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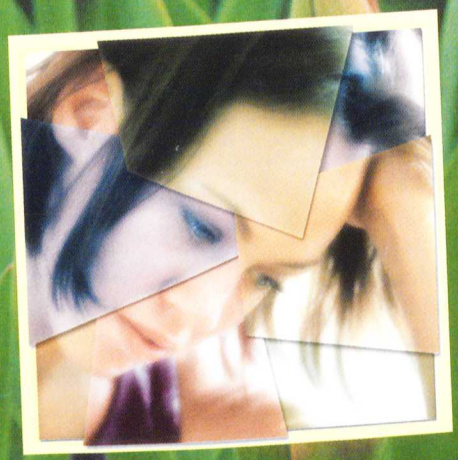
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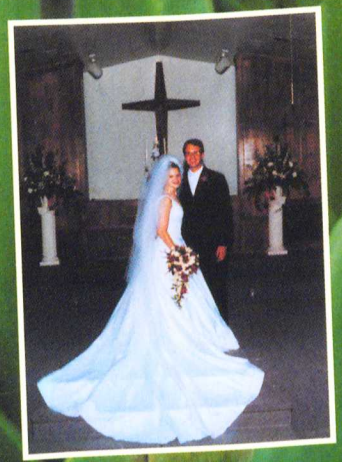
when hope is shattered

HOPE CHEST

MKs: Marriage of Two Worlds

WNAC CONVENTION PREVIEW 2004





HOPE

WOMEN NATIONALLY ACTIVE FOR CHRIST

Labor of my heart



Sarah Fletcher

HOPE SUCKERS

Michael bought them for our Sunday school class. A bag of bright, colored lollipops in delicious flavors. HOPE POPS. A little girl named Hope had been diagnosed with cancer. To fund research and offset medical expenses, her family created a candy in her honor. Knowing this, we ate these pops with pleasure and purpose. We also prayed for Hope.

Unlike Michael's treats, our Sunday plate often includes not HOPE POPS, but HOPE SUCKERS. Ever had them? You can find them just about anywhere. Sadly, even among believers. These individuals manage to suck the hope right out of everything. Generally, they're not hope-shatterers, just sidelines people, mere onlookers who are not personally involved in the situation. Hope suckers come in three flavors: DREAM KILLER, SOUR LEMON and BETTER BLASTER.

Joseph got a taste of DREAM KILLER as he shared his youthful visions. When even his father questioned the motive and meaning, Joseph buried these thoughts. Years later, as his brothers bowed before him in Egypt, Joseph saw his dream resurrected. DREAM KILLERS squelch great ideas and thwart the best of plans. They melt enthusiasm and hinder Kingdom growth. The writer of Proverbs declared them downright unhealthy. *"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick."* No matter, the DREAM KILLER market continues to thrive.

With pucker and pout, SOUR LEMON hope suckers pack a negative spirit everywhere they go. In John 11, when Jesus announced his plan to go to Lazarus, one disciple balked. On the very verge of a miracle, he muttered, *"Let us also go, that we may die with him."* SOUR LEMONS find pleasure in displeasure. Even praise items are laced with woe.

BETTER BLASTERS are, by far, the largest and longest lasting hope suckers. Cloaked in a better-than-thou wrapper, beneath their sugarcoating lies a condemnation-filled center. Job's three "miserable comforters" certainly followed this recipe. Paul's ministry life appears chocked full of these "critics on a stick." BETTER BLASTERS nibble at reputation, gnaw at weakness, and eat away at character.

How do we lick hope suckers? We hope. The gospel is all about hope. *"Christ the glorious hope," "Christ in us the hope of glory," "the hope of our salvation," "the blessed hope"* of Christ's return. Hope is the *"anchor of our souls"* (Hebrews 6:19). Romans 4:18, lauds Abraham as one who *"against hope believed in hope."* The Word admonishes us to *"continue in hope," "abound in hope,"* and *"hope to the end."*

We love. Hope and love—they're inseparable. Love hopes; hope derives purpose from love. Annette Aycock calls them "good company." However, loving a hope sucker isn't easy. The critic, the despairing, the discouraged are hard to shake, hard to swallow. Yet this, too, is the whole message of the gospel. *"Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you"* (Matthew 5:18). *" Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another…and above all these things, put on [love]."* (Colossians 3:13,14).

We share. *"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you…"* (1 Peter 3:15). It's hope that piques the interest and begs to ask a reason. Our glad times, sad times, even times of grief should echo hope. Hope sets us apart from the rest of the world. Hope opens a door for sharing our faith.

Life's lollipops are not always pleasant. How will we respond? As a hope sucker? Hope not. Call me a sucker for hope. How about you?

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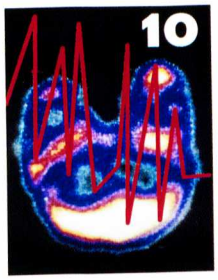
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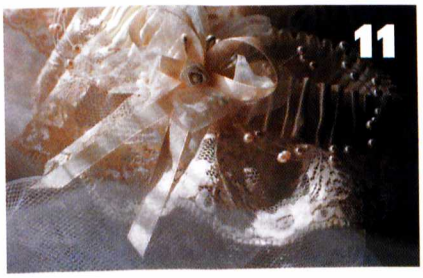
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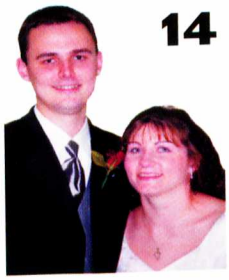
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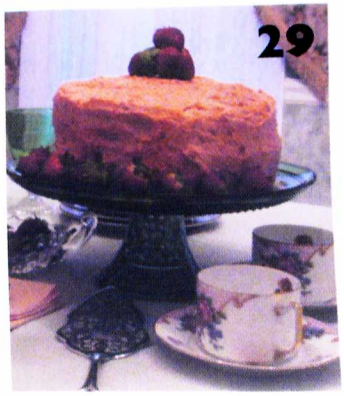












BLESSED

by Vicki Turner

Often times they stare openly at him. Not small, discrete glances, but outright stares. My son has a hard time remaining indifferent to these looks and accompanying comments—not from other children, but from adults who should know better.

Yes, my son is different than others on the outside, but on the inside he is still just a boy. Life is not easy for him at times. My son has a disorder called Ectodermal Dysplasia that affects the sweat glands, skin tone, teeth, hair, nails, and respiratory system. It is not, however, a disease that can be "caught" if too near. My daughter Kylie and I have also had this disorder from birth, but not to the degree that my son Kevin is affected. We would never have even known this disorder existed within our family had Kevin not been born. He is our pioneer and our unique ray of sunshine.

There is no medication, there is no magic cure. Yet ectodermal dysplasia is not holding any of us back from life. We live and love through God's design. His plans are far greater and omnipotent than any we could create. He knew what we could endure; He blessed us with three children.

We have all learned to adapt and set our pace. This is yet another lesson God has allowed us to learn through this disorder. Because Kevin does not sweat, we have learned to plan ahead and troubleshoot any situation. We have also experienced the truth of Philippians 4:13, that we can do all things through Christ which strengthens us. God has never failed to take care of all our needs.

I still grow impatient with the rudeness of strangers. Several times while on vacations or out shopping, people have actually pointed and made loud observations. I've often thought of placing a sign around Kevin's neck that reads, "No, he does NOT have cancer. Come and ask me about it." I would be more than glad to inform them about this rare disorder. Most people have never heard of it. (I didn't know it existed until it surfaced within our family's world.) Rather than a debilitating factor, it is a blessing from God to keep us close, to help us love, and to make us rejoice in life.

At twelve years old, Kevin looks different than society dictates. He has dark circles around his eyes; white, sparse, dry hair; dentures; and dry skin. However, he also has an irresistible sense of humor, a contagious laugh, and a charming personality. He does resemble someone in treatment for cancer. This, too, has proven a blessing from God. We often have the privilege of reaching out to those who have lost loved ones to cancer and who will come and ask us about Kevin. We seize the opportunity to explain how blessed we are and how great is our God. Now, what could be better than that?

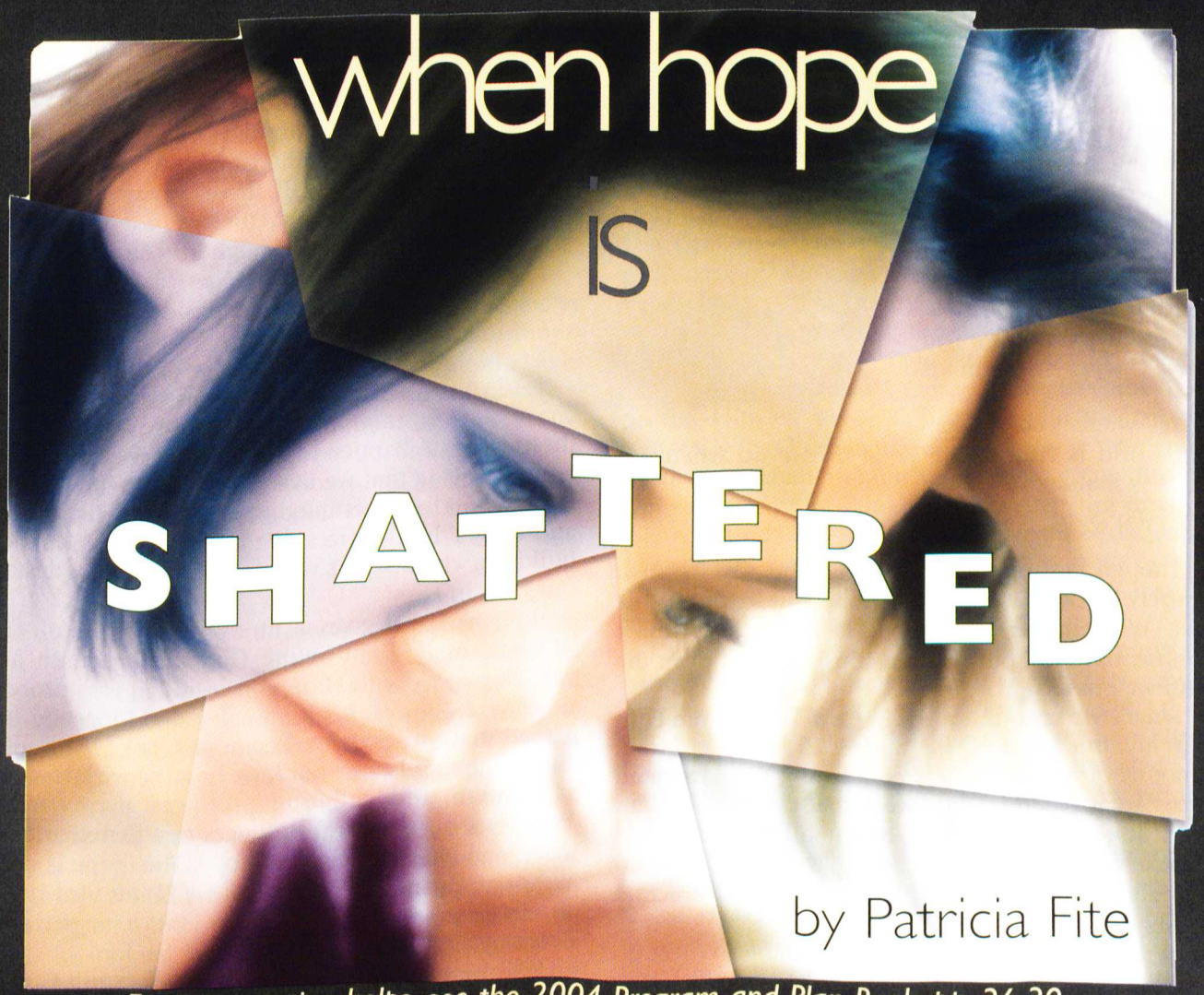
Vicki Turner is a high school English teacher from Carterville, MO. She attends Carthage FWB Church where her husband Joe is Minister of Outreach and Pulpit Supply for area churches. Mother of three and a frequent contributor to WNAC's Creative Arts Contest, Vicki's favorite verse is Philippians 4:13.



where is hope . . .

when the doctor says that you or someone you love, only has six months to live when sickness seems to plague you and no one can determine the cause when financial strains overwhelm you, creditors are calling, and you no longer see a way to make it from day to day, let alone month to month when you've prayed, wept and pleaded with a wayward loved one to return to the Lord, yet you evidence no change when you find yourself in a strained relationship, but cannot reach a compromise when a spouse says, "It's over. I've found someone else" when lifelong plans and dreams are put on indefinite hold when no one seems to be there for you when your world is crumbling

what do you do . . .



by Patricia Fite

For presentation helps, see the 2004 Program and Plan Book, pp. 36-39.

