

To Teach Keepers™

Planning a Family Fun Night – Creating New Traditions

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by Sylvia Britton

What are traditions? Why are they important to families? Where do families come up with the traditions that they participate in? How can I find some traditions for my family that aren't just copies of what other families do?

Traditions are some of the most important activities that families and individuals participate in. Traditions are rituals that provide a variety of benefits to us all. They tell us who we are, where we come from, what is important to us. They bind us together as a family group, give us a common touch point and reference for life and provide a feeling of security and acceptance.

We have cultural rituals such as the Independence Day celebrations we participate in here in the U.S. With fireworks, songs, picnics, poetry, speeches and ceremonies, this cultural tradition keeps us identified as a group, it helps to hold us together in a common bond. Family rituals or traditions are much the same only on a smaller scale within your own family.

Children develop their sense of identity through ritual and tradition. They thrive on routine. Which of us with children has not developed a "Bed-Time" ritual, a "Bath-Time" ritual, or a "Morning" ritual? Rituals give us a sense of belonging to something bigger than ourselves. We feel connected to our family and we derive a sense of meaning and security

from that. No matter how far we roam, we know we are connected to that family and we express it through the rituals we participated in as children. Rituals can be connected to anything, even the ordinary events of life.

All of us want to carry on some fun and meaningful family traditions with our children, and we want to make warm happy memories with them. But in these days of displaced extended families and the rush and run of life, it seems to be so difficult to establish those traditions.

If your family doesn't have its own traditions to participate in and pass on, it can be daunting to find some that are a good fit and to begin using them. I hope to give you some ideas and encouragement to find them and get busy using them with your family this week, and I hope you will share all of your own traditions with us, too.

January is a great month to begin Family Traditions. It's cold in most areas and we are staying indoors more. Families are together more than they are in the warmer months and consequently tempers can flare and boredom can set in.

It's a great time to turn off that TV and spend some time together as a family. If your family isn't used to this and especially if you have teens, it may be wiser to start slowly with a Family Night and work up to spending more time each evening together.

Family Night can be so beneficial

to your family! It can be serious and searching or it can be fun and silly. It's all dependent on what your family needs right now. Don't force fun on your family. Provide some interesting activities and allow it to happen spontaneously.

Some ideas for Family Night are board games, charades or Pictionary. If you have small children why not gather every one around the table and play with Play Dough? Even teens enjoy that.

Here are some more ideas for a Family Fun Night:

An Ice Cream Dinner - provide ice cream and all kinds of toppings and add-ins

Make a fire outside or even in the grill and toast marshmallows and make s'mores.

Pack a picnic and take a hike.

Build a fort or tent with chairs and blankets in the living room. Crawl in together and read a story.

Take a walk and collect rocks or leaves.

Walk in the snow and come home to hot chocolate and warm snacks.

Get out the coloring books and crayons and color together!

Moms teach the boys how to do something like cook or sew on a button. Dads teach the girls how to change the oil in the car or start the mower.

It doesn't have to be complicated or expensive, Family Fun is a sure way to bring your family





Every wise woman builds her house: but the foolish tears it down with her hands.

Proverbs 14:1

A Woman of Discretion

For some 11 years now The Christian Homekeeper website has offered Proverbs 14:1 and the question.... "Are you building up or tearing down?" A woman who has discretion will build her home up with her words, works and witness. She invests in her marriage and in her home and family. These questions are meant as thought provokers. See if you need to talk to your heavenly Father about discretion. Here are some questions that will help you to ascertain whether or not you are building your home and whether or not you are a woman of discretion.

Do you have the vague notion or perhaps the understanding that you are tearing your home down instead of building it up?

2. Are you building up your husband with your words and actions? Expressing gratitude and admiration?
3. Are you meeting your husband's sexual needs?

4. Are you a trustworthy partner to your husband? Are you keeping secrets from him?
5. Are you content to be in your own home or are you finding yourself more comfortable in someone else's home?
6. Are you creating a home atmosphere that is conducive to a happy family life?
7. Are you reverencing your husband?
8. Are you growing closer to a man other than your husband, spending time talking intimately with him or otherwise giving part of your heart to him?
9. Are you reserving physical touch, intimate looks for your husband or are you flirtatious?
10. Are you discreet in the way you communicate with men in your life at work or church? Are you expressing admiration for another man,

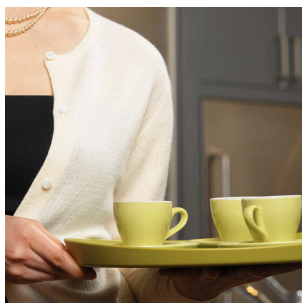
admiration that should come from his wife?

11. Is your conversation restrained and controlled or are you loud and brash? Are you exhibiting a meek and quiet spirit?
12. Have you built the proper hedges between you and other men in your life?
13. Is there anything in your actions or words that would defraud the men in your life?
14. Would the men and women in your life say that you are a woman of moral integrity and purity?
15. Would your husband say that you are a woman of moral purity?
16. Do you dress in such a way that helps men keep their thoughts pure?

As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion. Proverbs 11:22

A woman of discretion knows to say the right thing in the right way at the right time. So often we blurt out whatever we want to say without waiting and trusting God for the right time.

Cynthia Heald



The Style Quiz

By Nancy Leigh DeMoss

Answer True or False

1. According to the Bible, the primary purpose of clothing is to cover the body.
2. There's nothing right or wrong about particular clothing styles. It's all just a matter of taste and personal opinion.
3. The Bible tells us what styles of clothing Christians should wear.
4. Since the Bible says God looks on the heart, what we wear and how we appear aren't that important; it's what's on the inside that counts.
5. Our clothes and appearance reveal a lot about our values, our character, and beliefs.
6. What I wear is not really anyone else's concern. I should be free to wear the kind of clothes that I like and that I feel comfortable wearing.
7. Modesty means dressing in a way that is outdated, dumpy, and unattractive.
8. If a girl doesn't wear trendy clothes that are at least a little revealing, guys won't notice her.
9. Except for guys who are "over-sexed," most men are not really affected by the way women dress. Most guys don't even notice how women dress.
10. I can't help it if guys struggle morally because of what I wear. It's up to the guys to control their minds. I shouldn't have to change the way I dress just because they can't control themselves.
11. Parents shouldn't impose their standards or beliefs about clothing on their kids. They should let them make their own decisions, even if they don't approve of what their kids are wearing.
12. Christians are free to dress as they wish, because we're not under the law, but under grace. It's legalistic for parents or youth leaders to establish guidelines or

standards for the way young people dress.

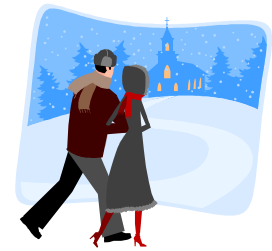
13. Christian women should never wear clothes that are revealing or that look sexy (i.e., clothes designed to arouse sexual desire or interest).
14. There are some public settings where it is okay for Christian women to wear clothing that exposes their private parts (e.g., thighs, breasts).
15. A woman can be covered from head to toe and still be dressed immodestly.
16. A woman can wear modest clothing and still be an immodest woman.
17. Most girls and women do not understand the meaning, the power, or the benefits of true modesty.

See the **Style Quiz Answer Key** on Page 3.

