

Heart to Heart

Devotional Thoughts for Women

February 2015

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A Servant of the Church, Helper of Many

In the book of Romans, the apostle Paul begins the final chapter with these words, *“I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchræa, that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.”* (Romans 16:1-2, NKJV)

Phoebe is a lesser-known character in the Bible as these two verses are the only mention of her, yet they tell us much about this remarkable Christian woman and her servant's heart.

Phoebe was a Christian who worshiped and worked with the congregation in Cenchræa. Cenchræa was a seaport about six miles east of Corinth where Paul was residing when he wrote his letter to the Romans. Paul gives quite a complimentary description of Phoebe as he refers to her as *“a servant of the church”* and *“a helper of many”*. The Greek word used for servant is *diakonon* from which we get our English word “deacon”. In Acts 6, seven men were chosen to serve the widows in the church by seeing they received their portion of the daily distribution of food. These men were servants of the church and we commonly refer to them as the first seven deacons. Phoebe demonstrated this same type of service as being one who was willing and able to assist others through her acts of charity and hospitality. She reminds me of Dorcas in Acts 9 as one who stayed busy utilizing her talents in service to the Lord.

It is thought that Phoebe might have been a woman of means as she seemed to help others from her own resources, including the apostle Paul himself. In light of this, we can also see the characteristic of humility in Phoebe as she generously gave of her time and means, ministering in the humble role of a servant. She didn't do these good works in order that Paul would write a glowing report about her to others, she simply responded to the needs around her with the energy, enthusiasm and diligence that would

please her Lord.

If you are ever at a loss as to what you can do to serve, just follow the example of Phoebe. Look around and see what needs to be done. Can you help prepare the communion trays? Can you wash dishes? Can you cook a meal? Can you encourage others through your words? Can you teach? Can you grade Bible correspondence lessons? Can you pray for missionaries? Can you use your own resources like Phoebe did to help support a missionary or assist a widow or to extend hospitality to a stranger? Service is not only for those that we know personally or like; it is an opportunity to do good to *all*. Galatians 6:10 tells us, *“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”* Which is exactly what Phoebe tried to do.

Phoebe serves as a great role model and inspiration to us. Could it be said of you that you are a servant of the church and a helper of many? There is always something that each of us can do; let's get busy in service to our awesome God. ~Heather Pryor

What Can I Do?

If you are too weak to journey up the mountain, steep and high,

You can stand within the valley while the multitudes go by.

You can chant in happy measure as they slowly pass along;

Though they may forget the singer, they will not forget the song.

If you have not gold or silver ever ready to command,

If you cannot toward the needy reach an ever-open hand,

You can visit the afflicted, o'er the erring you can weep;

You can be a true disciple, sitting at your Savior's feet.

Do not, then, stand idly watching for some greater work to do.

Go and toil in His vineyard, do not fear to do or dare;

If you want a field of labor you can find it anywhere.

**Ladies Bible Class – Saturday, February 21st
at 9:00 am** Please bring your Bible, book, and a
breakfast item to share. We will be discussing the last
lesson, #13.

Search the Scriptures
“Women Who Served”

Match the name of the woman on the left with the scripture on the
right that mentions her acts of service.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| _____ 1. Dorcas | A. II Kings 4:8-11 |
| _____ 2. Martha | B. Acts 16:14-15 |
| _____ 3. Tryphena | C. Acts 9:36-39 |
| _____ 4. Lydia | D. Luke 10:38-40 |
| _____ 5. Shunammite woman | E. Romans 16:12 |

Answers to last month's quiz
“Smelling Good”

1. What book of the Bible mentions a woman using such perfumes as spikenard, saffron, calamus, cinnamon, frankincense, myrrh, aloes, and others? Song of Solomon
2. According to Proverbs 27:9, what do ointment and perfume do? “Rejoice (or delight) the heart”
3. What Hebrew officials were anointed with holy oil perfumed with aromatic spices? Israel's priests (Exodus 30:23-33)
4. Where was Jesus when a woman poured an alabaster jar of perfume on his feet? At the home of Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36-50)
5. Who anointed Jesus' head with an expensive ointment known as spikenard? Mary, sister of Lazarus (John 12:1-3)

“She extends her hand to the poor, yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy... Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates.”
~Proverbs 31:20,30-31

RECIPE CORNER

"She...provides food for her household." ~Prov. 31:15

Janie Owens submitted this recipe and it looks simply scrumptious!

SWEET LEMON CHICKEN

1/4 cup flour	3 T. brown sugar
1 tsp. salt	3 T. ketchup
3 lb. chicken pieces	1 T. vinegar
2 T. oil	1 tsp. cold water
6 oz. frozen lemonade	1 T. cornstarch
1/2 cup water	

Combine flour and salt in bag. Place chicken pieces in bag and shake to coat. In large skillet or dutch oven, brown chicken pieces in oil, drain excess fat. In a bowl, combine lemonade, 1/2 cup water, brown sugar, ketchup, and vinegar. Pour over chicken. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer covered for 45-50 minutes or until chicken is tender. Remove chicken to a serving platter. Skim fat from pan juices. Combine cold water and cornstarch, stir into pan juices and boil until thickened and bubbly. Serve with rice.

And you know we have to have a little bit of chocolate in February so we can share the love!

CHOCOATE ALMOND CLUSTERS

12 oz. Almond bark, roughly chopped
2 cups whole raw almonds
1-2 tsp. coarse sea salt

Line a baking sheet with foil. In a microwave-safe bowl, heat almond bark for 2 minutes, stir, then continue heating for 30 seconds at a time, stirring after each interval until creamy. Add almonds to the melted chocolate and stir. Use a tablespoon to pour a mound onto prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle with sea salt. Let cool completely and solidify. Store at room temperature or chill.