My soul wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him. (Psalm 62:5)

Sarah took things into her own hands when her hopes seemed to be dashed by age and a promise she did not see coming to fruition. Did Noah's hope ever become challenged when faced with the fact that the rest of the known world was destroyed? Though he had promises from God, did doubt ever creep in to shake his resolve? How about Hannah, who desperately longed for a child until she laid her hopelessness at God's feet? Job seemed unwaivered by those around him, though no end was in sight and most said he had every reason to "curse God and die." The prophet Jeremiah's hopes for Jerusalem were crushed as he looked over the carnage of a city now in ruin.

We now can see how each of these events unfolded through the light of God's perfect will in Scripture, but these individuals didn't have that information in their time. They were walking through life, daily, just as we do. I'm so glad the Lord saw fit to share these experiences with us. Why? Because, everything written in the past was *"...for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope,"* (Romans 15:4).



Yet where is hope when our world is crumbling? What do we do when our hope is shattered?

Where is the hope?

Though we may be Christians, and say we trust entirely in God, at times our hope will be put to the test. Wherein lies our hope? Is it in ourselves, a spouse, our kids, our relationships, a career, or in the stuff we possess?

Maybe we say our hope is in God. We've given Him our all, but we feel we must still have a certain amount of say in matters concerning ourselves and those we love. Still, when we come to the end of our own attempts and efforts, when all the relational counseling, the financial haggling, the specialist hunting, and all other avenues have been spent, we find ourselves without hope.

At that point, what choices are available? Where do we turn when there is nowhere to turn? Will we be rebuked as those in I Thessalonians.4:13 who were mourning, *"even as others which have no hope"?*

What are the options?

Although it may seem we've reached a dead-end, we still have several options. We may allow ourselves to fall into one of the typical reactions: disbelief, anger, rebellion, and often depression. (I call them "reactions" because they tend to be the processes we, as humans, go through as automatic responses to major crisis.) They are steps that we must walk through in times of crisis in order to become healthy. Prolonged indulgence to these types of responses creates a climate ripe for emotional, health, and often spiritual issues to arise and fester. In Proverbs 13:12, we are reminded, *"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick."*

What response would God have us pursue? He did create us, and obviously, He knows our hearts and minds. Within us He created the capability of reacting in all these ways. The issue is whether or not we will go through those trials and challenges, and emerge on the other side with our hope intact.

We have the option to blame God and rebel against Him because He allowed these events to happen in our lives. Or we can cling to Him, knowing that we live in a world tainted by sin, requiring us to sometimes live with illness, unfairness, and others' bad choices. We can choose to let trials build our character or we can allow them to destroy our faith in Him.

Romans 5:1-11 gives us an overview of the process of being made right before God through faith and receiving peace with Him. This is not an easy process, nor does it promise health, wealth, and longevity. It is a road that causes us to *"rejoice in hope of the glory of God"* in the midst of sufferings, because we know that tribulation and suffering produces perseverance. Perseverance (patience) produces experience or character; and character gives us hope. This hope is not a disappointment, *"because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given us"* (Romans 5:2b, 5b)."

Will we place our hope in what we expect God to give us, or will we place our hope in God, believing

that only He satisfies? This is the most important choice we face. We set ourselves up for disappointment if we are only using God as a means of working out our own will. But if we finally come to the point where we acknowledge that nothing in this world will satisfy our most basic needs and desires except God—not ourselves, not our spouses, not our possessions, not our paycheck, not even our intellect—we will find He is enough.

Lamentations 3:17-33 reveals Jeremiah's transition from utter despair and bitterness at the destruction of Jerusalem towards a hope despite the situation. What changed? Not his circumstances, but rather Jeremiah's realization that the Lord was all he needed. He gained new perspective. He no longer needed to fulfill his expectations based on human accomplishments, hopes and dreams for a city. He understood that, no matter what else happened, God was sufficient. God's faithfulness overshadowed any worldly disappointment.

Will we place our hope in what we expect God to give us, or will we place our hope in God, believing that only He satisfies?

We too face such choices. We can become disillusioned with how life has failed to meet our own expectations, how our dreams and experiences have been so damaged by circumstances and unexpected complications. Or, we can be reminded that despite circumstances, within and beyond our control, God is sufficient. He will uphold us; He will provide peace and joy when there should be none. He will give comfort to those who should be drowning in misery; He will be *The Faithful One* when others have abandoned us.

Christ is my only hope.

I discovered God's sufficiency as I passed through the dark waters of an unfaithful loved one. I watched him being carried away by the wiles of Satan. I did everything I knew to do, humanly speaking, to try to win him back. I, like most women, am a fix-it kind of person. If something needs fixing, I am up to the challenge. I knew everything would work out eventually; all I had to do was to keep trying and trusting.

Trusting in what? Trusting in God, or trusting that my efforts would pay off? My attitude was that of an avid bargain hunter, standing at a clearance rack looking and looking because she "knows" what she is looking for will materialize if she only looks long and hard enough. The problem was…I was not shopping. This was reality, and I could not manipulate the situation to my desired outcome. I finally came to the crushing conclusion that there was nothing I or anyone else could do unless the other person was willing to submit to Christ. Absolute helplessness best described my innermost feelings. I felt little in this world was reliable.

In a joking manner, I took up the motto from the song, "This world is not my home, I'm just 'a passin' through. If heaven's not my home, then Lord, what will I do?" Though I used it in a lighthearted manner with friends, the phrase contained a lot of truth. I came to see the world from a completely different viewpoint. People and things in which I had placed my trust and hope required reevaluation. My dreams for the future did not turn out as *I* had planned. The faithfulness of one I relied on so heavily, faltered. Financial pressures did not disappear. Loneliness came and went. I now saw this world in the temporal setting to which Christ had alluded. The eternal future looked much brighter and hopeful than this present world. I finally came to the end of myself and knew that Christ was the only hope for my family and me.

Trust His heart.

The words to another song became my theme, "When you don't understand, when you can't trace His hand, trust His heart." I began to seek God's heart. The Lord revealed Himself to me daily through the Scriptures giving me comfort and instruction as I needed it.

He met so many needs through faithful friends and loved ones. How could I possibly doubt His love and care for me? When all seemed hopeless, the Lord proved Himself to be faithful despite the circumstances. When I felt isolated, with no one who could relate, God sent a friend who had been going through almost exactly the same drama. When the finances looked bleak, He sent an unexpected gift or unexpected back pay. When I didn't know what to say or how to deal with a situation, He gave wisdom at just the right time and in the right measure.

Lamentations 3:22-25 served as a constant reminder that *"…his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him."* Though *my* hopes had been shattered, the *Lord* still loved me and had hopes for me beyond my wildest imaginations.

Romans. 8:28 says *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* At the time, nothing seemed good about the crisis I was enduring. I am sure God desired a different outcome, and so did I.

Choices made by others did not allow for God's best. The good from this bad situation is that my reliance on God has become unshakable. His track record is undisputable. I lean on Him when I need instruction and advice, and I know a peace that goes beyond worldly understanding.

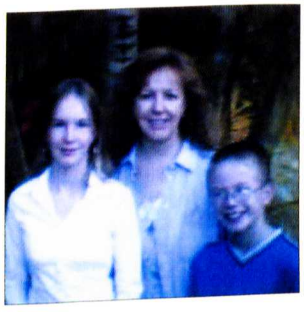
Would I have become as close to my Lord and Savior had I not endured these experiences? Probably not. I would never have chosen to submit to such horrors, but God knows the final outcome. Who am I to question His ways? My duty is to trust Him and apply Psalm. 62:5, *"My soul wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him."*

My responsibility to God is to pass on to others in distress, *"the hope that is within me"* and the peace that He has so freely given. In 2 Corinthians 1:3-7, Paul and Timothy shared with those in Corinth and Achaia what God had done in their lives so that these believers would also be comforted.

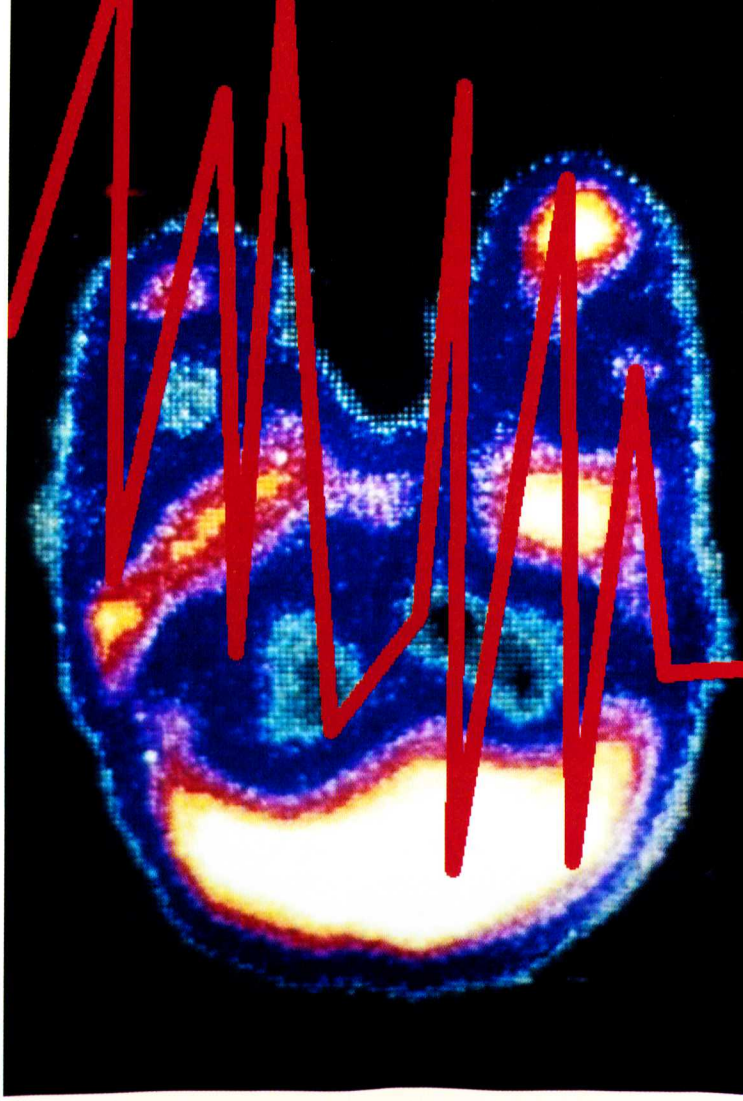
Share your hope.

Maybe your hope has been shattered in some way. How will you respond? Who will you help that no one else can? We are all uniquely and individually created by God. We all are given both a free will to make choices and the ability to learn from those choices we make. Someone out there needs to hear from you. You may be in a waiting room with others who need the encouragement and hope only you can share. You may need to share with another shattered heart how God has been faithful to you in the light of an unfaithful spouse. You may need to share how the Lord has given you peace and joy despite a loved one's waywardness. You may need to share with a disillusioned youth how God reshaped your priorities to do His will instead of your own. In whatever way you allow God to use you, He can turn shattered hope into something beautifully used for Him.

My prayer for you is the same one Paul gave to the church in Thessalonica, *"Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, Comfort your hearts and stablish you in every good word and work"* (2 Thessalonians. 2:16, 17).



Patricia Fite is ministering short-term in St. Croix, USVI with her two children, Morgan and Nathan. She teaches high school English, Creative Writing and Speech, as well as, 3rd and 4th grade Sunday school at the FWB church on the island. Patricia's hobbies include interior design, photography, watercolor, travel and time with her kids.



Coping with Chronic Pain

by Sue Winchester

Arthritis, neuropathy, fibromyalgia, neck and back disorders, cancer... One in three people suffers with some form of pain on a daily basis.

I am one of those people. My husband also battles this syndrome. By the grace of God, I have learned to deal with chronic pain. Personal struggle, discussions with others, and much reading has given me insight and a longing to share. I didn't learn all this overnight. I'm still learning. At present I may not be pain-free, but I'm definitely pain-less. Here are some practical things that you, with God's help, can do to help manage your pain.

Give your pain to God. You may be asking, "Why me?" or "Will this ever be over?" Instead of drawing near to God, you may begin to lose faith and become bitter. Don't shut out the One who can help you make sense of all you don't understand. Some people wait until they are utterly despairing and depressed before they finally realize God can help them even with this part of their life. One pain pamphlet I read disturbed me greatly. It suggested giving pain to God as a last resort—after you've tried everything else. I recommend this as the starting place for regaining your life.