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The Style Quiz Answer Key (Style Quiz on Page 2)

1. **True.** God designed clothing to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness, which became shameful after they sinned.
2. **False.** Choosing clothing styles is not just a matter of personal taste and opinion. Clothing choices should be based on biblical principles (e.g., modesty, moderation, and gender distinctiveness).
3. **False.** The Bible doesn't spell out specifics of "right" and "wrong" clothing choices.
4. **False.** You can't separate what's on the inside from what's on the outside. The external is a reflection of the heart.
5. **True.** A woman's clothing and appearance are powerful non-verbal communicators of what she believes.
6. **False.** Everything we do—including the way we dress—affects others. As believers, we have an obligation to be sensitive to others and to avoid anything that could put temptation in the path of another.
7. **False.** We may not be able to wear all the most popular trends, but it is possible to be fashionable and modest.
8. **False.** It's a matter of what kind of attention you want, and from whom. The right kind of guys will be drawn to women who are modest—inside and out!
9. **False.** Even godly men can be easily enticed to lust by the sight of an immodest woman.
10. **False.** We may not be completely responsible for how guys think, but we are responsible for modest appearance so we do not tempt them to sin.
11. **False.** Parents are responsible to provide guidelines, instruction, and, where necessary, restraint for children who are still in their home. (This does not mean that parents should not give their children freedom to express their own tastes, when those preferences do not violate biblical principles.)
12. **False.** Every area of a believer's life is to be lived under the authority and lordship of Jesus Christ. Grace gives us the desire and ability to please God. Parents and spiritual leaders are responsible to provide wise, biblical leadership for those under their authority.
13. **False.** It is absolutely appropriate for a woman to be sexy (in private settings) with her husband!
14. **False.** "Place" does not determine modesty. Unfortunately, when it comes to swimwear and formal wear, many Christian women do not even consider the issue of modesty, or they are content to settle for a standard that is "relatively" modest—i.e., modest compared to what "most people wear"—rather than asking, "Is this truly modest?"
15. **True.** A woman can be dressed from head to toe and still be immodest, if her attire is revealing, clingy, or too tight.
16. **True.** Modesty involves more than just our clothing. It includes our attitudes, the way we talk, and our behavior—how we walk, use our eyes, engage with others, etc.
17. **True.** Unfortunately, many Christian girls and women have never taken the time to discover God's will concerning biblical modesty. They do not realize the great rewards and blessings modesty will bring to them and to others.



Modesty involves more than just our clothing. It includes our attitudes, the way we talk, and our behavior—how we walk, use our eyes, engage with others, etc.

Revive Our Hearts

Praying for Your Husband

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Sunday

-----That he might become a holy man, a man of prayer, mature in the Lord, growing in his knowledge of God. (I THES 5:23, COL 4:12, EPH 6:18, EPH 1:18-19, EPH 3:16-19). That he might daily seek God with all his heart, walking in the Spirit moment by moment, growing in his dependence on Him (PSALMS 119:1-2, PSALMS 27:4, PROV 3:5-6), JOHN 15:5).

Monday

-----That he might learn to take every thought captive, to not be conformed to the world's thinking and to think scripturally (ROM 12:2, 2 COR 10:5). That he would learn to not depend on his circumstances for happiness but

on God alone (HABAKKUK 3:17-19).

Tuesday

-----That he might have new strength in the midst of his busy schedule and that the Lord might infuse him with His strength (ISAIAH 40:31, EPH 3:14-19). That his self-image might be a reflection of the Lord's thoughts toward him (EPH 1:17-19, ROM 12:3, PSALMS 139).

Wednesday

-----That he might become not driven but a called man, with well thought-through and prayed-through goals in life (I COR 9:24-27). That the Lord might give him wisdom to lead his family physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually (EPH 1:17-19, JAMES 1:5-7).

Thursday

-----That he might stand firm against the schemes of the devil and resist Satan in all circumstances. (EPH 6:10-18, JAMES 4:7) That he might not be deceived into unbelief or sin (GAL 6:7)

Friday

-----That the fruit of the Spirit might be exhibited more and more in his life (GAL 5:22-23). That he might learn to love as God has commanded (I COR 13:4-7, ROM 12:8-10).

Saturday

-----That the Lord might protect him, guarding his course (PROV 2:8) That he might learn to manage his time well (EPH 5:15) .



You should remember that though another may have more money, beauty and brains than you, when it comes to the rarer spiritual values such as charity, self-sacrifice, honor and nobility of heart, you have an equal chance with everyone to be the most beloved and honored of all people.

Archibald Rutledge



GOD is
Love.
1 John 4:16

I recommend that women make Jesus their first love (Rev. 2:2-5) and give Him the first of their day, thoughts and plans. Psalm 32:8 says, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go. I will counsel you and watch over you." When we make Jesus our priority, He directs our steps and leads us in prioritizing our day and activities.

Bunny Wilson

Scriptures on Love, Joy & Peace

from Linda M. Reddoch

Love

John 13:34, 35
Romans 5:5
Romans 13:10
1 Corinthians 13 (the whole chapter – good one to memorize!)
Ephesians 4:29-32
Colossians 3:24
Galatians 5:22-24

Joy

Psalm 89:15, 16
Proverbs 15:15
Proverbs 15:23
Acts 13:52
Romans 14:17, 18
Philippians 4:4
James 1:2, 3
1 Peter 1:8

Peace

Psalms 4:8
Psalms 89:17, 18
Psalm 119: 165
Isaiah 26:3
John 14:27
John 16:33
1 Corinthians 14:33
2 Thessalonians 3:16
Philippians 4:7
1 Peter 5:7

Look up, print up, share, and be
blessed by these Scriptures!

Where Do I Go?

from Linda M. Reddoch

Where do you go when life is in your way? You feel down and out and nothing is going right. Where is your "happy place"? Do you go and hide in a dark room?? I hope not!!

I go to my knees!!! If depression, gloom, despair and agony begin knocking on my door, I don't open it!! I choose to slam that door shut!!

Take inventory of what you've been allowing in your mind, spirit and in your house!!

What music are you listening to?? Does it glorify and honor God or flesh?? If you're battling depression - that is not the time to listen to music that will make you feel worse!! You need to listen to music that will lift your spirit. The only music I've found that really works and "does the trick" is praise and worship music. There's nothing like praising God for Who He Is!! Then, softly and quietly worshipping at His precious feet.

Have you ever prayed and felt like the Heavens were brass?? Did

you feel that your prayers weren't getting through?? So did the woman from Canaan in Matthew 15: 22-28:

And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, "Lord, help me."

In verse 23, He answered her not

a word!! What was up with that?? I know this.... When she fell at His feet and begin to worship (verse 25), things started changing!!

There is something to be said about worshipping the Lord!

Then in verse 28, "O Woman...great is thy faith..." and her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

That woman was in desperate need of the Lord to touch her grievously vexed daughter who was at home. Where did this woman go? She got up and went to the Lord. She had faith that He could change everything!! And HE did!!

God is no respecter of persons. What He's done for one, He'll do for another. YOU are the another!! God wants to move on your behalf. He wants to and will. Get full of the Word of God. Get His Word on the inside of you!! Be filled to overflowing of the Word of God!! Jesus changes everything!! You don't have to be depressed, down, and worried. Be FREE in Jesus!! Run to Him!!

Winter Sports

By Karen Twombly

When most people think of winter sports they think of skiing, snowboarding and ice skating. Not me! My winter sport is knitting! To me a beautiful winter day entails sitting with a fun knitting project in my cozy house watching the snow fall outside.

About a year ago I joined a Dishcloth Knit Along Yahoo! Group. They send out two free Dishcloth patterns per month. The pattern sent out at the beginning of each month usually uses knits and purls to make a nice picture like a sun or a flower or a dolphin or anything. The pattern sent out in the middle of the month teaches a new skill like knitting various lacy designs. Nine rows are sent out per day until the end of the week when you have a beautiful new cloth. You can use them yourself or for gifts and even to join together in a blanket. It is quick and easy and lots of fun! You can find this group at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MonthlyDishcloths/>.

