

# *Heart to Heart*

Devotional Thoughts for Women

October 2016

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## **The Good, the Bad and the Ugly**

Any ladies out there who are at all familiar with westerns may be groaning inwardly at this title thinking, “She's gonna talk about Clint Eastwood!” Fear not! This has nothing to do with westerns or Clint Eastwood, but rather, I want us to consider three unique examples from the Bible who all have valuable lessons to teach us.

### **The Good: Martha**

Martha tends to get a bad rap from us sometimes because we usually assess her in the light of the event where she complained to Jesus about her sister Mary not helping her serve the food to their guests. (Luke 10:38-42) But there is a lot of good in Martha that tends to get overlooked. First of all, we see in this dinner party of Luke 10 and in another dinner party in John chapter 12 that Martha was a woman given to service. John 12:2 begins with these words, *“There they made Him a supper; and Martha served...”* Service is an important aspect of a Christian's life, and the church today could definitely stand to have more Martha's! Martha was a go-getter. She saw what needed to be done and was busy doing it. She had a heart for hospitality and practiced it at every opportunity. In that sense alone, she is a good example to us, but there is more. When Martha's brother Lazarus died, Martha and her sister Mary were sitting in the house surrounded by those wishing to offer them comfort. As Martha heard the news that Jesus was approaching, she went out to meet him and had an interesting conversation with him about the resurrection (John 11:21-27). In John 11:25, Jesus tells her that He is the resurrection and the life and in verse 26 He asks her, *“And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”* Listen to Martha's resounding answer of faith, “Yes,

*Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is come into the world.” (John 11:27)*

So, what do we learn from Martha? Martha was human like the rest of us. There were times she was distracted with “busy things” to the exclusion of the more important things, but she also teaches us to have the heart of a servant and a heart that completely believes in and desires to follow the Lord Jesus.

### **The Bad: Rahab**

Rahab was a citizen of the city of Jericho but not an upstanding one. She was a harlot, which is another name for a prostitute. They had no better reputation back then than they do today. She was probably shunned by the “respectable” women of the city as a bad girl, and yet she played a vital part in the destruction of the city by God's people led by Joshua. In Joshua 2, two spies were sent out by Joshua to scope out the land and especially the city of Jericho. Rahab the harlot offered them shelter in her home and even diverted the king's soldiers to offer the spies a chance to successfully escape the city without detection. (Joshua 2:1-7) In response to her kindness and help, she was given a chance for she and her family to be saved from the coming destruction of Jericho. This was not just some quid pro quo. Hebrews 11:31 tells us, “*By **faith** the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.*” Rahab had heard what the God of Israel had done for His people, and she believed in Him. As a result, not only was she saved from the destruction of Jericho, she eventually married an Israelite man named Salmon. They had a son named Boaz who married Ruth who was the grandmother of King David. Rahab the harlot is one of the few women mentioned in the lineage of Christ. (Matthew 1:5)

So, what do we learn from Rahab? We learn not to make judgments as to who may believe or not believe in the Lord. She teaches us that sometimes even the most unlikely of candidates can develop a heart and life of faith.

## The Ugly: Manasseh

Manasseh was the son of King Hezekiah, a ruler of Judah who was faithful to God. Unfortunately, Manasseh did not take after his father. He became king at the tender age of 12, and the Bible describes his 55 year reign in this way: *“He made his son pass through the fire, practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft, and consulted spiritists and mediums. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger.”* *“Moreover Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another.”* (II Kings 21:6, 16) Doesn't sound very promising, does he? We would look at someone like Manasseh and describe him as downright evil. But if we read the account of his life in II Chronicles 33, we see an amazing transformation that took place in his life. The Lord sent the Assyrians against Judah and King Manasseh to afflict them for their wickedness and Manasseh was taken captive to Babylon, bound with bronze fetters and being led by a hook in his nose like livestock. How did such an evil, hardhearted, coldblooded man like Manasseh handle this situation? II Chronicles 33:12-13 tells us, *“Now when he was in affliction, he implored the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord was God.”* Manasseh turned his heart and his life around.

So, what do learn from Manasseh? His story teaches us that we serve a great God who is rich in grace, mercy, and love. Manasseh's life shows us that no matter how deep we've sunk in the ugliness of sin, we have a God whose *“hand is not shortened that it cannot save.”* (Isaiah 59:1) Even for someone like Manasseh, there was hope, and what a blessing and comfort it is that we have that same hope as well.

~Heather Pryor

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**Ladies Bible Class – October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 9:00 a.m.** We will be

continuing our study in the book of Nehemiah. Please bring your Bible and a breakfast item to share, and study **Lessons 3 & 4** before class.

## RECIPE CORNER

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

### OVERNIGHT BISCUITS & GRAVY CASSEROLE

Gravy:

- 1 lb. breakfast sausage, hot or mild
- 1/3 cup flour
- 4 cups whole milk
- 1/2 tsp. seasoning salt
- 1 1/2 – 2 tsp. black pepper

Egg mixture:

- 6 eggs
  - 1/2 cup milk
  - 3/4 tsp. seasoning salt
  - 1/4 tsp. dry mustard
  - 1/4 tsp. paprika
  - 1/2 tsp. salt
  - pepper to taste
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- 1 can of biscuits
  - 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

In a large skillet, brown the sausage, breaking it up into small pieces. When the sausage is cooked through, sprinkle half of the 1/3 cup flour on the sausage and stir until it is absorbed. Add the rest a little at a time and stir until all of the flour is absorbed. Stir for 1 minute. Turn the heat up to medium and pour in the milk, 1 cup at a time, stirring to thicken. Continue stirring for 10-12 minutes until the gravy has thickened. Add seasoning salt and up to 2 tsp. of pepper. Set aside. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs and add milk, seasoning salt, mustard, paprika, salt and pepper. Grease a 9x13 inch casserole dish. Separate the can of biscuits and cut each one into 4 pieces. Place the quartered biscuits into the prepared baking dish and spread them out evenly. Pour the egg mixture over the biscuits. Sprinkle with cheese. Pour the gravy over all. Cover tightly and refrigerate overnight. Bake in a 350 degree oven for 38-45 if baking immediately, or (if refrigerated overnight) bake for 30 minutes, remove foil and continue baking for another 15-30 minutes until biscuits are browned and sauce is bubbly.