Regardless of individual circumstances, pain disrupts every phase of life. You may think it won't affect the spiritual, but pain can take a toll on your faith. During those really bad days, remember the suffering of Christ, knowing that by *"his stripes we are healed"*(Isaiah *53:5b)* Can you comprehend His suffering, dying to give us hope of a better life than the one we may be presently living. Whatever has caused chronic pain in your life, He can give strength that surpasses your pain. Without His help, pain and suffering can consume you. God can help you control it before it controls you. Ask God for wisdom and direction so you can learn to function better in spite of pain.

Seek competent treatment. That doesn't mean going from doctor to doctor, seeking some magical cure. Find a specialist who will listen and work with you. Together explore treatment options. Educate yourself about the resources available and don't be timid in talking about them with your doctor. Pain specialists and clinics, medications, biofeedback, massage and physical therapists, acupuncture, and high-tech devices are available for pain management. For those who prefer a more conservative approach, homeopathic treatment might be an option. Literature furnished by your doctor, or information gleaned on the internet can be helpful in determining treatment choices.

You've given your pain to God. You've sought professional help and treatment. Now you must do something that may be as difficult as the pain you bear.

Learn to accept pain as part of your lifestyle. You can move on with your life in spite of it. Some may think this impossible. If you allow yourself to take the focus off your pain, you can be a victor instead of a victim. I got tired of feeling like a victim and being robbed of my joy. I not only needed physical healing, but spiritual healing as well. I needed to put everything about myself into God's hands and be restored. His Word promises that He will never forsake us; take Him at His Word.

Don't isolate yourself. If you are not housebound and your church is willing to accommodate, by all means go. Reach out to family and friends. If you relate to them your need for prayer and understanding, they will most likely work with you. Sometimes relating our needs gets overlooked in the midst of self-pity and whining. Not that you aren't entitled, but wallowing in misery accomplishes and changes nothing. When you feel depressed, time alone with God, Bible study, and pastoral counseling can help the "sun to shine again after the rain."

Exercise. Try to do even simple exercises daily to help reduce stress. Establishing a routine can give you purpose for going on even when you don't feel like getting out of bed.

Consider counseling. You may be prone to bouts of deep depression. That's not unusual because pain and depression often go hand in hand. It's easy to talk about the pain, but often embarrassing to mention feelings of depression. Fear of being misunderstood or judged "unspiritual" may cause you to remain silent...i.e. "You are a Christian, how can you feel that bad?" Don't be ashamed to seek short-term professional counseling. Talking to an objective person who can help you sort truth from lies may put you back on track.

Develop a sense of humor and enjoy the simple pleasures of life. Find things that make you smile or laugh. Choose to overcome and concentrate on what you have left rather than what you have lost. Your service to God need not be over. Remember, the Apostle Paul had a "thorn in the flesh." Though the identity of this "thorn" is debatable, it wasn't a deterrent to his service for God. Amazingly, even the most physically challenged or those in severe pain have found ways to continue to be used of God. They are prayer warriors. They make phone calls or send notes of encouragement; they write letters or cards to missionaries.

Share your faith. You are still admonished to witness for the Lord. In addition to sharing the gospel, what a testimony and inspiration you can be, especially to others

who may be suffering. Pray for opportunities to turn your misery into ministry.

Anticipate a greater hope. Our future in Heaven includes a new body and the promise of no more pain, tears, suffering and death. Hold to the unchanging hand of God; the best is yet to be.

It will be worth it all when we see Jesus,
Life's trials seem so small when we see Christ,
One glimpse of His dear face, all sorrow will erase,
So bravely run the race, til we see Christ.

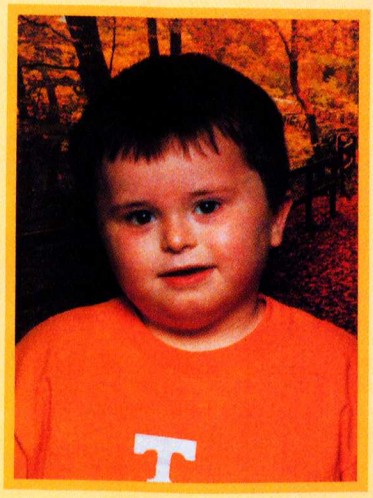


Due to complications after extensive surgeries in 1996, Sue Winchester suffered nerve damage to her neck and shoulders. In spite of chronic pain, she continues to serve in her local church and WAC (Fourth FWB, St. Louis, MO). Sue's first published work, "Recipe for Happiness" appeared in ***CoLaborer*** *30 years ago.*

Dedicated to my son Trevor, who was recently diagnosed with autism.

Beautiful Mind

by Angel C. Hall



Beloved child so innocent and sweet,
With the face of an angel and two chubby feet,
Eyes so brown, so near yet far,
Sometimes I can't tell where you are.
You have a place that's all your own—
A place where no one else can go.
How I would love to peek inside
And see your world with my own eyes.
God alone knows how you feel.
Your creation was a part of His will.
To be chosen as your mama was my gift from above,
Heaven and earth cannot contain my love.
So darling little boy of mine
Hand in hand with Jesus we'll walk thru time,
One day your secrets will be told,
The mystery of your mind will unfold.
Only then will Mama be able to know
That secret place you love to go.
Until that moment comes along,
I promise you, I'll try to be strong.
I'll love you till the end of time ,
My special child with your beautiful mind.

Angel Hall and husband Rev. Jackie Hall, have three children, two with special needs. They attend Greeneville 1st FWB, Tennessee, where Angel is involved in WAC and children's church ministry. She works part-time with mentally challenged adults.

Special Needs Need Special Attention

Do you have a special needs child? Mothers Angel Hall, Vicki Turner and others offer these helpful addresses and opportunities.

For ADHD

—Ask your doctor for a copy of "A Guide to the Educational Rights of Children with ADHD." (This pamphlet contains the new laws Section 504 and IDEA.)

—Contact the national help organization CHADD, 8181 Professional Place, Suite 201, Landover, Maryland 20785 ph. 301-306-7070 or 1-800-233-4050 www.chadd.org.

For Autism

—www.autismsociety.com

For Ectodermal Dysplasia

—Contact the national foundation at NFED, 410 East Main, P0 Box 114, Mascoutah, Illinois 62258-0114 Web Site - www.nfed.org

For Homeschooling options

—NATHHAN (National Challenged Homeschoolers Associated Network) is a Christian organization for homeschoolers of special needs children. www.NATHHAN.com

For All Special Needs Moms

If you would be interested in forming a FWB special needs support group, contact Rhoda Creech.

EMAIL: rpaulcreech@juno.com
PHONE: (478) 781-5502

Hope Chest



by Annette Aycock

To be sure, we had found treasure, and we were so excited! My former roommate and I were both engaged with weddings approaching. Imagine our delight when we walked into the bridal department of an exclusive store in Nashville and saw the banners: "Everything 75% Off!" The store was closing their bridal department and everything had to go. We each walked away with the perfect dress.

Later that night we gave an impromptu bridal fashion show in the girl's dorm at FWBBC. And the next night the department store had to take down their banners. Throughout the day, every girl who'd attended our fashion show went to the store and bought her own wedding dress. A couple of the girls were engaged; a few had boyfriends. But most weren't even dating!

So why did they buy a wedding dress? Buried in the heart of every little girl is a hope—a hope of a handsome man, a ring, a wedding, and a life lived happily ever after.

What is hope? It's to want and expect. Example: One day I hope to live in a big house. It includes wishful thinking. Example: I hope to become a doctor. But according to the Bible, only Christians can truly have hope. The Aycock family definition of hope is as follows: an excitement you feel when you anticipate that something spiritually wonderful will happen soon.

God is a God of hope (Romans 15:13). Because God sent His Son Jesus to die on the cross for our sins, we, too, can obtain hope. Jesus Christ is our hope (1 Timothy 1:1). Hope is a gift that God has made available to all who will accept it.

The Bible also teaches that apart from God there is no hope (Ephesians 2:12). Thus, those without Christ are without hope. As Christians we have the awesome responsibility to share our hope with the unsaved. We also have the wonderful privilege to pass on this hope to our own children.

Hope chests store treasures which young women collect in anticipation of getting married. As the mother of four children, three of whom are daughters, here are some of the treasures I hope will be included in their hope chests. Each item holds special significance.

> "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end [a future and a hope]." Jeremiah 29:11

For presentation helps, see the 2004 Program and Plan Book, pp. 40-43.



An Old Family Bible

Psalm 119:147; Romans 8:24,25

During my high school years, one of my best friends was a pastor's daughter. One day she showed me an old Bible that her father had given her. The Bible was ragged and falling apart. This was the Bible her father had used in his early ministry. He had preached from it hundreds of times, marked his sermons—dates and notes in the margins. She was so proud of this treasure.

The only way our children will know hope or obtain salvation is through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. As parents, our ultimate goal is the salvation and spiritual growth of our children. The Word of God will serve as the foundation on which they will build their own lives. Our lives must be a spiritual example in both word and deed. We must show our children through God's Word that there is hope. When the difficulties of life knock on our door (and they *will* knock—sometimes bang), we can send hope to respond to any problem that may arise.

Fine China

Romans 5:4-8

When I was a little girl, the grocery store where my mother shopped offered a promotion to collect a set of china. Each week you could buy a different piece of china— with the purchase of groceries, of course—for a special discounted price. Each week my mother bought a different piece of china until she completed the set. The beautiful blue and white, silver lined china is one of my treasures.

I want my children to understand that in life our focus is not on things. If God has blessed us with things, then they are to be used for His glory. I don't want them to put the china on the shelf and admire it. Rather, I want them to put the china on the table, make a pot of spaghetti, and practice hospitality. We are commanded to show hospitality to one another. We can use our homes to be an encouragement to other Christians. Hebrews 13:2 reminds us that the stranger who sits at our table could be an angel unaware. And most importantly, we can use our homes as a witness to those without hope—the unsaved. We can get people into our homes who might never enter the door of the church. I want my children to share their faith and never be ashamed of it. *"Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope"* (Psalm 119:116).

A Handmade Quilt

I Thessalonians 4:13-18

Tim and Pam love old things. While dating they saw an old quilt in an antique store. Pam immediately fell in love with this beautiful, handmade, expensive piece of art. A few months later they honeymooned in a quaint, snow-covered cabin in the hills of Tennessee. Imagine Pam's surprise to find a quilt on her honeymoon bed just like the one she'd admired! When it was time to leave, Tim suggested that Pam just take the quilt since she loved it so much. Pam was in shock at his suggestion until Tim quickly explained. The same quilt she had fallen in love with several months previously was now hers. Tim had secretly bought and arranged to have the quilt on their honeymoon bed.

A quilt brings warmth, comfort, beauty and security. Hope in Christ brings these things to our lives as well. Our hope distinguishes us from unbelievers.

Once someone asked me, "How can you have children in days like these?" True, we live in an age of war, disease, betrayal, a time when sin abounds. Yet these verses in 1 Thessalonians explain that Christians do not live as those who have no hope. Thus, we should not behave or react to the events around us as the unsaved person would. We will stand firm because we know and have hope. We will not be shaken(Jeremiah 17:7,8). We will share the reason of our hope with unbelievers. So, why did we have four children? Because there is a Hope. This Hope now lives in them. I want my children to react to whatever lies ahead of them with this hope that is now entrusted to them.

Old Family Photos

Psalm 146:5

Eating dirt, chasing a pig, sucking toes, stuck in a tree, covered in lard, in a pumpkin—these are just a few of our more colorful family photos. Our albums also include pictures of birthdays, holidays, recitals, and competitions. Photos serve as pegs for hanging memories. They remind us of special occasions, obstacles overcome, unique achievements, and times of growth and development. Photos help us remember.

I want my children to smile when they think back on their years with us, their parents. Psalm 146:5 says that happy is the person whose hope is in God. This hope that governs our family enables us to be a genuinely happy family. I want to produce happy children who will in turn share their happiness with others. I believe one way to accomplish this is to create good memories. Sometimes memories just happen. But, more often than not, you must choose to make a memory.

A few years ago we went to an amusement park. One of the attractions was the production of a family game show. Before entering the theater, two families would be chosen to participate in the onstage "fun." I knew that this fun sometimes included green gook running down your face! I also knew that Autumn and Breeana, nine and seven at the time, really wanted to participate. So, when the host began to search for contestants, I started jumping up and down and acting crazy. We were chosen! To begin our activities we had to don chicken suits. We then had to compete against another family, breaking water balloons with our "beaks" on top of our heads. Long story short, we lost. But, in the category of making a memory, I scored a homerun.

A White Nightgown
1 John 3:3

Melissa was a childhood friend and, like myself, an only child. Every Christmas season she would sneak and unwrap all her presents. She would then carefully rewrap each one so as not to be discovered. And Christmas morning? The anticipation and excitement was lost, perhaps replaced by disappointment, knowing that what she'd hoped for was not under the tree.