When I am not working up a cloth from the patterns of my group I love to surf the internet in search of other free patterns. I have found so many generous and talented designers! The designer I tend to find myself returning to again and

again is Rhonda K. White at <http://www.knittingknonsense.com/index2.html>. Her patterns are beautiful and work up quickly.

If you would like to start knitting or improving your present knitting skills, the best online help I have found is www.knittinghelp.com. This website has a search engine if you would like to enter the stitch you are interested in learning. Then you can read instructions or watch knitting videos online to see close up how that stitch is done.

Recently my 9 year old daughter became interested in learning to knit a cloth with a picture on it like mom does. I wanted a small project for her to get the stitches and the counting down. I designed a little cloth just for her to see if she was ready.

If you would like to try to knit this "test cloth," I offer it here below. If you can knit this cloth you are ready to try the numerous cloth patterns on the internet. Be careful though, it is **quite** addictive!



*Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.
~ Abraham Lincoln ~*

Heartstrings Cloth Pattern

I used cotton yarn and size 7 needles. I cast on 25 stitches. The finished product, depending on your knitting tension, will measure approximately 4.5" by 5".

Here goes:

1. Knit across
2. Knit across
3. Knit
4. K 3, P 19, K 3
5. Knit
6. K 3, P 5, K 3, P 3, K 3, P 5, K 3
7. Knit
8. K 3, P 4, K 5, P 1, K 5, P 4, K 3
9. Knit
10. K 3, P 3, K 13, P 3, K 3
11. Knit
12. K 3, P 3, K 13, P 3, K 3
13. Knit
14. K 3, P 4, K 11, P 4, K 3
15. Knit
16. K 3, P 5, K 9, P 5, K 3
17. Knit
18. K 3, P 6, K 7, P 6, K 3
19. Knit
20. K 3, P 7, K 5, P 7, K 3
21. Knit
22. K 3, P 8, K 3, P 8, K 3
23. Knit
24. K 3, P 9, K 1, P 9, K 3
25. Knit
26. K 3, P 19, K 3
27. Knit
28. Knit
29. Knit
30. Bind off and enjoy!

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Heartstrings Cloth by Karen Twombly (pattern at left)



My winter sport is knitting!

Karen Twombly

The Price of Marriage



So you say you can't take it - the price is too high.

The feelings are gone it seems the rivers run dry.

You never imagined it could turn out so rough.

You give and give and still its never enough.

Your emotions have vanished that once held a thrill

You wonder if love could be alive in you still.

But that ring on your finger was put there to stay.

You'll never forget the words you promised that day.

Jesus didn't die for you because it was fun,

He hung there for love, because it had to be done.

And in spite of the anguish His word was fulfilled.

'Cause love is not a feeling, it's an act of your will.

~Don Francisco

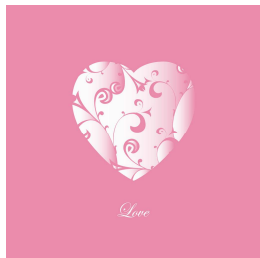
Success in marriage is much more than a matter of finding the right person; it is also a matter of being the right person.

Leland Foster Wood



Wardeh's daughter Naomi and her doll quilt inspired this doll quilt kit that you can assemble for a young lady's gift.

If I belittle those whom I am called to serve, talk of their weak points in contrast perhaps with what I think of as my strong points; if I adopt a superior attitude, forgetting "Who made thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou hast not received?" then I know nothing of Calvary love.



Amy Carmichael

Baby Doll Quilt Kit

By Wardeh Harmon

This is a quilt kit meant for young ladies who are still young enough for enjoying dolls, and are beginning to learn to quilt. In fact, on the Titus 2 Christian Homekeeper website, I have shared a doll quilt made by my daughter Naomi using this same formula. But recently, I assembled together the ingredients for making this quilt into a kit and we'll be giving it to a young lady we know on the occasion of her birthday.

What you'll need to gather together are these supplies:



- * (25) 5-inch squares total of 4 or 5 types of fabric
- * 28" x 28" square of back fabric
- * 28" x 28" square of unbleached cotton batting
- * (3) 2" x 40 to 45" strips of fabric for the binding
- * Thick embroidery thread for tying

Put it all together, with instructions*, and it is ready for gift giving (see photo at right)! The recipient will need to supply thread, a sewing machine, scissors, and pins.



*Instructions can be copied and pasted from the web. Please visit the Titus 2 Christian Homekeeper website. Go to: <http://www.t2chk.org/new/archives/467>.

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All From Thrift Store Sheets

By Wardeh Harmon

I have sewn many useful household items from thrift store sheets. In my area, second-hand sheets cost between \$2 (for twin size) to \$5 (for king size). I especially love knit (stretchy) sheets. They are extremely soft and usually 100% cotton — and much higher quality knit than is available to home sewers at fabric store chains. I also love flannel woven (non-stretchy) sheets for winter pajamas because they feel softer and warmer than smooth woven sheets. So the next time you hit your thrift store, don't leave before you check out the linens!

When shopping, keep in mind that stripes and plaids are harder to match when sewing. I usually avoid those and opt for sheets that are solid or patterned with prints or florals that don't have lines which need to be matched. Consider the following uses for thrift store sheets:

1. Pajamas tops and bottoms (use knit sheets for tops; woven or knit will work for the bottoms).
2. T-Shirts (using knit).
3. Nightgowns (knit or woven).
4. Boxers (knit or woven).
5. Shorts (knit or woven).
6. Skirts (knit or woven).
7. Dresses (knit or woven).
8. Tote Bags (woven).
9. Quilt Backings (woven).
10. Quilt Top pieced from sheet scraps (woven).
11. A Muslin — to practice a pattern before cutting into more expensive fabric (knit or woven, depending on the pattern type).
12. Curtains (woven).
13. Table Runners, Doilies, and Napkins (woven).



Wardeh's children, Christmas 2007, bedecked in comfy pajamas made from thrift store knit sheets.



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Resolutions for Better Health

By Wardeh Harmon

Thank God For Your Food. God, our Creator, designed our food and our bodies which use the food as fuel. God gave us this fuel, so thank Him for it. But also thank Him for the tasty foods He made that make eating so enjoyable.

Pray More And Think More. When you experience food cravings, especially toward sugar, chocolate, or caffeine, pray and ask the Lord to reveal your true needs -- whether you are really hungry, or whether you are experiencing a craving for a sensation to feed you emotionally.

Eat Less And Move More. This is purely logical. The less you eat, and the more you exercise, the more fuel you burn instead of storing it as unwanted weight.

Drink More Water. Our bodies need much more water than we normally drink. If you are craving something or feeling hungry, have a glass of water first. Water may be what you're craving. If after 15 minutes, you're still hungry, then have a sensible meal or snack. On the other hand, if the water satisfied you and you find out you're not hungry anymore, rejoice! You just saved yourself from unneeded calories, which will help

you achieve your goals of weight maintenance or weight loss.

Make Healthier Food Choices. Way back before man turned our food system into a commercial conglomerate, food was grown and eaten naturally. Sweets were few and far between. People ate local, seasonal produce. Red meat choices were grass-fed and pasture raised. Poultry was pasture-raised and grew on a healthy diet of grains and field insects. Fish were wild, not farmed. Our plant foods were not genetically engineered. If a food grows or is raised the way God made it to do so, then it is the better choice.

Replace Refined Grains With Whole Grains. God made grains whole. They contain more fiber and vitamins and minerals than their refined counterparts. Carbohydrates gives us energy and grains are loaded with energy-giving B vitamins. Choose the whole varieties of the grains—they pack the most nutritional punch.

