

Heart to Heart

Devotional Thoughts for Women

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Getting Back to Basics

When we arrived home from church on Mother's Day a few weeks ago, there was a very large box sitting on our front porch. It was a delivery from Amazon, oh boy! My husband carried it inside (as it was rather heavy) and excitedly opened it up. Inside was a metal pressure canner in the largest size currently available. Happy Mother's Day to me.

For the last several months in the Pryor home, we have slowly but surely been working on getting back to basics in several areas of life. We have made a small start into gardening. I have been growing fresh herbs (which are wonderful to use in cooking!) and Paul has some tomato, pepper, and bean plants growing in containers. We have been canning – boy, have we been canning! We are turning our daughter's room into our canning storage area and she is beginning to fear that she will have nowhere to sleep when she comes home from college next month. We have canned strawberry jam, apple butter, apples, beans, and even hamburger and chicken. I am currently making a foray into soapmaking the old-fashioned way with lye and the next project that I would like to tackle is hand-dipped candles. Have we gone crazy? Maybe. However, I would like to share some thoughts with you about how some of these things have affected us.

Getting back to basics has helped teach us to slow down and enjoy the process. Gardening, canning, soapmaking, candlemaking, and other “back to basics” projects are not things you can rush around and do in five minutes. They take a lot of time and effort, but the results are so satisfying. When you can see the work of your hands, you feel a sense of accomplishment and you also have something useful to show for it. We work together more, read more (as we study up on how to do things), watch less TV, and have a greater appreciation for the wonderful resources God has blessed us with in creation.

Working in the soil, sowing seeds, and reaping a harvest makes us marvel at the wonders of God as he puts so much life inside one little seed. Gardening also teaches us so many spiritual lessons such as the necessity of sowing seed in order to reap a harvest, the importance of watering and nurturing the plants as they grow, and the dependence upon our Maker to supply the sunshine and the rain. Working outside has also sharpened our senses to the beauties all around us in God's world. We love to listen to the songs of the birds and sometimes my eyes almost ache at the brilliant blueness of the sky. Truly, *"The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork."* (Psalm 19:1)

Canning, soapmaking, and candlemaking have helped teach us patience and the need for caution. All three involve high temperatures and the potential for burns which keeps us alert and makes us take proper safety precautions. All three involve a lot of waiting which forces us to have patience. If we aren't patient with any one of these and try to take a shortcut, the end result will be a failure. Patience is absolutely necessary for a perfect result, and it is worth it.

Tackling some of these projects and changing the pace of our lives has also had the result of quieting me more on the inside. While waiting for my pressure canner to build up steam one day, I thought about the words of Psalm 46:10, *"Be still and know that I am God."* Sometimes, God has to slow me down in order to get my attention fixed on Him. Being more still and quiet allows me to focus my thoughts more on spiritual things instead of being so distracted by the world rushing around me at breakneck speed.

Getting back to basics tends to force us to live life at a different pace, to have patience, to work hard, to take satisfaction in a job well done, to spend more quality time together as a family, to be good stewards of the things God has blessed us with, and to have a greater and deeper appreciation for our Creator and the blessings in His creation.

After initial reluctance to jump into the world of canning, fear of killing every plant I would try to grow, and wondering if I would blind myself with lye while making soap, I have come to have a great appreciation and enthusiasm for getting back to the basics. That pressure canner just may have been the best Mother's Day gift ever!

~Heather Pryor

Ladies Bible Class – We will be taking a summer break from class for the months of July and August.

Search the Scriptures **“Crafty Ladies”**

Match the lady on the left to her craft or trade on the right.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| _____ 1. Priscilla | a. great cook |
| _____ 2. The Proverbs 31 woman | b. seller of purple |
| _____ 3. Tabitha | c. tentmaker |
| _____ 4. Rebekah | d. spinner of wool and flax |
| _____ 5. Lydia | e. seamstress |

Answers to last month's quiz **“Mothers”**

Match the mother on the left to her child(ren) on the right.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| <u> f </u> 1. Tamar | a. Samuel |
| <u> g </u> 2. Bathsheba | b. Obed |
| <u> i </u> 3. Eunice | c. Manasseh and Ephraim |
| <u> h </u> 4. Elizabeth | d. Athaliah |
| <u> j </u> 5. Jochebed | e. Dinah |
| <u> d </u> 6. Jezebel | f. Perez and Zerah |
| <u> c </u> 7. Asenath | g. Solomon |
| <u> e </u> 8. Leah | h. John the Baptist |
| <u> b </u> 9. Ruth | i. Timothy |
| <u> a </u> 10. Hannah | j. Moses |

RECIPE CORNER

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

In keeping with our "back to basics" theme, I want to share some recipes with you for some money-saving products for the home. Go ahead and give them a try!

DISHWASHER DETERGENT PACS

- 1 cup Arm & Hammer washing soda (can be found at Publix and Wal-Mart)
- 1 cup sea salt
- 1/2 cup baking soda
- 1/2 cup citric acid (found at Wal-Mart with canning supplies)

Mix all ingredients together in a bowl, then fill empty egg carton cups to make the individual pacs. These will need to sit and harden. The citric acid causes a warming chemical reaction with the other ingredients that will solidify the mixture. Yield: About 36 pacs

ALL-NATURAL GROUT CLEANER

- 7 cups water
- 1/2 cup baking soda
- 1/3 cup lemon juice
- 1/4 cup vinegar

Mix together and place in spray bottle. Spray onto dirty grout, let it sit, then scrub with a brush.

SUMMERTIME AIR FRESHENER (STOVETOP POTPOURRI)

- 2 each sliced lemons, limes, and oranges
- 1 can pineapple juice
- 1 oz. coconut extract
- several cups of water

Place all ingredients in a large pan and slow simmer on the stovetop all day for a pleasing, clean and natural fragrance.