My heart is saddened at the multitude of youth who give away their purity before marriage. God has given each person a precious gift, meant to be saved for the wedding day. But, like my friend Melissa, so many are anxious to open this gift before the appropriate time. Excitement over what should be the most anticipated day of two young lives is too often replaced with guilt and depression.

Hope is pure, without blemish. As this hope lives within us, we too can remain pure. This is a message we must proclaim to our children! As each of our daughters turn thirteen, they enjoy a special date with their dad. He takes them to a really nice restaurant and challenges them that because of the Hope that is within them, they are to remain pure until their wedding day. They are to save this special gift for the one man whom God has planned for them to marry. As a symbol of their willingness to proclaim the purity of hope, their father presents them with a gold ring. They will wear this on their left ring finger until it is one day replaced with their wedding band.

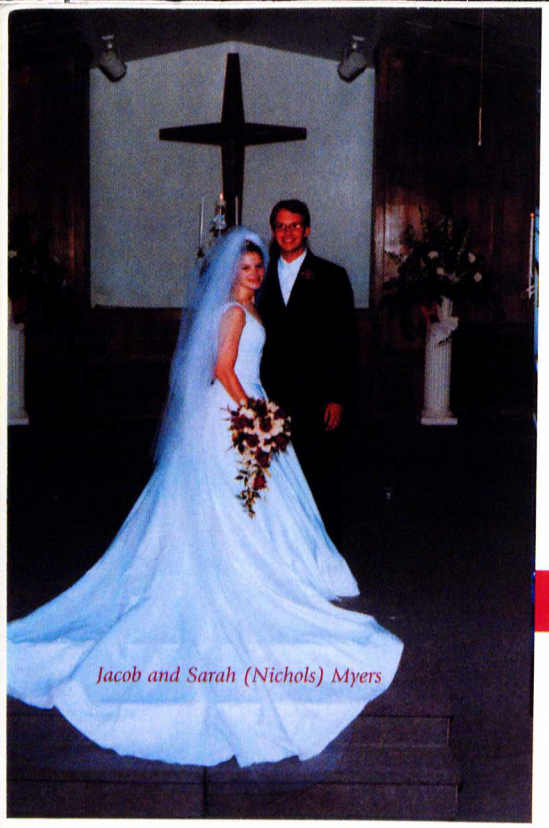
Hope for Life
1 Corinthians 13:13

First Corinthians 13:13 declares, *"and now abideth faith, hope and charity, these three..."* I would consider these pretty good company–faith and love. Hope abides. It endures. It is not something that will fade away or go out of style. When you are looking for that perfect gift—remember hope! You can share hope with a lost world. You can teach hope to the young girls that God has put in your life, whether a daughter, granddaughter, student, neighbor or other. Help these young girls prepare for the future that God has planned for them. Help them find a life of salvation, purpose, beauty and security, good memories, happiness, purity—a life filled with hope.



Annette Aycock serves with her husband David as a FWB missionary in Barbacena, Brazil. This mother of four teaches both seminary English and Sunday school. A chocoholic, Annette enjoys a chocolate chip cookie ministry. Because the chips are not available in Brazil, her homemade cookies (thanks to "care packages") are a delicacy that has opened many doors for evangelism.





Jacob and Sarah (Nichols) Myers

MKS: A MARRIAGE OF TWO WORLDS

by Sarah Fletcher

WHEN MK SARAH NICHOLS PLANNED HER WEDDING LAST SUMMER, SHE CHOSE RED AS ONE OF HER COLORS. RED BRIDESMAIDS' DRESSES, RED BRIDAL BOUQUET, RED FEET...

IN TYPICAL AFRICAN manner, Sarah and all her bridal party dyed their feet with henna for this joyous occasion. Friends honored her with wedding showers, African themed with animal-print balloons, picture frames and cake.

Brooke (Cousineau) Arnold, another recently wed MK, also chose to walked the bridal path in bare feet—in December. Her ceremony included no bridal march, no receiving line, and no throwing of the bouquet or garter. And not wanting to miss out on pre-wedding excitement, she saw the groom before the ceremony.

Newlywed Brooke Turnbough surprised her MK husband Matthew on their wedding day by memorizing and repeating her wedding vows in Spanish. "I wanted the wedding to be special for Matthew since his friends and church family in Spain couldn't come to the wedding" in her hometown of Huntsville, Alabama. She carried a bag of thirteen gold coins, which she gave to her new husband during the ceremony, a Spanish custom signifying "all that I have or possess I give to you." When the vows were completed, the couple placed wedding rings on each other's right hands instead of left—another hint of Spanish influence. The couple used a sword to cut their wedding cake.

"When an MK marries, the ceremony will almost certainly be unique," says Neil Gilliland, director of FWBFM member care, and a former missionary school dorm supervisor. He recalls one wedding in which both bride and groom wore white gowns, the groom adorned in a *bou bou* (long, flowing African robe). At another, during the recessional, the groom gave his new father-in-law a live chicken.

Planning an MK wedding can also be a challenge, especially when parents are far away. Deleen Cousineau admits this did bother her "a teeny bit," but then she decided to make the best of it.



Matthew and Brooke used a sword to cut their cake.



Sarah Nichols used henna dye to decorate her feet.

"I had a choice...and I decided not to stress out"—even when she arrived home two weeks before the wedding to find the cake had not yet been ordered. The Lord's timing allowed her to be with daughter Brooke when she mailed invitations and picked out her wedding gown. Email and phone calls sufficed for the rest.

MK weddings are times of rejoicing and reunions. (Over thirty MKs attended the Cousineau-Arnold wedding.) And like the MKs themselves, their weddings and their marriages are a blending of cultures.

Missionary kids are part of a larger classification known as TCK, or third culture kids. Each owns a passport country (USA), and a host country (where they have lived most of their life). Yet the MK claims allegiance to both. Sometimes she may feel American; other

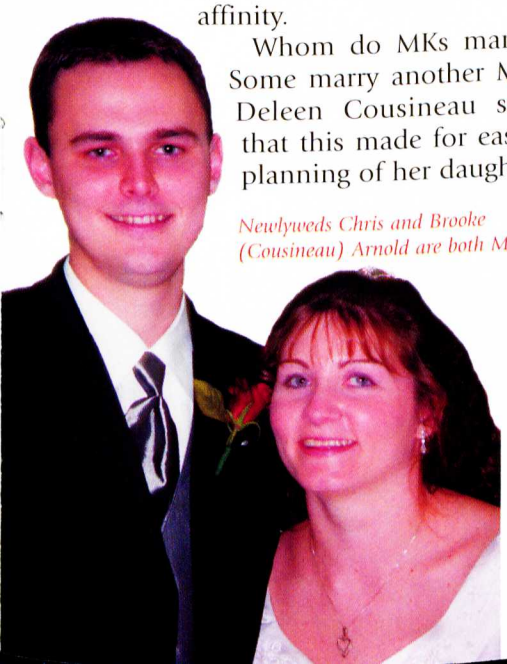
times she may feel African or French. At no time does she feel totally "at home."

> ONCE AN MK, ALWAYS AN MK. "THE MK NEVER REALLY GETS OVER THE MISSIONARY EXPERIENCE."

Restlessness often characterizes the MK. This traveler mentality influences their relationships. The dating pendulum swings from one extreme to another. Some MKs tend to "fall fast and hard," in quick, intense relationships. Accustomed to leaving, they concentrate on the here and now. Others tend to shy away from serious relationships for the same reasons. A sense of "we're always leaving" hinders the MK from establishing a relationship she "knows" will be short-lived.

Once an MK, always an MK. Dr. Gilliland points out "the MK never really gets over the missionary experience." Even MKs who've been married and settled in the US for many years, still claim camaraderie with this unique band. That's why occasions like weddings are such reunions. No matter the field, no matter the sending church, MKs find an immediate affinity.

Whom do MKs marry? Some marry another MK. Deleen Cousineau says that this made for easier planning of her daughter Brooke's wedding. Because her son-in-law Chris' parents were also missionaries, they understood the situation and "were easy to plan with." Yet even when an MK marries another MK, it is still a multicultural wedding.



Newlyweds Chris and Brooke (Cousineau) Arnold are both MKs.

Many MKs marry someone from their passport culture. This was the case for Sarah (Nichols) Myers. She and her husband Jacob, a native Oklahoman, met at Hillsdale FWB College where they both participated in drama. "Though Jacob is not an MK," says Sarah, "we hope and pray that someday we will be involved with Foreign Missions."



Mother of the bride, Deleen Cousineau smiles with daughters Brooke and Kristina.

> TYPICALLY, FEMALE MKS WITH NON-MK SPOUSES RATED THEIR MARITAL SATISFACTION HIGHER THAN MALE MKS WHO WERE MARRIED TO A NON-MK.

MKs who marry a monocultured person face adjustments and unique challenges. In a study of adult MKs and marital satisfaction, marriage to an MK or non-MK was not a significant factor within itself. When combined with gender, however, it became more significant. Typically female MKs with non-MK spouses rated their marital satisfaction higher than male MKs who were married to a non-MK.* This could be due to a general higher satisfaction level among women. It could also reflect the fact that often male MKs are more integrated into their host culture, allowing for greater adjustments.

MKs may choose to marry someone within their host culture. Several FWB MKs have followed this path, establishing permanent residency on their "missionary field." Though the adjustments are still greater than for two people who've grown up in the same culture, these types of marriages tend to flourish and succeed. The closer the culture, the easier the transition. For instance marrying a Brazilian or French national would typically require fewer cultural adjustments than marrying within Asian or African cultures.

No marriage in any culture is immune from difficulty. Yet the MK marriage mix often exacerbates conflict. MKs and the persons they marry should recognize, before the "I do's," that their union will be unique. Dr. Gilliland shares these suggestions as he conducts premarital counseling with our MKs. He encourages a non-MK fiancé or fiancée to read books about MKs. One helpful title is *The Third Culture Kid Experience: Growing Up Among Worlds.*** This book opens a window into the thought processes and common experiences of those who have lived internationally.

He also recommends that the non-MK visit the host country of her spouse, preferably before the marriage. Views of marriage differ from culture to culture. The

*Gilliland, N.R. (2001) *An Exploratory Study on the Impact of the Missionary Kid Experience on Marital Satisfaction.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Tennessee State University, Nashville, Tennessee.

**David C. Pollock and Ruth Van Reken. (1999) *The Third Culture Kid Experience: Growing Up Among Worlds.* Intercultural Press, Yarmouth, Maine.



Matthew and Brooke Turnbough enjoy Christmas in Spain with coworkers/family members Jeff, Susan, and Melissa Turnbough.

couple should discuss at length their philosophy and expectations of marriage.

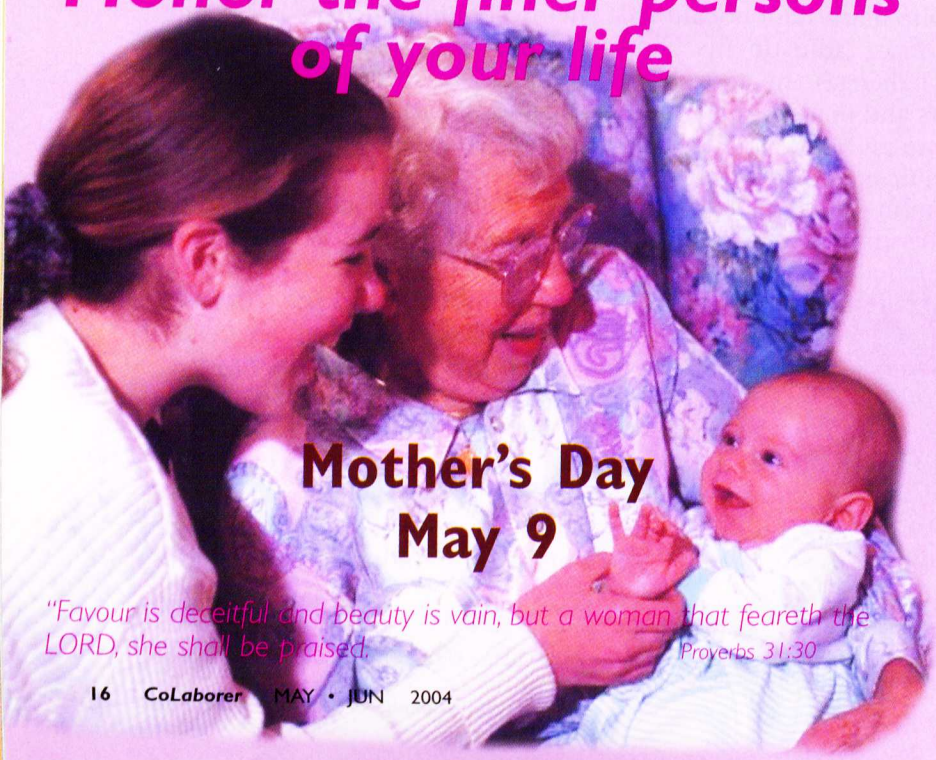
MKs who plan to return to the mission field should take into account that they will be going home, while their spouse will be hurled into a new culture, new language, and new situations. Missionary wife Brooke Turnbough is presently experiencing this. She and Matthew are now ministering in Spain along with Matthew's parents. Brooke realizes that she and her husband, " came from different backgrounds and must consider both in our relationship. Our wedding provided us with the perfect opportunity to begin doing just that."