Eat More Fruits And Vegetables. In addition to cutting back on your refined grains, such as white flour baked goods and white rice and potatoes, ramp up how many fruits and veggies you eat. They supply a great deal more of the vitamins and minerals needed for health as well

as fiber, and in addition they don't offer as many calories. That's a win-win.

Let Yourself Enjoy A Treat Every Now And Then. We all know that deprivation leads to bingeing. Avoid that trap by allowing yourself to enjoy a treat. Pick a schedule that suits you best -- for instance, enjoy dessert once per week, instead of once per day.

Rest More. If you tend to get too busy, stay up late too often, or work yourself too hard, then you should consider cutting back. It is simply not healthy to run yourself get depressed, which makes you more likely to get sick. You'll struggle with being happy, contented and peaceful. Your body will be functioning at less than prime, which makes weight maintenance or weight loss very difficult. God rested from His work of creation. He asks us to rest also through the way He designed the world — darkness falls every night and our hormones trigger us to want to sleep and rest then. He also gave us a sabbath rest. We can honor God by acknowledging that He designed our bodies to rest from our work, too.



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Instead of allowing yourself to be unhappy, just let your love grow as God wants it to grow. Seek goodness in others. Love more persons more... love them more impersonally, more unselfishly, without thought of return. The return, never fear, will take care of itself.

Henry Drummond



And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

~Mark 11:22-25

Believing God for the Answer

By Linda M. Reddoch

Have you ever believed God for an answer to prayer? Do you pray one time and give up? How truly desperate are you for your answer? I want to encourage you to stand on the Word of God. I want to encourage you to **never give up** believing God for your answer.

Do you truly believe what the Bible says? I do. Especially Mark 11:22-25 (see right margin).

I love verse 22. It says "Have faith in God." That is so simple. The Amplified Bible says "to have faith in God

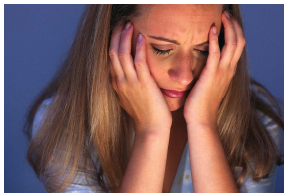
constantly." That means to have faith in God all the time. In good circumstances or bad circumstances. No matter what kind of circumstances -- we must have faith in God. That means we're going to trust God through it all.

Then He says that "What things soever ye desire." What is your desire? What are you believing God for? What are you praying about? He said that when you pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. "Shall" means "it's a gonna happen!" So you can pray in faith believing God for your answer. Never give

up. **NEVER give up!** It's worth it to never give up and to receive your answer.

Also, forgive. That's one of the most powerful things you can do. You don't want unforgiveness in your heart and in your life stopping the blessings or the answers from God you're praying about. Also, how can the Father forgive you of your wrongdoing if you can't forgive others?

Be encouraged today!! Trust and believe God for your answers. He told us in the verses to believe that we receive!! **NEVER GIVE UP!!**



If we are struggling with any issues in our lives, as Christians, we should ask for prayer.

*You, O Lord,
keep my
lamp burning;
my God
turns my
darkness
into light.*



Psalm 18:28

Depression

By Traci Knoppe

Are you depressed? Have you ever been? We've all had times when we felt "blue". That's normal, but clinical depression is more than that. Studies show that 7-18% of the population will suffer from depression on at least one occasion in their lives before age 40.¹ If you've had one episode of depression, you're more likely to have another, and females, at least, report or receive treatment for depression more than twice as much as males. These statistics make clinical depression the leading cause of disability in North America.² These statistics alone can make you depressed!

So how do you know if you might be clinically depressed? Below are some standard symptoms of clinical depression. A person may have some or all of these symptoms; only your doctor can diagnose you. If you have any of these symptoms for more than two weeks, you may need to discuss them with your doctor for possible depression. So use these as a guideline and take your concerns to your doctor to discuss them.

- Marked change in mood
- Deep feeling of sadness
- Noticeable loss of interest or pleasure in favorite activities
- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Loss of appetite and/or weight loss, or conversely overeating and weight gain
- Insomnia, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping
- Restlessness or irritability
- Feelings of worthlessness, inappropriate guilt, helplessness
- Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism
- Difficulty thinking, concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Thoughts of death or suicide or attempts at suicide
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities that were once enjoyed, including sex

- Decreased energy, fatigue, feeling "slowed down" or sluggish
- Persistent physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive disorders, and chronic pain.

Note: if at any time, you have thoughts of death or suicide, you need to seek help immediately! Please, this is very important! If you know of someone who you believe to be depressed who talks of suicide, you need to get them to professional help immediately for their safety.

As if these statistics weren't enough to well, depress you (or to get overly technical), the fact that there are different causes of depression can certainly give you pause. Clinical depression is the main "cover name", if you will, for depression. What we often refer to as types of depression are technically categorized by their cause triggers, but all fall under a form of clinical depression (whether major or minor). Still with me?

So what causes depression? Scientists believe causes either to be:

- Physiological
 - genetic predisposition
 - neurological
 - medical conditions
 - dietary
 - sleep quality
 - seasonal affective disorder (SAD)
 - postpartum depression
 - Sociopsychological
 - psychological factors: low self-esteem, stress, etc..
 - early experiences: death of a parent, childhood trauma, etc.
 - life experiences: loss of job, poverty, etc..
- I know from my own personal experience, and from years of mentoring others with depression, plus years of study on this topic,

that the longer one lives under depression trigger conditions, the more likely depression could result. I believe this is caused by chemical changes in the brain. Scientists aren't even 100% sure on all the workings of this, but there are certain enzymes and chemicals in the brain that, when levels are out of normal range, persons show signs of clinical depression. Something as simple as lack of sunlight, which helps the body regulate and control the production of melatonin, can lead to Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). I have personally found that praise music, singing and positive talking to be helpful in overcoming depressive tendencies. I like to think of these things as "light" and depression as "darkness": Light chases away darkness!

*"You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light."
Psalm 18:28*

In certain Christian religious circles, some believe depression to be a form of demonic possession or oppression. Basically Satan playing mind games with you in order to keep you from living the life a full and joyful life serving God. Obviously science can not prove this demon theory – but then, Christianity and salvation isn't based on proof, it's based on faith. Even if one were to believe in the "demon-depression" link, the depression itself is still real; the trigger cause is just different than what the medical community recognizes. So then would the treatment also be different? Not necessarily, and in some cases, absolutely not.

If we are struggling with any issues in our lives, as Christians, we should ask for prayer. We need prayer warriors standing in the gap for us, but if you are feeling down or depressed for more than just a few days, then go talk with your pastor or a trusted mentor. Seek their counsel and guidance to help you through this *before it gets to the point of full blown depression.*

(continued on page 9)

Depression (continued from page 8)

I personally have struggled with depression a good part of my life. It began in childhood, triggered by some events that happened and it continued on into adulthood. I did not have every symptom listed above, but I had quite a few. Some of it I thought was just my personality, but the overall lack of joy in my life was probably the key in realizing something wasn't right.

I sought medical treatment twice for depression. Those treatments worked okay. I did feel better. But ultimately – for me, what really helped me win the depression battle was my faith. I don't say that lightly, and I'm not a medical doctor and I'm not suggesting that someone who is depressed should forego medical treatment at all! But I do believe that once we become truly sold-out, in-love and won-over for Jesus. We truly realize that we are sinners and what Jesus went through for our sins (for me). It's a sobering

thought. It also makes you realize how much God loves us and how true God's word is and how little we really need to worry about anything. How we don't have anything to fear. It gave me the courage to dig deeper into the "why" behind my depression and conquer those issues. God is with me – and you too!

