

Heart to Heart

Devotional Thoughts for Women

November 2015

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Fasting and Feasting

Martha scurried around in her kitchen, her face flushed from the heat and excitement. There was so much to do and everything must be perfect. After all, it wasn't every day she had such an important guest in her home, and she fully intended to show him every ounce of hospitality that she could. If only her sister hadn't disappeared and left her all alone to do everything! In exasperation, Martha snatched up a pitcher of water and hurried into the next room to refill her guest's cup. As she stopped at the table beside her distinguished visitor, she frowned down in disapproval at her sister as she sat on the floor by his feet. But her sister didn't catch Martha's stern look. She was too busy feasting on the words of the Messiah.

In Luke 10:38-42, we read the well-known account of Mary and her sister Martha as they received Jesus into their home and served him a meal. Martha had the best of intentions by offering generous hospitality to the Lord, but in the process of producing and serving a satisfying meal to the Savior, she was missing out on something far more important. Her sister Mary, however, was keenly focused on it. Mary recognized the importance of the spiritual food being offered to her in a bounteous banquet. Luke 10:39 tells us that Mary *“sat at Jesus' feet and heard His Word.”*

Was Mary not aware that it was dinnertime? Didn't she remember that Martha was slaving away in the kitchen and might have needed some help? Of course she did. But Mary quietly put aside her mental “To Do” list. She fasted from all of the distractions around her in order to focus on the spiritual feast set before her. Jesus was not a disgruntled guest because of this, but rather, He praised her for her decision. In Luke 10:42 Jesus says, *“One thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”*

Mary was hungry, but it wasn't the aroma of fresh baked bread or roasted lamb that ignited her appetite. She hungered after the word of God, and she satisfied that spiritual craving at the feet

of the Lord.

Each of us are encouraged to be hungry for the word of God just as Mary was. I Peter 2:2 tells us, *“As newborn babes, **desire** the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”* Peter uses the word “desire.” To desire something is to want it, to crave it. How hungry are we for the word of God? Do we crave it? Do we, like Mary, have such a strong desire for it that we are willing to fast from every thing that is going on around us in order to feast on it? Or are we too “distracted” with everything else going on in our lives as Martha was? (Luke 10:40-41)

Job certainly had an appetite for spiritual food. In Job 23:12, he says, *“I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.”*

Do you have a sweet tooth? We see that David definitely did as he describes God's Word for us in Psalm 119:103. *“How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”*

There is nothing more satisfying than feasting on the words of God. As Ezekiel wrote in Ezekiel 3:3, *“And He said to me, 'Son of man, feed your belly, and fill your stomach with this scroll that I give you.' So I ate it, and it was in my mouth like honey in sweetness.”* God's Word fills us up and satisfies every need and longing that we have. What a blessing that we can sit down every day to such a banquet and feast to our heart's content.

As so many of us will soon be sitting before bountiful feasts of food this month, let's not forget to thank the Lord for the spiritual feast He offers us continually through His word. Let's strive to remember the principles of fasting and feasting that Mary so beautifully demonstrates to us.

~Heather Pryor

Ladies Bible Class – See Angela or Heather for the date of the next scheduled class. Please bring your Bible, your notes from your study and a breakfast item to share. We are continuing a study on prayer titled “Unto Thee, O Lord.” Read and do the October assignments and we will discuss them at the November class.

Search the Scriptures

“Feasting on the Word”

Complete the following verses. Quotations are taken from the NKJV.

1. “Your _____ were found, and I _____ them, and Your _____ was to me the _____ and _____ of my _____.” Jeremiah 15:16
2. “O God, you are my God; early will I _____ You; my soul _____ for you; my flesh _____ for You in a dry and _____ land where there is no _____.” Psalm 63:1
3. “For He _____ the longing _____, and fills the _____ soul with _____.” Psalm 107:9
4. “Blessed are those who _____ and _____ for _____ for they shall be _____.” Matthew 5:6

Answers to Last Month's Quiz

“Complainers”

What was each of the following complaining about and to whom were they complaining?

1. **Genesis 30:1-2** – Rachel Rachel complained to Jacob about her barrenness. He pointed out that it was in the hand of God.
2. **Exodus 15:24** – **Children of Israel** The Israelites complained to Moses about their thirst in the wilderness. There was no source for water. They failed to see God as their source of provision.
3. **Numbers 11:4-6** – Children of Israel On this occasion, the Israelites complained about the lack of meat, failing to be thankful for God's daily provision of manna.
4. **John 12:3-7** – Judas Judas complained about Mary's “waste” of expensive spikenard oil to anoint Jesus instead of being sold to help the poor. He didn't care about the poor; he simply wanted to help himself to the coffers.
5. **Acts 6:1** – Hellenist Christians The Greek Christians in the early church complained to the apostles that their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. The first 7 deacons were appointed to take care of this oversight.

RECIPE CORNER

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

CRANBERRY GELATIN SALAD

- 1 pkg. (6 oz.) cherry gelatin
- 1 ½ cups boiling water
- 1 can (20 oz.) crushed pineapple, undrained
- 1 can (16 oz.) whole berry cranberry sauce
- 1 ½ cups seedless red grapes, halved
- ¼ cup chopped pecans

In a large bowl, dissolve gelatin in water. Stir in pineapple and cranberry sauce. Refrigerate for 30 minutes then add in grapes and pecans. Pour into a 2 quart serving bowl. Refrigerate until firm. Yield: 8-10 servings

The following is not a recipe but a fun "How To" for thanksgiving.

THANKSGIVING TREE

- One large jar or vase
- Rocks
- Branches
- Leaf pattern
- Twistie ties or string

Place some small bare branches into a large vase filled with rocks to anchor the branches. Draw a leaf pattern (or find free printables online), make copies and cut them out. Hole punch the leaves in order to secure them onto the branches. Place a stack of leaves with a marker and twistie ties next to the vase. Encourage your family or any visitors to your home throughout the month of November to write down something they are thankful for on a leaf and tie it on the tree. Remind each person to sign their name on their leaf or leaves as well. Take time on Thanksgiving Day to read aloud all of the things you and others are thankful for then go to God in grateful prayer for each blessing that was written.

"For in Him we live and move and have our being." ~Acts 17:28