6 WAYS TO PRAY FOR MARRIED MKS

1. PRAY THAT BIBLICAL NORMS WILL SUPERCEDE ALL CULTURAL NORMS
2. PRAY THAT THEY MIGHT ADJUST TO BOTH MARRIED LIFE AND PRESENT CULTURE.
3. PRAY THAT GOD WOULD GIVE GRACE WHERE NEEDED.
4. PRAY THAT THEY WOULD SEEK WISE COUNSEL. OFTEN PARENTAL WISDOM MAY BE MORE DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN.
5. PRAY THAT THEY MAY SENSE THE NEARNESS OF GOD AS THEY ARE SEPARATED FROM FAMILY AND CULTURE.
6. PRAY THAT THEY MAY FIND AVENUES TO SHARE FREELY WITH PEOPLE WHO UNDERSTAND THEIR MK LIFE SITUATION.

--DR. NEIL GILLILAND

Honor the finer persons of your life



Mother's Day May 9

"Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. Proverbs 31:30

No finer lady did ever live,
No finer wife did God e'er give.
No finer mother in rearing a child
No finer friend with a cheering smile.

No finer soldier of the cross,
No finer witness to the lost.
No finer worker with kids at camp
No finer light with oil in lamp.

No finer student in the Book,
No finer steward upon field to look.
No finer saint to make it home,
No finer sister at Heaven's throne.

—Wade T. Jernigan

Tribute to Tippye Shade, pastor's wife and longtime WAC supporter, upon her homegoing, December 10, 2003.

Great EXPECTATIONS

69th Annual WNAC Convention

July 19-20, 2004 • Kansas City, MO



Kansas City Convention Center

Hallmark Cards, Russell Stover Chocolates, shopping malls and a WNAC Convention. What more could a woman want? Kansas City will have it all this July. Join hundreds of women together in worship, service, and fellowship. Find out what God is doing through Women Active for Christ worldwide.



Don and Ruth McDonald
Japan
TUESDAY WORSHIP

Don and Ruth McDonald will combine their gifts in music and ministry through the Word to challenge listeners at the Tuesday morning Missionary Service. The parents of four children, the McDonalds have served as FWB Missionaries to Japan since 1985.



Lynette Morgan
Côte d'Ivoire
FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON

Lynette Morgan is no stranger to Women Active for Christ. Daughter of medical missionaries Dr. LaVerne and Lorene Miley, she and her husband Clint have served FWB's in Cote d'Ivoire for over 27 years and are now involved with missionary efforts in Central Asia. Lynette is a gifted communicator who will warm your spirit as she shares her heart during the annual Fellowship Luncheon.

HGTV
HOSPITALITY, GRACE, TREASURES & VALUES
WNAC

Hospitality: a lost art or a biblical admonition? Join FWB First Lady Debbie Burden and friends Monday afternoon from 1:00-3:00, for **"Show-Me HGTV—WNAC Style,"** This hands-on workshop and seminar will help you

- keep a spiritual/material balance
- fill your home with fragrance and flair
- learn proven methods and hostessing tips
- stretch your boundaries, not your budget
- utilize your gifts to fulfill the Great Commission.



Want to make a difference? **Women Active in Kansas City**, in conjunction with Reach That Guy, will give women an opportunity to serve Christ by serving others—feeding the hungry, caring for the needy, providing for the poor. Monday and Wednesday morning service opportunities are available. Think of it as a great way to begin or end the Convention.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT, CONTACT WNAC@NAFWB.ORG OR CALL 1-877-767-7662.

Great EXPECTATIONS
69th Annual WNAC Convention
July 19-20, 2004 • Kansas City, MO

MONDAY, JULY 19
Great OPPORTUNITY

8:30-12:00—**Women Active in Kansas City**
1:00-3:00—**WNAC Seminar: HGTV-WNAC Style**
7:00—**NAFWB Worship**

TUESDAY, JULY 20
Great BLESSING

9:00-10:45—**69th Annual Session of WNAC**
Debe Taylor presiding
Creative Arts Contest awards
Special music: Handbell choir, Mtn. Grove, MO
11:00—**Missionary Service**
12:30—**WNAC Fellowship Luncheon**
Tickets: $25 per person. Available from WNAC.
7:00—**NAFWB Worship**
9:00—**State Presidents/Field Workers Reception**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 21
Great IMPACT

8:30-12:00—**Women Active in Kansas City**
7:00—**NAFWB Worship**

EXPECT Great **THINGS FROM GOD**

To Register

Register online for both the WNAC Convention and the National Association of Free Will Baptists at www.nafwb.org or call 1-877-767-7654 for a brochure. Hurry. Preregistration ends June 18.

To Purchase Tickets

WNAC Fellowship Luncheon tickets may be purchased at time of online registration or through the WNAC office.

2004 Local WNAC Delegate Card

This certifies that _____
(delegate name)
is a duly authorized delegate to the
Women Nationally Active for Christ Convention.

Church Name _____

Church/City/State _____

_____
(local coordinator or local secretary's signature)

Important: This card properly signed and accompanied by a **$5 representation fee** entitles a local delegate to register for voting privileges.
Only one delegate per church.



a baby? a grandbaby? Wishing, waiting, wondering. WNAC invites you to join the journey of two women. Experience the great expectations of a first-time mom and a soon-to-be grandmother as they journal through the months.

mother

March

I still haven't really been sick. Yeah! I'm able to continue most all my activities. I am just tired, but I keep on going. I've had problems with my sciatic nerve and legs hurting. I guess it is just everything already moving around. I am now almost 18 weeks pregnant. My doctor scheduled an ultrasound. I'm excited. I'm hoping we can find out what it is. I think just having a baby is going to be a big enough surprise and change for my husband and me. I don't mind not having the surprise of whether it's a boy or girl.

I finally broke down and started wearing maternity clothes. I was trying to wait because all my friends said I would get tired of wearing them. But I was getting tired of not being able to find anything in my closet to wear. At least people might be able to tell that I am pregnant and not just gaining weight.

It happens again! My other cousin just found out she is pregnant too. All together that will make four new babies in our family this year. Three will be born in a four-month time span. Now we're just watching to see who will be next.

April

Today was my ultrasound. My husband and I got to the hospital early because we weren't exactly sure where to go. I arrived with full bladder (nurse's orders), only to fill out paperwork and wait—not a very nice process for a pregnant lady. Finally, the ultrasound. This one was even more incredible than before, clearer than any I've seen. I could find and recognize all the body parts. The baby had one fist up near its face. The technician told me what everything was and what he was measuring. He did have a bit of difficulty measuring the leg because the baby wouldn't stay still. Its legs were crossed for quite awhile. Finally, it found a new position. The technician said it was 80% girl. I'm not sure what that's supposed to mean. I guess we won't know for sure until the baby comes or if we have another ultrasound. It showed my due date as August 23, not enough difference for my doctor to change from my original date of August 28.



People keep asking if I've felt the baby move. Not that I am aware of, but maybe I don't know what I am supposed to be feeling.

I felt it move for sure for the first time today. I guess this baby likes music or at least responds to it. I went to hear my niece at state choir competition. Whenever the music started or the choir started singing, the baby would start moving. This is definitely a feeling that can't be described without actually experiencing it. Later, as our vet was sharing bad news about my dog, (cancer—only four to six weeks to live) the baby decided to do acrobatics. I guess it helped soften the sadness about the dog. I'm not sure what the vet thought. It almost made me laugh; the movement kind of tickles.

grandmother

My Dearest Grandbaby,

I think of that verse in Psalms that says you are fearfully and wonderfully made. It is amazing to me that He already knows who you are, the date of your birth, and the details of your entire life. Just know that He already loves you as much as He ever will, no matter what you do or don't do in your lifetime. In a few weeks you will have hair, and He will know the number of hairs on your precious head.

I have been busy making your crib quilt, bumper pads, and curtains for your nursery. Your mommy chose a plaid with all different colors, so you will be sure to like it. While making these, I also made sure to sew in lots of love. So when you arrive, and you lie in your crib, remember you are surrounded by the love of your...

Nana

"...thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made:... My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret... Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

Psalm 139:13-15

SPRINGBOARD

LEADERSHIP

HOPE. This word best describes "great expectations. This issue deals with several reasons why women lose hope and challenges each woman to share hope. Use *all* the magazine as you prepare for your meeting. If chronic pain, divorce, or other special needs have affected someone in your group, invite this person to share their hope. Invite others to share their concern. Consider your role as a leader. Are you sharing hope at your meetings, in the way you approach programs and projects? Ask God to give you overflowing hope.

CHALLENGE. Did your group take the "One More in 2004" Challenge? Discuss results to date. Encourage women to fulfill this commitment.

SURVEY. The WNAC Survey has garnered excellent response. Results will be shared at the 69th Annual Convention in Kansas City.

LEARN. Learn about World Vision's Hope Initiative: www.wvi.org (1-626-303-8811). Even if your group does not wish to participate or partner with this organization, the recognition of this vast need is an imperative for missionary prayer and support.

FIND MORE IDEAS



SERVICE

SHARE "Serving Up Strawberries" (p.29). Discuss local service opportunities for sharing hope by sharing food.

PARTICIPATE in **Women Active in Kansas City** at the WNAC Convention. Contact wnac@nafwb.org or 1-877-767-7662 for more information.

INVOLVE teens and young women in your service projects.

MISSIONS

SHARE the FOCUS article about the Provision Closet.

MAIL Mother's Day cards or notes to both home and foreign missionary wives with children.

SEND your group's contribution to the Laura Belle Barnard World Missions Offering through WNAC channels.

PROMOTE these events involving missionary speakers: 2004 WNAC Convention and the 2005 Retreat.

STUDY

SHARE the review of "Detours, Tow Trucks, and Angels in Disguise" on page 30. Carol Kent is the featured speaker at the WNAC Retreat at Ridgecrest Oct. 29-30. Book is available from WNAC.

ENCOURAGE women to do a Bible word study of "hope."

Coming to Kansas City?

WNAC
National Convention
July 19-20, 2004

PRAYER

MAKE a list of girls/women in your church. Give one or more names to each woman, as reminders to pray that this person would live a life of purity and hope.

SHARE "6 Ways to Pray for Married MKs." (p. 16). Name some married MKs in prayer.

READ "Unknown Zone" (p. 25). Pray for these and other students on missions teams.

We're on the Web!! Check us out @ www.nafwb.org/wnac

NEEDS

PROVISION CLOSET. Queen sheet sets, gift cards or phone cards.

WNAC OFFICE. Funds to purchase a G-4 or G-5 Macintosh Computer, Quark XPress software, color laser printer, and an electric stapler.

MONTHLY FAITH PROMISE support to fund WNAC office ministries.

WOMEN OF THE HARVEST MAGAZINE

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FEEDBACK...FEEDBACK...FEEDBACK...

FEEDBACK...FEEDBACK...FEEDBACK...FEEDBACK...

Dear WNAC,

We just received the Missouri Gem and noticed that WNAC is requesting help. Jerry and I feel we should not ask people to help us if we do not also do our part. Please take (monies) for WNAC each month from our personal account. WNAC has blessed, helped and prayed for us for years. This is just a small way to show our love and support.

Jerry and Carol Pinkerton
Côte d'Ivoire

Dear WNAC,

The enclosed check (10% of our offerings) is to be used as you see fit. We have a great group of ladies. *CoLaborer* is enjoyed by all and we appreciate all you do there. May God richly bless you all in His service

Pansy Cravens, Princeton FWB Auxiliary
Ontario, CA

Dear WNAC,

I really enjoy my *CoLaborer.* Our WAC meets once a month September through May. Each lady signs up to do a program, devotion and provide food for one of the months. I make it a matter of prayer as to my month. The Lord has never failed to lead me to the right one. Every time it has been my turn, the program featured that month has been exactly what I needed to minister to me as I prepared to teach the program to the other ladies. I am constantly amazed at how much the Lord has used those programs in my life, and how much he has blessed me through them. I believe that I can speak for each one of the ladies in our group when it is their turn as well. He has also used the articles and other components of the magazine to really touch our hearts.