Stress. Fear. Worry. Regret. Sin. Guilt. Shame. Pain. Anger. Unforgiveness. Jealousy. Bitterness. Pride. Lust. Gluttony.

What is it that's keeping you from living a full and joyful life in Christ? We all have had past hurts, pain and sin in our life. What is it that you have not dealt with and put behind you, that could be keeping you from being truly free to live a joyful life? Taking an emotional health inventory and really looking at where you are and how you got there, could be key in getting free from depression. A combination of

spiritual counseling, and perhaps even medical treatment, may be needed to help you get free of the "depression-demon".

References:

¹ Kessler RC, McGonagle KA, Zhao S, et al. Lifetime and 12-month prevalence of DSM-III-R psychiatric disorders in the United States: results from the National Comorbidity Survey. Arch Gen Psychiatry 1994;51:8-19.

² Murray, C.J.L.; Lopez, A.D. (1997). "Alternative projections of mortality and disability by cause 1990-2020: Global Burden of Disease Study". *Lancet* **349**: 1498?1504.

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It also makes you realize how much God loves us and how true God's word is and how little we really need to worry about anything. How we don't have anything to fear.

Traci Knoppe

Easy Cherry or Blueberry Cheesecake

From Linda M. Reddoch

Have you ever needed a dessert and FAST!? Being a minister's wife I know I've had to have fast dinners and desserts. Here's a quick and a very easy recipe. It's tasty too!!

- (2) 8-ounce boxes of cream cheese (softened)
- 1 LARGE container of Cool Whip
- 3 cups of powdered sugar
- 2 graham cracker crusts
- Cherry or blueberry pie filling (canned)

Mix powdered sugar with cream cheese until smooth. Add large container of Cool Whip.

Pour evenly into both graham cracker crusts. Then top with pie filling of your choice.

Refrigerate as long as possible before serving!!

Actually, I've mixed this before Sunday morning service and put in the refrigerator and it was perfect after lunch.



Basic Granola

From Karen Twombly

A dear friend of mine gave me this wonderful Basic Granola recipe. The beauty of it is that you can eat it as is or add your own favorites like coconuts, raisins, or nuts. My son loves adding chocolate chips to it after it is fully cooled.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup oil
- 1 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2/3 of a cup of water
- 8 cups Old Fashioned Oats

Stir together the oil, brown sugar, vanilla, and water in a large bowl. Add the oatmeal and mix thoroughly.

Spread on a cookie sheet and put in a preheated oven at 350 F. Bake for 25 minutes, stirring every 10 min.

Cool and enjoy! It's that easy!



Beloved, let us love one another. For love is of God and anyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God for God is Love. So beloved, let us love one another.

1 John 4:7-8



Making soap is
a fun hobby,
great for any
time of year.

Traci Knoppe

People are lonely
because they
build walls
instead of
bridges.

Joseph Fort Newton

Soapmaking 101

By Traci Knoppe

Making soap is a fun hobby, great for any time of year. My daughter Emily was born in July 2000, and shortly after birth developed severe eczema. It was in my research to find a treatment to help her, that I discovered homemade soaps and I have been making all the soap my family uses since that time.

Like most people, I was intimidated by lye. I knew it could cause serious injury and that made me hesitant to get started in soapmaking, but once I read-up on the safety precautions, got the necessary equipment and supplies together, I was ready to make soap!

The one question I get asked more than any other:

Q. Do you make lye soap?

A. **All soap is lye soap. No lye. No soap. No lie.**

The process by which soap becomes soap is called saponification. It's a chemical process where the fats, lye and water become the end product of soap.

Technically, after saponification is complete, there is no active lye left in the soap, if you have properly calculated your recipe and have the proper balance of fats, lye and water. If you have ever experienced a harsh homemade soap (i.e., grandma's lye soap), it could very well have been 'lye heavy', which means it had too much lye for the water and fat proportions and it did not all get saponified. Obviously this type of soap would be harsh and drying to your skin.

Thankfully, in today's world of technology and the internet, we have at our finger-tips, wonderful lye calculators that will calculate the proper amount of lye for us and make it very easy to even create your very own soap recipes! Squee!! Hey, and you all thought my kitchen sat unused amid take-out boxes. Well, I still like take-out for food, but my kitchen stove really gets a workout on soaping days. :)

A few warnings about lye:

*Lye does not like aluminum or non-stick coating. Lye really doesn't like much except stainless steel and it will play nicely with plastic, as far as mixing it with water for your lye water. So for soapmaking purposes: stick with stainless pots for the actual soap cooking; glass or plastic for mixing and measuring.

*Do not breathe lye fumes!! Even in winter, I crack the window over my kitchen sink and turn on the exhaust fan. Seriously – the fumes are dangerous – do not put your face directly over the pitcher when you're stirring the lye.

*Lye burns. It will burn your clothes, skin and anything else it touches. Wear gloves, goggles and long sleeves and long pants or dress and shoes! I wear older clothes and an apron. If it splashes, you need your skin covered! Keep the children away, or at a distance, during the lye mixing portion of soapmaking.

So how about we get ready to make some soap? First you need some basic equipment.

* **Large stainless steel pot.** Yep, it must be



stainless steel.

* **Glass or plastic measuring cups, bowls, pitchers, spoons, pipettes:** for measuring ingredients. Assorted sizes and types may be needed, depending on the size of your recipe and ingredients used.

* **Digital scale:** that measures down to .01 ounces. (I use a postal scale.) Ingredients are by weight, not by volume. Exact measurements count and you need a scale that tares weight.

* **Plastic pitcher** (for mixing lye water).

* **Stainless steel or plastic spoon** (for stirring lye water).

* **Stainless steel spoon** (for stirring soap).

* **Glass candy thermometer.**

* **Safety goggles.**

* **Rubber gloves.**

* **White vinegar:** In case lye gets on your skin, rinse with cold water first, then quickly pour on vinegar to will help neutralize the burning effect. If you are wearing your goggles, then you should not get lye in your eyes, if you do – seek medical help immediately.

* **Newspaper:** To protect your counter tops from lye spillage.

* **Paper towels/dish towels:** To wipe up any spills or messes

* **Stick blender:** Optional, but highly recommended to keep your arm from falling off from all that stirring you'll have to do to get the soap to trace without the blender.

* **Soap mold:** I have an Upload silicon lined mold, as well as a log mold; but you can use a cardboard box lined with a trash bag, a plastic tray, or just about anything. If it's not water tight, then line it with a trash bag. Be creative! I've used Glad-ware containers and Pringles cans lined with parchment paper.

* **Towels or blankets:** To insulate soap mold. (continued on page 11)

Soapmaking 101 (continued from page 10)

Now that you have your equipment, we need a recipe. I've created a very simple one that will only use ingredients that you can easily find at your local grocery store. How cool is that?! For this recipe, I've not included any fragrance or color. I use Red Devil lye that you can find at hardware stores or grocery stores. It's found in the plumbing area as a drain opener. You do not want any other product. Red Devil is pure sodium hydroxide and that's what you want. Nothing else in it or added.



I've created four recipes for you, all with ingredients you should be able to find at your local grocery store. These are all 48 ounce (3 lb cured) recipes. Just pick one that suits your fancy and get soapin'!

*Note: you can get castor oil in the pharmacy, or in the first aid aisle, at the store. I buy mine in bulk, so in the photo, my bottle of castor oil may look different than yours.