I am coming to realize we have something very special at our church within our ladies' group. We come together once a month for fellowship, food, devotion, study and prayer. We never come away without being truly blessed. As we go through the programs and devotions, it gives us an avenue to share with others what God is doing in our lives, how His hand is upon us, and how He is guiding us through each day. It is such an encouragement to see and hear how God is working.

These meetings and our weekly Bible studies have drawn us so much closer to the Lord as well as to each other. We come together one in spirit; we pray one in spirit; we study and learn about God's Word one in spirit. We can truly feel the Lord's presence when we meet. Keep up the good work.

Terri Lovett
Madison, AL

Dear WNAC,

CoLaborer is great. Thanks so much for all the hard work you have put into it.

Judy Lytle
FWBFM Department, Nashville, TN

Dear WNAC,

Thank you for the nice job you folks do with the magazine. Several of us wish you would print things on colors that are more easily read. Some of the colors are so hard to read. Our older eyes are tricky enough with bifocals, etc. and we need all the help we can get.

Thank you again for all your work at our home office.

Marie Rutger, Oak Valley WAC
Fairfield , IL

Dear WNAC,

Our WAC really enjoys *CoLaborer* magazine. We use it for our programs each month. They serve as inspiration and guidance, but never a must-do situation. The articles, features and pictures are always interesting and informative. I appreciate all the effort and time that goes into making "our magazine" what it is. May the Lord continue to bless all of you in our National Offices.

Carolyn Michael, President
Madison FWB WAC, Madison, AL

Dear WNAC,

Enclosed you will find Walmart gift cards for the Provision Closet. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication at WNAC.

Rosemary Fairchild, Coordinator
Central WAC, Royal Oak, MI

Dear WNAC,

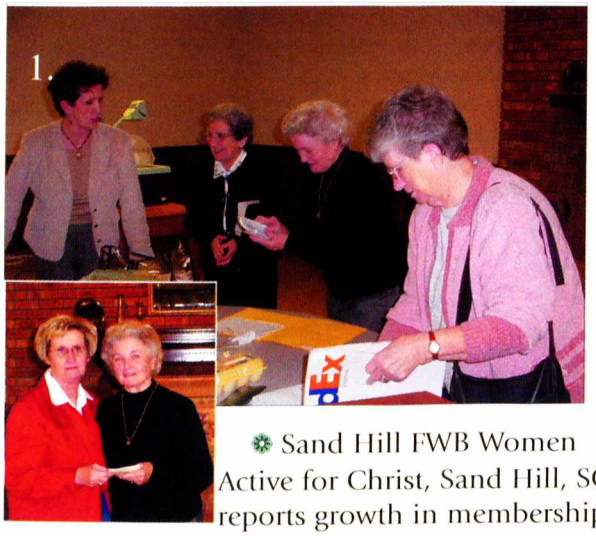
We wanted to say thanks again for the items we got from the Provision Closet during our recent visit. It always warms our heart to see what the ladies send for their missionaries. I was really amazed. When you did not have one of the items I needed, you had a gift card. What a nice idea and added touch. May God richly bless all you do for the cause of missions.

Bob and Brenda Lewis
Grand Junction, CO

Voice your thoughts and concerns about the magazine or the ministry of WNAC. We welcome all comments. Letters will be printed as space is available. Send feedback to: P. O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002

LABORS OF LOVE

"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father:" *I Thessalonians 1:2,3*



❁ Sand Hill FWB Women Active for Christ, Sand Hill, SC, reports growth in membership and outreach. In January 2004, Grace Johnson, retired school teacher/missionary, shared with the group concerning her 23 mission trips to Russia and, most recently, Iraq. Sand Hill WAC gave Ms. Johnson $200 for her ministry. The church is currently gathering school supplies for Ms. Johnson's next journey to a school of 1500 Russian girls.

❁ Crossroads WAC, Jenks, OK, gathered December 5, 2003, for an annual Christmas fellowship at the home of Annette Gibson. Women enjoyed fellowship, feasted on Christmas foods, and exchanged gifts. The group sang Christmas hymns and carols together.

❁ Both young and young at heart attended a churchwide Valentines Day Brunch at Woodbine FWB, Nashville, TN. The annual event is jointly sponsored by the church's WAC and Master's Men. Guests Dr. and Mrs. Garnett Reid from FWBBC provided the program.

❁ WAC women mourn the passing of two organizational pioneers. Tippye Shade, Oklahoma pastor's wife, WAC member and longtime youth camp worker entered Heaven in December. Myrtle Bloss Price Parrish, pastor's wife, active in WAC work in both Alabama and Tennessee, was promoted to glory in early January.

❁ Mary Neal and Opal Tatum, New Castle, IN, recently hand-delivered a check for $600 from First Bible FWB Church to the WNAC office. Each year, the church designates a percentage amount into a benevolence fund. From this, the congregation voted to give matching amounts to WNAC and Master's Men and a sizeable gift to FWBBC. Mrs. Tatum, age 92, says she loves WNAC and still reads *CoLaborer* from cover to cover.







PICTURED: 1. Grace Johnson shares momentos of her missionary journeys with Sand Hill WAC, SC. INSET: Coordinator Rosalind Collins presents a check to Ms. Johnson. 2. Crossroads WAC, OK gather at Christmastime: (1ST ROW)Glenda Wadsworth, Debby Arnold, Ramona Rhodes, Annette Gibson, Vicki Townsend. (2ND ROW) Marlene Townsend, Delores Sutterfield, Jill Janzen, Sharyn Willard, Karen Derryberry, Clantha Lawson. (3RD ROW) Beverly Jones, Nadine Hood, Debbie Whiteis, Lorrie Carey, Delores Bread, Charlyn Buchanan. 3. Mary Neal and Opal Tatum, First Bible FWB, IN, present check to Marjorie Workman. 4. Woodbine WAC, TN, sponsors a Valentines Day Brunch.

HELP! I'M A MOM

bright ideas for mothers from mothers

Bed wetting, thumb sucking, nail biting. Help!

Bed wetting, nail biting, and thumb sucking are common problems that many mothers face. Like all parenting issues, these should be addressed with prayer. Consider too, the following information and suggestions of a pediatric health professional.

BED WETTING (nocturnal enuresis) refers to nighttime involuntary urination in children six and older. Bed wetting is a common childhood condition. An estimated 30% of children continue to bed wet at age five. 10% continue to wet at 10 years and 2% at age fifteen.

There are two types of bed wetting—primary and secondary. With primary nocturnal enuresis, the child has never established nighttime urinary control for longer than six months. Secondary nocturnal enuresis pertains to a child who has been dry at nighttime for more than six months and then begins to wet. A child with secondary nocturnal enuresis should be evaluated by her/his primary health care provider to rule out urinary tract infection or other medical problems.

Several possible causes for primary nocturnal enuresis are delayed neurological development (Child is unable to control bladder contractions and will most likely have day time urgency and frequency) or small bladder (Child just needs time for her/his bladder to grow equal with age—usually around age eight). One theory suggests it results from a decreased secretion of ADH, an antidiuretic hormone. Children who are dry may have increased ADH during sleep, causing a decrease in urination at night. Genetics are thought to play a most important role in the bed wetting dilemma. An estimated 70% of bed wetters have a parent who bed wet as a child.

Several therapies are available. One of the most effective treatments is a moisture alarm such as Wet Stop, Sleep Dry, or Malem. These devices have a moisture sensor that attaches to the child's underwear and is connected to a buzzer that sounds at the first drop of moisture. This awakens the child giving her/him time to go to the bathroom. A child may need to wear the alarm for several months, but may be discontinued after the child has been dry at night for three consecutive weeks. Along with the alarm, discourage fluids two hours before bedtime. This should be done in a gentle way. Do not deny a thirsty child a drink of water. Avoid caffeinated beverages and certain foods such as dairy products, citrus juices and chocolate just prior to bedtime. Be sure your child agrees with the above diet restrictions. Do not force this upon your child. Another helpful hint is to have your child urinate just before going to bed. Always protect your child's bed with special waterproof mattress covers and pads that are washable. This will help eliminate odor.

Several prescription medications can be used as treatment for bed wetting. However it is preferred that these medications be reserved for children six years and older. One of the more frequently prescribed medications is DDAVP, a manmade version of ADH the antidiuretic hormone. DDAVP is also recommended as short-term therapy for camping trips and sleepovers. Other medications include Imipramine and Ditropan (usually reserved for children with daytime urinary frequency/urgency too.)

Bed wetting affects approximately five to seven million children in the United States. Any child who continues to bed wet at age six should be evaluated by a health care provider who can guide the parent and child on the most appropriate therapy.

Parents and children should be informed that bed wetting is NOT the child's fault. Bed wetting is never intentional; punishing children for accidents is inappropriate. Bed wetting can create psychosocial problems, causing poor self-esteem, social isolation, shame and guilt, affecting the child for years to come. This is why it is so important that all family members (including grandparents) understand that bed wetting is not the child's fault. Teasing and name calling should never be tolerated. Bed wetting is a problem that is self-limiting and one the child will eventually outgrow.

For bed wetting alarms and supplies contact the Bed wetting store Phone: 800-214-9605 or online at www.bedwettingstore.com or ask your health provider.

THUMB SUCKING may begin before birth or shortly thereafter. The best prevention for thumb sucking is to substitute a pacifier during the newborn period. Thumb sucking is the most common childhood habit. At four years of age 15% of children still thumb suck. This is considered a normal behavior. Never try to force your child to stop. This will only encourage her/him to dig in their heels. It will become a power struggle.

After age four, as the child matures and understands the problems associated with prolonged thumb sucking, she/he may be ready to give it up. Explain how the thumb looks, all wrinkled and callused. Have the child look in the mirror at her/his teeth. A trip to your child's dentist, who may be more persuasive to your child, may also help. Enlist your child's help. Explain that you know the thumb sucking is a habit the child may be unaware he/she is doing. Ask your child's permission to give a gentle reminder when you see her/him sucking the thumb. Remember to give praise whenever you observe she/he is not sucking the thumb. Try placing a sticker of your child's choice on the thumb. Even a band-aid may work. The whole family should be informed of these parent/child agreements. No one should be allowed to tease or use name calling tactics. For a reminder during sleep, you may want to obtain a plastic thumb guard that fits over the thumb and attaches to the wrist. Purchase these from your local pharmacy, pediatric dentist or online at www.medetal.com If your child continues to thumb suck at age six, have the child evaluated by her/his dentist. The dentist may need to insert an orthodontic prosthesis in the upper portion of your child's mouth. This will interfere with the thumb sucking and hopefully help prevent future expensive orthodontic procedures.

NAIL BITING (onychophagy) usually begins at age three to six years. The peak age for nail biting is thirteen. Nail biting is thought to be a nervous mannerism. As with bed wetting, there is often a positive family history of nail biters. Unlike thumb suckers who select one thumb, a nail biter bites all ten fingernails with no preference for one hand over the other. Nail biters may chew the cuticle or the skin around the nail or even pick at the skin, causing frequent bleeding.

Unfortunately there is no single cure for nail biting. Good hand washing, including the use of a nailbrush, may help prevent infections around the nail. Frequent moisturizers applied to the nail area may decrease skin roughness and hopefully decrease the desire to pick or bite. If bleeding occurs, treat the area with antibiotic ointment and a band-aid.

When the child is mature enough, provide her/him with nail care products (file, clippers, special antibacterial hand soap and moisturizing hand creams). These may help motivate your child to decrease the nail biting. Gum chewing may also be helpful.

The best approach is positive reinforcement through praise and giving recognition to the child's efforts to decrease the nail biting behavior.

Nancy Mosley, RN, PNP
Cape Girardeau, MO

REFERENCES: "It's Not Your Child's Fault" (Pamphlet). The National Bladder Foundation. P.O. Box 1095, Ridgefield, CT 06877. • Schmitt, Brandon D. MD. *Instructions For Pediatric Patients, 2nd Edition.* W.B. Saunders Company, 1999. • Burnes, Catherine, PhD, RN, CPNP; Barber, MS, RNC, CPNP;Brady, Margaret A. PhD, RN, CPNP; Dunn, Ardys, PhD, RN, PNP. *Pediatric Primary Care.* W.B. Saunders Company, 1996. • "Thumb Sucking" (Pamphlet). National Mental Health Association 1021 Prince Street, Alexandria, Virginia. • Levine, Melvin D. M.D., Carey, William B. M.D., Crocker, Allen C. *Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics, 2nd. Edition.* W.B. Saunders Company, 1992.