Kitchen Soap 1

Coconut Oil	10 ounces (21%)
Lard	10 ounces (21 %)
Olive Oil	28 ounces (58 %)
Lye	6.50 ounces
Distilled Water	16.80 ounces

Kitchen Soap 2

Coconut Oil	10 ounces (21 %)
Castor Oil	10 ounces (21 %)
Olive Oil	28 ounces (58 %)
Lye	6.41 ounces
Distilled Water	16.80 ounces

Kitchen Soap 3

Castor Oil	10 ounces (21 %)
Olive Oil	38 ounces (79 %)
Lye	6.00 ounces
Distilled Water	16.80 ounces

Kitchen Soap 4

Olive Oil	48 ounces (100 %)
Lye	6.05 ounces
Distilled Water	16.80 ounces

If you need to adjust the size of any of these recipes, you can do so by going to an online lye calculator, enter in the recipe ingredients and then change the amounts to equal the total amount you need. 48

ounces of wet soap will net me 3 pounds (36 ounces) of cured soap.

And some lye calculator links for you:

<http://www.soapcalc.com/calc/soapcalc.asp>

<http://www.thesage.com/calcs/lyecal2.php>

<http://www.cranberrylane.com/calculator.htm>

Once you have chosen your recipe, gather your ingredients. Then you need to pre-measure everything and have it all sitting in separate containers, ready for you to grab and use. This is critical and soapmaking is a wait-and-hurry adventure. You seem to wait and wait for things to heat up to the correct temperature, add ingredients, then stir, stir and wait for trace, then you need to hurry very quickly to add any fragrance/essential oils, stir and pour into the mold before your soap seizes on you. So it pays to have things prepared ahead of time.

Here are the basic soapmaking steps:

1. Put on your safety goggles, gloves and clothing.
2. Turn on the exhaust fan, open the window and/or make the lye outdoors. Make your lye-water solution. Let it sit, until cooled down but still hot, between 100-110 degrees. You will use your glass thermometer to check.
3. Weigh out your oils/fats and add them to the stainless steel pot. Yes, I said *weigh* out everything (see photos on page 12).
4. Slowly heat the oils/fats until only a few small bits are left unmelted.
5. Once most of your fats have melted, check the temp, if the fats/oils are between 100-110 degrees *and your lye-water is just slightly cooler than your oils/fats temp*, move on to step 6.
6. Carefully *pour the lye-water mixture into* the fats/oils mixture and begin to blend on High with your stick blender, making sure to not splash, and keeping the blender head submerged under the liquid to prevent air bubbles; or stir continuously with a stainless steel spoon.
7. As you blend you will notice the mixture becomes thicker, kind of like thin pudding. Stop mixing, when you can see a "trace" or line from where the mixer has been, then you are ready to add anything extra. This is what the term "trace" means.
8. Remove the mixer and using a spoon or rubber spatula make sure all the fats/oils have been combined into the soap. Now add your extras to the soap.
9. Pour into the prepared mold, cover with plastic wrap. If the weather is cool, then you need to wrap the soap in towels to insulate it from cooling too quickly and hindering the saponification process.

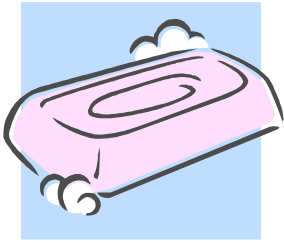
(continued on page 12)



Soapmaking is a wait-and-hurry adventure.

You seem to wait and wait for things to heat up to the correct temperature, add ingredients, then stir, stir and wait for trace, then you need to hurry very quickly to add any fragrance/essential oils, stir and pour into the mold before your soap seizes on you. So it pays to have things prepared ahead of time.

Traci Knoppe



*You've just
made soap!*

Congratulations!

Soapmaking 101 (continued from page 11)

Let the soap sit, without peeking, for 18-24 hours. If it's firm when you check it, and does not leave a finger indentation, you can cut it into bars. If it's still soft, let it sit another 24-48 hours and check it again.

You've just made soap! Congratulations!!



Why You Need a Scale that Tares

These are picture illustrations on weighing the water and why you need a scale that tares the weight (meaning, it will reset the weight to zero, so it doesn't include the weight of your container).



Scale showing container filled with recipe required amount of 16.80 oz water (1 lb .8 oz)



Ginger Chicken, Rice & Lentil Stew

From Wardeh Harmon

This soup is heart-warming, healthy and delicious. Serve it on after a day spent outside in cool winter or fall weather. It makes a large quantity — great for company or for wonderfully nourishing leftovers.

Even though the soup will be cooking in part all day long, it is still really simple. Begin with the stock in the morning, so it can simmer all day — developing a rich, hearty broth. You'll finish it off about 1-1/2 to 2 hours before dinner.

Make the Stock

- * bones from 1 or 2 chickens
- * 2 inches of fresh ginger root
- * 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- * 2 tablespoons sea salt
- * 1 onion, cut in quarters
- * fresh herbs, if desired
- * filtered water

Put all stock ingredients in 10 quart stock pot and fill to within 1 or 2 inches of the top with filtered water. Bring to a boil. Reduce

heat, cover and simmer for 6 to 8 hours. Make sure it is constantly simmering, to preserve a safe food temperature for the duration of the cooking time. Remove from heat. Strain to remove all ingredients, leaving just the liquid behind.

Easy tip: Use a pasta pot for easy straining. Put the pasta insert into the pot. Put all the stock ingredients in the pasta insert. Fill the insert and pot with water. When the stock is done, lift out the insert, leaving the delicious stock behind in the pot.

If you make the stock a day ahead of time, allow it to cool a bit, then store it in the refrigerator. Skim off the fat (if desired) before proceeding to the next stage.



Make the Soup

- * 1 onion, diced
- * 5 to 8 carrots, diced
- * 5 to 8 stalks of celery, diced
- * 2 cups brown lentils
- * 1-1/2 cups brown jasmine or basmati rice
- * 1/2 cup wild rice blend (or brown rice)
- * 2 tablespoons dried parsley
- * 1 tablespoon sage
- * 2 teaspoons oregano
- * 2 teaspoons thyme
- * salt and pepper to taste (may not be necessary at all)
- * meat from 1 deboned chicken

To the stock, add the vegetables, lentils, rice(s) and spices. Bring to a simmer. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 1-1/2 hours. Add the chicken. Adjust seasonings and serve. Add more water as needed, or for desired consistency. Delicious served with warm, fresh, whole grain bread or rolls.



Serve a heart-warming stew after a day spent outside enjoying winter weather.

Hot Cocoa

From Wardeh Harmon

Dairy-Free, Agave Sweetened

- 6 cups unsweetened almond milk, strained
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup agave syrup
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 teaspoon mint extract (optional)

Whisk all ingredients together in a saucepot. Over medium heat and while stirring, bring contents to a very warm temperature. Taste. Add more cocoa or agave as desired. Serve!

Herb Seasoning Salt

From Wardeh Harmon

Use this MSG-free herb seasoning salt to season salads, salad dressings, soups, sandwiches and more.

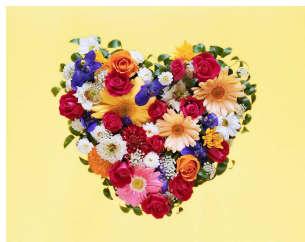
- 1 cup sea salt
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons onion powder
- 1/2 cup dried parsley
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/2 teaspoon dried dill weed
- 1 teaspoon dried sage



Put all ingredients in blender container and blend to chop up the herbs and incorporate all the ingredients. Store in a glass jar or a salt shaker in a cool, dry place.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.

Romans 1:16



For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38

Honey Roasted Almonds



From Wardeh Harmon

- * 2 cups whole, raw almonds, with skins
- * 1 tablespoon xylitol (optional)
- * 1 tablespoon cumin (optional)
- * 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- * 2 tablespoons raw honey
- * 2 tablespoons water
- * 2 teaspoons coconut oil (or other cooking oil)

Spread the almonds in a baking pan, in a single layer. Bake at 300 degrees, stirring every 2 or 3 minutes, until beginning to smell fragrant and a darker brown, about 8 to 12 minutes. Don't let them burn! Remove from oven and set aside.

In a saucepot, bring the honey, water and oil to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Add the almonds. Stir in the almonds. Keep stirring until the almonds absorb all the liquid, 3 to 5 minutes. Turn off the heat. Transfer almonds back to the baking sheet. Sprinkle the almonds with sea salt, xylitol (if using), and cumin (if using). Toss to coat well.

Allow almonds to cool. Store in an airtight container.

4-Grain Breakfast Porridge



From Wardeh Harmon

Combining four healthy whole grains, this breakfast porridge is delicious. Look for these whole grains at your health food store or health food section.

- * 1 cup millet
- * 1/2 cup quinoa
- * 1/4 cup amaranth
- * 1/4 cup teff, brown or ivory
- * 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- * 5-1/2 cups pure water
- * desired garnishes: unsweetened shredded coconut, raisins, dried fruits, chopped nuts, xylitol, honey, agave, shredded apples, and/or nut milk.

Combine all ingredients in medium size pot. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer. Cover. Let simmer for 20 minutes. When all the water is just about absorbed, turn off the heat. Mix. Either mix in garnishes in the pot and serve in bowls, or spoon into bowls and garnish individual portions.

Ginger Pear Crisp

adapted by Wardeh Harmon from *The 'I Can't Believe This Has No Sugar' Cookbook* by Deborah E. Buhr

- * 4 cups sliced pears, skin on
- * 3 tablespoons granulated or small pearl tapioca (or rolled oats)
- * 1/2 cup unsweetened apple juice concentrate
- * 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- * 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- * 1/4 cup whole wheat flour
- * 1/4 cup chopped almonds
- * 1/4 cup rolled oats
- * 1/4 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- * 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon (heaping)
- * 3 tablespoons Earth Balance (non-hydrogenated margarine) or butter shavings

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix together sliced pears, tapioca, apple juice concentrate, cinnamon and ginger. Put in square 8 or 9 inch baking pan. Sprinkle flour, almonds, oats, coconut and cinnamon over all. Top with shavings of non-hydrogenated margarine or butter. Bake for 50 minutes.



Great Northern Bean Stew

From Wardeh Harmon

- * 1 to 2 pounds grass-fed ground beef
- * 2 small red onions, diced
- * 4 cups Great Northern beans, cooked
- * 4 to 6 cups clean water
- * 1 6-ounce can tomato paste
- * 2 to 3 teaspoons sea salt
- * 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- * 1 tablespoon dried basil
- * 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- * 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- * 1/4 cup nutritional yeast



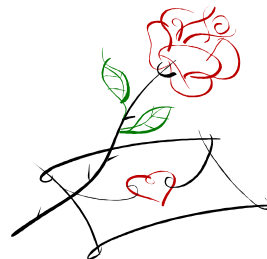
In a stockpot, brown the ground beef over medium-high heat. Keep it chunky. Add the onions and let saute until translucent. Turn down heat to medium.

Whisk tomato paste into 4 cups water until smooth. Add to pot. Add beans and all remaining ingredients to pot (except additional water). Let come to a boil, then turn down heat to low. Let simmer, covered, for about 15 minutes. Taste, and adjust seasonings if necessary. Add more water to desired thickness.

Serve with whole-grain bread or over brown rice.

1 Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.



Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three;
but the greatest of these is LOVE.*

*But you,
O Lord, shall
endure forever;
And the
remembrance of
Your name to all
generations.*

Psalm 102:12

*And did we
humans make
things happen
anyway?
Or were the things
we claimed as ours,
the times we
acknowledged
"yes! I did that,"
were those
moments merely
gifts God gave us
for not getting in
His way?*

Jane Kirkpatrick

When My Love To God Grows Weak

When my love to God grows weak, when for deeper faith I seek, then in thought I go to thee, garden of Gethsemane.

There I walk amid the shades while the lingering twilight fades see that suffering, friendless One, weeping, praying there alone.

When my love for man grows weak, when for stronger faith I seek, hill of Calvary, I go to thy scenes of fear and woe.

There behold his agony, suffered on the bitter tree; see his anguish, see his faith, love triumphant still in death.

Then to life I turn again, learning all the worth of pain, learning all the might that lies in a full self-sacrifice.

John Reynell Wreford,
1837

How To Wash Dishes

Help for the Beginning Homekeeper

Scrape all food from the dishes into the trash or other receptacle.

Rinse off excess soil from the dishes.

Stack the dishes according to kind. Plates, glasses, silverware, cups, etc.

Make two sinks of water; one with soap at the hottest temperature you can stand on your hands the other with clear clean water for rinsing. Add a couple of teaspoons of bleach to the rinse water, to kill bacteria. if desired.

Make a place on the counter opposite to where you have stacked the dirty dishes for stacking the clean dishes.

You will begin washing the least dirty dishes first and move to the most soiled ones. This keeps your dish water cleaner as you go.

If you have burned-on food, you may want to soak those pans or dishes while you are washing the others. Even if you don't have an automatic dishwasher, it's a good idea to keep a bottle of automatic dishwasher liquid on hand. Pour a little of this detergent on burned on foods and allow to soak. The burned food and carbon comes off very easily. Depending on how burned the food is, you may have to soak it for several hours, but it beats standing and scrubbing for hours.

Begin by washing plastic-ware. Wash well and rinse, sit to dry or towel dry.

Next wash the glass-ware. Use a scotch-brite pad or other small rough cloth to wash the dishes. Rub the

outside and then the inside of the glass. Be careful not to put your hand so far down in the glass that it breaks.

Get most of the bubbles off the glass before rinsing. Rinse the glass in the rinse water by immersing it several times.

Place the glass on the prepared area and allow it to air dry if you have used bleach. Air drying allows the bleach's disinfectant properties to kill bacteria.

If you have not used bleach, it can be dried immediately.

You can also rinse dishes in hot running water. It's not possible to disinfect them this way, but it does do a good job of getting rid of streaks and takes away the trouble of re-filling the rinse water when it is too soapy.

Next move to the cups, saucers and silver ware. Be sure to clean between the tines of the forks well using your scotch-brite or cloth. Rinse as directed above.

Replenish your hot water if necessary. The hotter you can stand the water, the better.

Wash the plates and serving platters next. Then move to the pans and cooking pans. Ideally, the pots and pans you have cooked in are washed as you are cooking and moving food form them into serving platters. "Clean as you go" is a great way to manage your kitchen. Having the pots and pans already washed before



dinner also gives you a break when it's time to wash the dishes and you are tired.

If you have cast-iron, be sure to dry them completely before storing them. Dry them with a clean towel and then place them on a hot burner on the stove for a few minutes. When they are dry and hot, rub some shortening into the inside and handle using a paper towel and continue to heat it for a few minutes. This gives the pan a quick seasoning between uses and keeps it non-stick longer.

If you have air-dried your dishes, you can put them away whenever they are completely dry. Don't allow moisture to remain on the dishes though, mold and bacteria can grow. If you are going to towel dry your dishes, use a clean, absorbent, dry towel. Thoroughly dry the dishes and put them in their storage places.

Now wipe down the counter-tops and behind the faucet. Use the dish water to clean the sinks. Wash out the sinks after you let the water out, scrubbing the inside of the sink with your scotch-brite or cloth. Wash out your cloth or scotch-brite with some bleach and water and place it in a small dish or other receptacle to dry. Dry the counter tops with your dish-drying towel and hang it to dry.