NEXT ISSUE: Dealing with Bullies.



DEBE'S DELIGHTS

"thy commandments are my delights."
Psalm 119:143b

by

Debe Taylor
WNAC President

MY HOPE

"My only hope is You, Jesus,
My only hope is You.
From early in the morning 'til late at night,
My only hope is You."

"My Only Hope" by John Paul Trimble
c. 1989 Megin's College Fund

As I stood singing that song with our congregation, God began to speak to me. It was as if He were asking, "Am I your hope?" What I discovered that day gave me great peace and comfort.

God is my hope in testing. Joseph was sold into slavery at a young age, badgered by Potiphar's wife, unjustly thrown into prison and, for a time, forgotten. Yet, he knew his hope was in God. He told Mrs. Potiphar, *"how...can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"* (Genesis 39:9). Refusing to turn on the One he trusted, he fled from her presence. Years later, when his brothers came to Egypt, he once again shared his hope in God. *"And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive"* (Genesis 50:19-20).

Now, *my* sisters did not sell me into slavery, although I am sure they thought about it a few times, but I have been tested throughout my life. I have found that the times I trusted the Lord were the times I experienced victory. As I look back over the years, I echo the words of the prophet Jeremiah, *"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is"* (Jeremiah 17:7). My hope is in God in testing.

God is my hope in tragedy. As Job contemplated all that had transpired in a short time in his life—death of seven sons and three daughters and the loss of all his livestock (wealth)—he still expressed hope in God. *"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold..."* (Job 19:25-27b). Tragedy and heartache have brought me to my knees and I have felt despair. During those times, the words of the Psalmist David would come to mind, *"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God"* (Psalm 42:11). My hope is in God in tragedy.

God is my hope in troubled times. Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah (you may know them better as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego) had been carried into captivity. Finding themselves in a pagan land, subjects to a heathen king, and facing an edict they could not obey, they expressed their hope in God. *"...O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God who we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."* (Daniel 3:16-18). They refused to be intimidated into placing their trust or hope in any other person or thing.

David and I flew to Jacksonville, Florida exactly one week after 9/11. I was amazed at the people who tried to get us not to make the trip. What if something happened? Our answer was, "If something happens, we are in God's hands." I refuse to let faceless individuals dictate my life. *"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"* (Psalm 27:1). My hope is in God for the troubled times.

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost" (Romans 15:13).

Adapted from a message shared with Georgia's WAC, March 2004



Into The Unknown Zone

"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." *1 Corinthians 16:9*

THIS SUMMER, A TEAM OF STUDENTS WILL VENTURE INTO THE UNKNOWN ZONE. Headed for the 10-40 Window, the group will be working in two Central Asian countries.

Going in, the group knows this will not be an easy task. They will be ministering in servant-type roles, working in youth camps where living conditions are poor, amenities are few, and restrictions are many.

We asked some of the girls to share their great expectations for the summer.

The idea of simply going to Central Asia makes me so excited. Throughout life I've learned not to set my expectations too high, but I can't seem to help it with this trip. I feel God calling me into ministry, where or how I do not know. This trip may be a very important precursor to God's plans for my life. How exciting if this proves a long-term opportunity to serve God.

Naturally I am expecting a new and exciting adventure. A different place to see, an amazing culture to experience, a challenging living environment, a whole new world unlike my own. I am expecting my heart to be opened to a group of people. This can only happen through personal contact. I am expecting to be spiritually challenged in the strength of my own faith, in my will to fully serve God wherever and however he needs me, and in sharing God's love through service. Though things may turn out differently than I expect, I do hope God's love will shine through all that we do in Central Asia this summer.

Michelle Haas

Finding I was accepted for the Central Asia trip, I was totally excited, naturally. But after the initial "high," I also realized the very threatening and dangerous aspects of a trip within a restricted access country. Having grown up overseas in Africa, I am used to being involved in different cultures, but none where my freedom of sharing Christ is forbidden. It's a very strange feeling. Yet, I am so excited to see what God has in store and wants to teach us in those three weeks. Sometimes serving God does mean stepping out of our comfort and even safety zones. But we must believe that the benefits of serving God, no matter where, will far outweigh the fears or hard times we face.

Autumn Morgan

I am very excited to be part of what God is doing in restricted access countries. I look forward to the opportunity to minister to those who have never heard the gospel. I expect this trip to help me better realize the needs of Central Asia and how I can be a part of meeting those needs in the future.

Hollie Hubbard

I really don't know what to expect this summer. I'm both nervous and excited. Since the focus is geared toward the service aspect of mission work, I hope we are able to make a strong impression through our actions. I'm praying that God will continue to open doors in Central Asia. This is an awesome experience and I am glad to be a part.

Jeanette Wilson

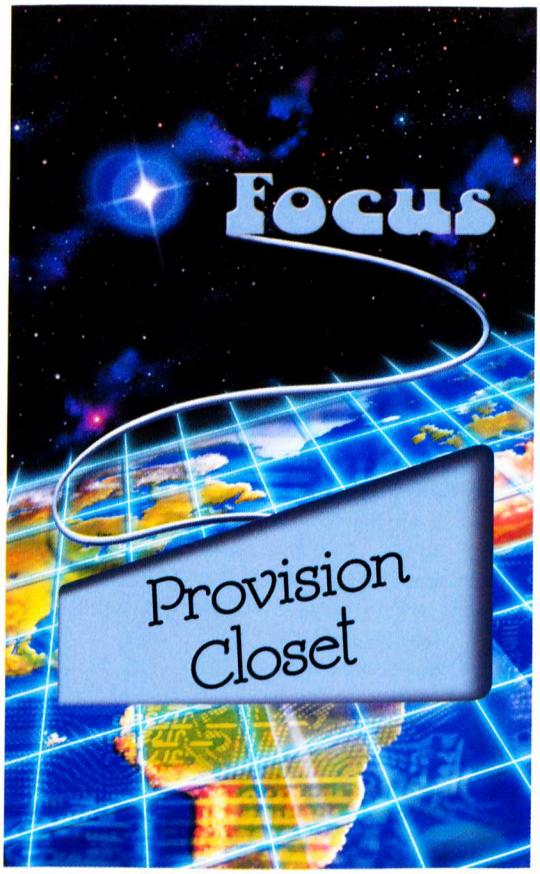
As a seventeen-year-old girl, I have many expectations about the future. What will I do? Where will I be? What will I be like? These are hard questions. One thing I know; I will only get there as I am on mission with God. This summer I have the tremendous opportunity to experience life in a Middle Eastern country. This journey, made solely to glorify God, will be different from any experienced before. Though I expect to see and be part of a culture completely opposite from my own, I can only believe that God's expectations are even above my thought processes. Uzbekistan is 88% Muslim, 9% Eastern Orthodox, and 3% other. Other? Does that mean Christian? Sadly, I think not. My expectations are to somehow show this world who God actually is.

Habakkuk 2:19 says, *"Woe unto him that saith unto the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it."* I want to tell people that our God not only has breath, but He also gave it to us. He is real and loves us with a love no man can create or take away. God purposes that the earth be filled with the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. His expectation, and mine is to pour out that glory until it overflows.

Rachel Dennis

I actually have no idea what to expect. I have never been to a country that isn't openly religious. I'm really excited to see the doors God will open, however small they may be. Even if nothing dramatic happens during the trip, at the very least, I know I will be changed by the experience. The culture itself will play a major factor. I know there will be a lot of tea drinking. I like tea, so I am good to go there. The language difference may be hard. The one-on-one feeling or the emotions usually tied to conversation—so much is lost, using an interpreter. A big part of the trip is centered around children's camps. I love hanging out with kids, playing, talking with them, so I think this part will be awesome. I am also excited to see how God will work in Central Asia. Big things can happen in His timing. I've been praying, His will be done.

Jennifer Looper



Pray:

—for continued support for the Missionary Provision Closet.

—for Lucille Steward and her family as they daily depend upon the Lord for strength.

—for individuals who will take up the task to encourage and motivate others in fulfilling the Great Commission

—for new avenues of WNAC ministry to FWB missionaries.



A BOUNTIFUL SUPPLY

WHAT! Been married 41 years and have yet to purchase a bath towel, dish towel, or Tupperware? That's exactly right.

Just imagine how many towels and sheets we've used in those 41 years, especially since our residence has often been called the Poole Hotel. Not good at estimating? Neither am I. But I do remember one week when I washed 23 sheets. One thing is for sure, there's no guesswork about the source of this bountiful supply. The items came from the Provision Closet of WNAC, from women who are active for Christ.

Our missionary tenure began before the Provision Closet came into existence. In the fall of 1960, just before we went to Brazil, the ladies of South Carolina showered us with Tupperware. Wedding gifts supplied most all of my other needed housekeeping items.

By 1966, when we returned for stateside assignment, the Provision Closet was in operation. What a joy to go shopping where prices are the best possible—completely free! However, nothing is absolutely free—someone pays for it—so let me revise that statement. What a joy to go shopping where our needed goods have been purchased by FWB women—no extra charges.

I enjoy moving about the kitchen and throughout the house, taking mental note of all the things from the Provision Closet. Often I breathe a prayer of thanks to God and ask a special blessing upon each lady who has given to make the Provision Closet possible.

—Geneva Poole



Recent gifts await inventory and stocking.


Carol Teague and Lynn Midgett explore.

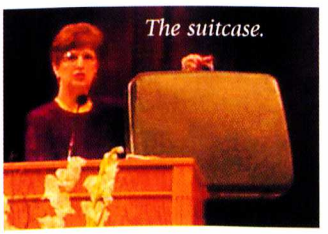
A BOUNTIFUL SUPPLIER



Lucille Steward

She's been lauded as "Mrs. Foreign Missions." Veteran missionaries know her as Mrs. Lucille. New appointees soon learn of her willing heart and her working ways. For many Women Active for Christ, the terms Provision Closet and Lucille Steward are almost synonymous.

Suitcase. In 1962, Lucille Steward filled a blue suitcase and traveled to Nashville with her first load of sheets and towels for the new Missionary Provision Closet. Since that time, she has recruited, organized, collected and delivered missionary home supplies—over half a million dollars worth since 1980. For many years, she and her husband Wendell rented a truck and made a yearly trek to Tennessee to bring the goods. Her annual Provision Closet drive for the state of Michigan has spurred other states and local groups to adopt this worthwhile endeavor. Today, the Closet is fully stocked, much the result of her unified efforts.



The suitcase.

Stuff. Crock pots, irons, linens, homemade quilts, cookware. She's sent it all. But fast-food restaurant toys? Not an everyday gift to the Provision Closet. Lucille had been reading about French Muslim children and their love for American toys. She promptly gathered a huge assortment to accompany the newly-appointed "M Team." Her concern for missions runs deeper than the stuff she sends. Lucille is a constant missionary advocate. She frequently contacts individual missionaries, asking for specific needs. She communicates and corresponds with countless families. She prays. In a 1996 *Heartbeat* article* editor Don Robirds spoke of a banquet once given in her honor. Of the 100 missionary and FM personnel in attendance, 80 had been in her home.



FM helpers unload the annual Michigan truck.

Spunky Lady. Her good deeds are accomplished despite personal difficulty. Lucille suffers from both arthritis and diabetes. A tragic housefire destroyed many of her missionary mementos and almost took her life. Hit by a car, she now walks with difficulty. Lucille has also battled cancer since 1980. Extensive surgeries, countless procedures, and endless medications have not dampened her spunk or her spirit. Yet, early this year, a final lung surgery confirmed that this 24-year-old enemy would likely win the fight. Lucille continues to plan and collect for this year's Provision Closet project.

When Lucille was honored for her efforts at the 2001 WNAC Convention in Detroit, MI, Mrs. Marjorie Workman commented, "As long as she has a heart, she will serve." Lucille's heart and her service will long be remembered among Women Nationally Active for Christ. Her gifts, scattered round the world, will reap eternal reward. She prays that someone will take her place. A bountiful supply needs bountiful suppliers.

Other Prayer Concerns

—Pray for Matt and Cristina Price as they prepare to go to France. Pray that God would supply needed financial support so they may begin language studies in the fall.

—Pray for Jim and Vickie Sturgill, Brazil, as they begin stateside assignment and for Ken and Rejane Eagleton who will assume the Sturgills' ministry in Belo Horizonte.

—Pray for Robert and Judy Bryan who are preparing to leave for France in late summer.

—Pray for FWB churches and missions efforts in Japan. This summer marks the 50th anniversary of FWB work there.

—Pray for Don and Ruth McDonald as they begin stateside assignment and as they prepare to speak at the WNAC Convention.