The Art of Letter Writing



I imagine that many women in these times have never given letter writing a second thought. Most of us learn how to write a personal letter in English class in around the 6th grade. But after that, do we try to improve our skills in this important area?

In bygone days, letter writing was the only way to correspond with friends and family. The ability to express one's self with the written word was essential for all people. However, the bulk of the correspondence from a family often fell to the woman of the house. She was the one who wrote family to tell of births, deaths, illnesses, occasions and everyday life. Life seems to be topsy-turvy these days but the personal art of letter-writing is never really out of style; just neglected.

As a child I remember my Mother receiving a letter from her mother, my grandmother, weekly. I remember looking at the beautiful handwriting and wanting to write like that. Mother would sit down and answer the letter in her neat script and I would always be invited to write a short note to Grandma to include in the envelope. We had a telephone. But it was ever so much more personal to get a letter. Telephones were for emergencies! I imagine it was so because of the cost involved in making along distance telephone call.

The familiarity of a well written letter in a beautiful script is one of the pleasures that we for the most part have deprived ourselves of by using the telephone and computer e-mail.

Letter writing can be a very personal form of communication. It can be more personal than the spoken word over a telephone. Somehow, when we are able to read a familiar handwriting and re-read it to ourselves, we find that a part of the writer's personality leaps from the page to greet us! A picture, a piece of gum or hand drawn sketch can be included in a letter to make it even more personal. Simply to know that a loved one has held the letter in his or her hand and has labored over it is a comfort and a joy when we receive it in the mail.

When writing a personal letter, it is best not to use a type-written word like a type-writer or computer. It is best to use your own handwriting, however poor you may believe it to be. If your handwriting is illegible, work to improve it to the point that it can be easily read. Even a neatly printed letter is more desirable than a computer generated letter. Your correspondence represents you in your absence. What ever you write to another, is there for all time in ink. It tells on you and tells about you. So let your aim to be glorifying God and your letter will speak well of you.

Let your letters be as if you were there talking to the recipient face to face. Don't waste time or paper being too formal or stiff. Speak to the paper with your pen and your heart.

Choose your stationary with care. It represents you and your thoughtfulness to the recipient. It doesn't need to be expensive stationary, a simple piece of white paper will do. But it should be clean and wrinkle free, and not torn or frayed. Your final product should be free of smudges, scratch outs and erasures.

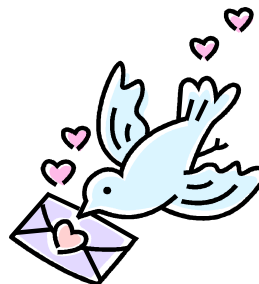
Practice your signature. It should be neat, legible and completely yours. Don't try to copy another person's style into your signature. However, beautiful handwriting styles should be emulated.

Find some copies of the old style of handwriting to observe closely. Look at the fine strokes and attention paid to detail. Buy a handwriting book that teaches the strokes for the old style of handwriting, called Spencerian writing. Or find a style that suits you and practice it. You will be surprised at how easily the writing comes to you compared with the struggle you may have had as a child in this area! Other suitable styles of handwriting abound, but you may find that a simple italic print is easy to learn and attractive on the paper.

Learn to enjoy writing letters and set aside a time each month to sit alone, perhaps under a spreading tree or by a crackling fire, and write letters to your friends and family who long to hear from you!

In His Grace and Joy,

Sylvia



God Has A Plan For You

If you're like us, you often wonder how you can possibly do everything that you have to do as a mom, wife and Christian and stay sane.

Sometimes, instead of helping us, homemaking articles, websites and ezines like this one really put a guilt trip on the ladies who come to read and get encouragement. We sure don't want to do that.

You need to know that no one has a perfect life, not even the people who write all the articles on homemaking pages.

All the great articles in the world, all the most beautiful poetry and informative reading won't make you into a good homekeeper ... or into a better person. Even after practice and work and real effort, you may be a good homekeeper, but still may be missing something in your life.

What God has planned for you is not necessarily to be the greatest homemaker in the world. What He has planned is for you to know Him and to love Him above all others and above all else. Whatever He has to do to reach that goal in your life, He will do.

So while you are reaching for the goal of being a great homekeeper, super mom, best friend, great wife or perfect employee, don't neglect the greater goal of knowing Jesus Christ above all else.

When you really know Jesus and have a relationship with Him, everything else pales in comparison and yet everything else seems to be so much more clear and meaningful.

May God bless you as you seek to serve Him in your home.

*The Titus 2 Christian
Homekeeper Staff*

*Love is
an act of
endless
forgiveness.*



Jean Vanier

A High Calling — A Journey Of Faith

When I started teaching women about being godly, keepers at home, there were very few sites online where you could go to get information. Today, there are thousands of places online where you can read, get encouraged and find practical information for being a Christian woman. Often these days, I find myself feeling a bit redundant when I talk about modesty, submission and a gentle and quiet spirit. Its usually been said and said much better than I could say it.

But God's Word is never redundant. It is living and vital and if we will allow it to do its work, it will convict, teach and encourage us along our way as we learn to be Keepers at Home and Christian women in the world.

I've made a list of God's instructions that are specifically for women. There are many more instructions that are for both men and women. These, however, are just His Word to women. Look through this list and honestly answer; "Am I working toward achieving this?" "Have I already got a good understanding of this command and am I obeying?"

I'll include my own answers, mainly so that you can see I am traveling along with you.

***Being a keeper at home (Titus 2:5).** ~ Yes, I'm doing this. This is my 25th year at home. I think even a woman who works outside the home can be a keeper at home. But, I've done that and I was never very satisfied with my results. I prefer to be at home and concentrate on being as good as I can at one thing at a time.

***Submitting to one's own husband (Eph. 5:22-24, Col. 3:18, I Pet. 3:1).** Yep, already doing that. OK, most of the time. Well, at some of the time. Maybe not as much as I should be after 27 years of marriage. I can see definite progress in this area, but honestly, I don't think my husband would answer that I am always a submissive wife. This is something where I need the grace of God so that I can have the Mind of Christ.

***Reverencing my husband (Eph. 5:33, I Pet. 3:2).** Reverence means to respect and give honor. Even when he doesn't deserve it? Especially then. I believe I am doing well here because I had a good model for this in my own Mother.

***Dressing modestly and femininely (I Tim. 1:9, I Pet. 3:3).** You know, this doesn't mean lace and frills necessarily. This part of God's Word isn't talking about style, it is talking about your intentions and motivation. Do you intentionally dress like a man to look like a man? I'm doing well here because I actually like looking like a woman and my personal style lines up with being covered and modest. It's harder when you have to make your style conform to God's Word.

***Expressing the gentle quiet spirit (I Tim. 1:10, I Pet. 3:3).** As I grow older, this becomes more like first nature. At first though I really had to concentrate on speaking gently and keeping my thoughts to myself. How are you doing in this area of being gentle and quiet?

***Loving my children (Titus 2:4).** At first glance, this seems easy. Christian women just naturally love their children, right? I think I do. But if love is an action and not simply a feeling or notion, am I loving my child in ways she can see and which honor Christ?

It's a journey. This life that God has given you is filled with trials and blessings and its a journey that unfolds before you as you travel. God has given you instructions, now it is up to you to possess them, understand them and obey them. He will help you all along the way, so don't worry that you won't be able to be the woman He intends for you to be. Even though we both have the same instructions, your journey won't look exactly like mine or any one else's, but it will be your journey to His glory, which ends with you being transformed into the likeness of Christ.

In His Grace and Joy,

Sylvia



Titus 2 Ministries

www.t2chk.org

Titus 2 Christian Homekeeper Ministry to Women

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