—Pray for missionary Ken Dodson as he seeks qualified teachers for the FWB school in the Virgin Islands.

—Pray for FAITH Evangelism Outreach efforts in Home Missions churches.



White Oak and Tulip Poplar

A MARRIAGE PARABLE

by Jim Bivens

Deep in the midst of an untamed forest, where only the sounds of the flowing stream, the calls of birds, an occasional squack of squirrels playing high in the limbs above or the gentle moo of a passing doe to her fawn interrupt the solitude, stood White Oak. Limbs almost symmetrical, reaching out, reaching up, his gray-white bark, slightly scaling, teemed with lobed, dark-green, thick leaves. Decaying limbs littering the ground below gave proof of his unyielding position. Many storms, heavy snows, and countless nuggets of hail had struck at him through the years, but he stood.

In the midst of this same solitude stood a sleek, smooth, straight, tall beauty–this one somewhat different. During those same storms, these limbs had moved and flexed; the tall mast yielding just enough, sustaining less loss of limb and leaf. Her lovely gray-white bark was unabrasive; her leaves revealed a unique shape—the outline of a dutch flower. At certain seasons, buds formed blossoming flowers identical to miniature tulips. Her name was Tulip Poplar.

So the forest, with its quiet, peaceful busyness, saw the dawn of another day. Little by little, dark clouds—ominous clouds—crept over the far horizon, making their way ever closer. Gentle breezes grew into strong gales. All the animals, with their God-given instincts, scurried for shelter. The rain came. Then more wind. Then torrents of floods from above.

"I don't enjoy these times," said Tulip Poplar, as she bent slightly as needed with the winds.

"I just refuse to yield," proclaimed White Oak, as he stood upright, pelted by the storm.

But after a while, as at other times, the winds ceased, a gentle drizzle replaced the onslaught, and soon the sun once again peeked through the clouds. Neither White Oak nor Tulip Poplar gloated or criticized the other for the way in which they handled the storm. They were what they were.

Soaked and strewn with oak limbs and acorns, and lightly scattered with poplar leaves and blossoms, the ground beneath the trees soon felt the light tracking of rabbits, robins, and spotted fawn. Squirrels snacked their fill on the acorns. Both rabbit and fawn lay on the soft poplar-leaf mat. Even insects and earthworms found a haven of protection under the debris.

One day, the peace in the wonderland was broken by sounds never heard there before. Not the rare bugle of an elk or the grunt of a buffalo, but a fluttering of lips and a clattering of hard matter, sounds much clearer and louder than rocks rolling against each other. Heavy, solid thuds of footsteps pounded disregard, snapping twigs, breaking limbs. A creature five times bigger than a twelve-point buck, swinging, bobbing his head, came plodding up the gentle incline from the stream below. Behind him, other much smaller creatures occasionally called out, louder, more distinct than the call of a crow. This company of unknowns—a horse pulling a sled, a pioneer husband, his wife, young daughter and son—drew closer to the mat under White Oak and Tulip Poplar.

"I believe this is it," proclaimed the pioneer to his brood.

"It's beautiful," answered his dear spouse.

"Look how far you can see from here," declared the young daughter.

"All kinds of animals to play with!" exclaimed the wide-eyed little son.

"Thank you, Lord, for giving us a home," they all prayed with heads humbly bowed.

"To build our house, we must have the right plan, a foundation firm, a floor strong, walls smooth, a roof tight to stand the storms," declared the pioneer dad.

White Oak and Tulip Poplar listened with interest. No other

creature beneath them had ever uttered such statements. But it all made good sense. The man began to dig into the forest floor and soon came to solid rock. Finding some large rocks nearby and, with the horse's strong help, he pulled these into the right places on the high ground and set them up on the solid rock beneath. "What they do is a good work," said Poplar to Oak.

"To support everything on this good rock foundation I must have material that is solid, unyielding, that can stand the test of time," said the man.

"I think I might be able to help him with that," remarked Oak to Poplar. And so the bottom sills of the cabin and the floor joists would be hewn from strong Oak.

"I want our family to be able to look out and see the beauties and wonders of God's creation, so we will need several windows," the mother pondered. "My children will sometimes rub against the inside walls. And the floor their feet will tread must have no sharp edges to harm them."

"Do you suppose my smooth bark and yielding nature could help in those areas?" asked Poplar, volunteering her services.

"Alone, I cannot meet their needs. But together, if we share and blend our qualities, something solid and long-lasting can be formed," Oak said to Poplar.

The pioneer husband and his sweet spouse, little by little, brought the walls up, forming the corner notches in the yielding softness of Poplar, leaving the windows as desired, splitting shakes in proper shingle lengths out of Oak, the man placed them, layer on layer upon the roof supported by rafters of Poplar. In no time the little pioneer family completed the house, their love for each other and for their Heavenly Father making it a real home. The unyielding beams, the splinterless floor, the dryness of the tight-grained shakes, and the ever present fragrance of the tulip tree's smooth bark, served as constant reminders of the complete commitment and sacrifice made for the family's safe abode.

White Oak and Tulip Poplar had not realized this earlier, but their manner of life provided for the needs of others. Unique, individual traits made them valuable to all—from greatest to smallest–of the forest creatures. And when the opportunity arose, they voluntarily gave of themselves, committing their lives in service to others. They could have remained resolute in their solitudes. Winds of time would have eventually taken their toll. The two would have bowed to the earth like all the rest, with no lasting evidence of their existence. But in giving of themselves, they provided shelter and a nurturing environment where yet another generation could be embraced, loved, taught, and equipped to go out and face the world with the confidence and full assurance that their training at home had been good and right.

Those who are unyielding have their place, but they may learn from those who can adapt to the moment's situation. And those who are pliable and softer in texture may learn from the essential strength of those who stand and face the blasts of the elements of life. What a lonely life indeed, if all were White Oaks, or all were Tulip Poplars.

Pastor Jim Bivens surprised his wife, Pamela, reading this parable at a special marriage service at their church, Charley FWB, Charley, KY. Since that time, Pamela has been diagnosed with cancer. "He's the best," she declares.





Serving Up Strawberries

THIS LUSCIOUS Strawberry-Pecan Cake *(recipe below)* from the WNAC Cookbook became a means for ministry as one Woman Active for Christ poured her culinary skills into Christian service. The cake was a welcomed gift for a pastor's wife suffering from cancer.

Strawberry-Pecan Cake

1 box white cake mix
1 (3 oz.) box strawberry Jello
2/3 c. salad oil or oleo
1/2 c. milk
4 eggs
1 c. coconut (opt.)
1/2 c. pecans
1 c. frozen strawberries

Mix together the cake mix and Jello. Add oil and milk. Add eggs, one at a time and beat. Stir in strawberries, coconut and pecans. Bake in layers (at 350 for 20-25 min).

Frosting:

1 stick oleo
1 box confectioners sugar
1/2 c. strawberries, drained
1/2 c. pecans
1/2 c. coconut (opt.)

Cream oleo and sugar. Add strawberries, pecans, and coconut. Mix and spread.

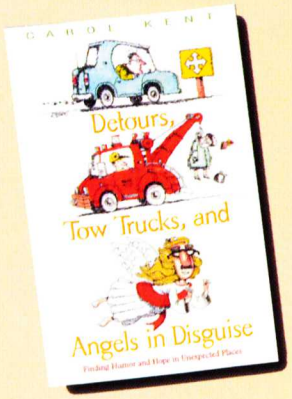
Amy Webb, FWB Church, Tupelo, MS
Zulienne Thompson, Westside FWB, Johnsonville, SC

IS IT TIME you were Serving Up Stawberries or some other ***Fruit of Our Hands***? What ministry opportunities lie waiting in your kitchen?

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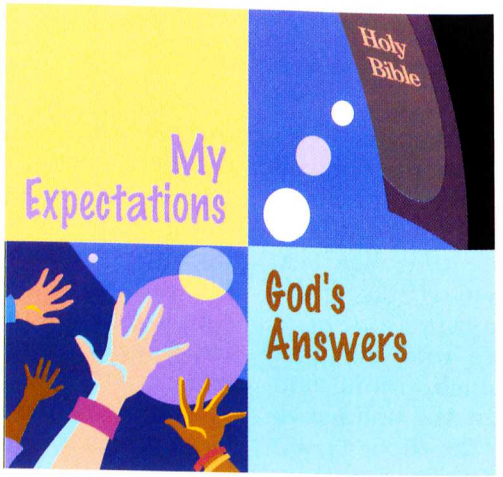
You'll laugh and cry as you listen to God's voice in the funny, poignant, and inspirational stories and situations that make life so worth living. And you'll find yourself reflecting on the stories of your own life, seeing God's grace at work in you.

—Review courtesy of NavPress.

Read her book this summer. Hear her speak this fall.

WNAC National Retreat, Ridgecrest, NC October 29-30, 2004

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God, Satisfy My Longings

"Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee" (Psalm 38:9).

Yes, every one of us has secret longings. You do and so do I. Here, let me show you. I wish my nose was smaller, my eyebrows darker, and that I wasn't succumbing to the ravages of middle age.

What? That's petty? Superficial? Well, sure it is. You didn't think I was going to share my innermost longings, did you? I mean, after all, I don't know you.

If you're honest, you have some very private longings, too—desires, hopes, wishes, dreams, yearnings that perhaps no one else knows about...for a friend, a companion, a husband...a baby, a grandchild, word from distant loved ones...a new job, a home, a purpose...to be whole in body, mind and soul...for freedom from pain, forgiveness, a fresh start..to be heard, for someone to care, understand and love you...to be at peace with the past, the present and the future...for lost loved ones and loved ones lost.

Privately, we groan, agonizing over our frustrations, failures, and flaws. With silent, hidden tears we labor over hurts and disappointments. Our unmet wants and perceived needs seem larger than life. They encompass our waking hours and turn our sleepy dreams into nightmares. We ask ourselves, "Why aren't they met? Doesn't God care?" We've done everything possible to satisfy that longing, quench that thirst, fill those empty arms, satiate that hunger, heal that broken heart. And, still that longing remains.

And, it will remain until we pour our hearts out to God in humble realization that He alone is capable of performing the impossible. He knows our deepest longings. He understands. And, He alone knows how to satisfy.

"For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Psalm 107:9). He takes that empty spot—that vacant, gnawing thing that keeps us tied in knots—and fills it with Himself (Psalm 17:15).

Jesus can satisfy that dissatisfaction within you. He alone can answer the longing you feel. When He becomes the object of our desire, we will find our needs are met in Him and our longings are satisfied.

What is it you long for? Whatever it is, God can satisfy in ways you cannot imagine (Luke 6:21). Give Him an opportunity to work the impossible, the remarkable—a miracle in your life.

Suzan Hutchison is a pastor's wife (New Salem FWB) from Colquitt, GA. Suzan enjoys reading, gardening, and collecting seashells.



Words for Women

Blessed are the Pure in Heart



Executive Secretary-Treasurer

Marjorie H. Workman

"YOU'VE GAINED WEIGHT. You aren't pregnant, are you?"

In retrospect, I realize my mother wasn't serious. But at the time, her question shocked me like a bolt of lightning. I didn't answer. Why was she asking? I was so young and naive. Growing up in an era where *"it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret"* (Ephesians 5:12), I barely knew the meaning of the word, much less how to make it happen. This ignorance made me pray for a long time that I was not pregnant. I know that sounds silly, but, honestly, my lack of knowledge caused me great pain. I wasn't even a teenager yet, but this incident made an impression on me.

What was hush-hush talk a few years ago is now spoken openly and unashamedly in any gathering of people. Unless you turned off your television for a week, you didn't escape seeing the half-time Super Bowl shocker as it repeatedly played on every news broadcast and talk show.

From public prayer requests to announcements from the pulpit, we show no discretion at what we say publicly. Is this good or bad? I suppose it is mild in comparison to what we hear and see on television, on school grounds, in movies and on radio. Innocence is gone. No wonder our young people have difficulty maintaining purity. In this amoral,"do-what-pleases-you" culture, what can Christian mothers or singles do?

Know what the Bible says about purity. *"Now the body is not for fornication, [pre-marital sex], but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body"* (1 Corinthians 6:12b). *"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints"* (Ephesians 5:3). *"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, [passions] even as the Gentiles which know not God: For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness"* (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5; 7). Many other passages address the issue, but just *knowing* the Scripture is not sufficient.

Set boundaries. Communicate them clearly to your daughters lest they be misunderstood. For singles living alone, predetermine your boundaries. Don't wait for the moment of crisis to make your decision. For starters, never allow your daughters to be inside a house or apartment alone with the opposite sex. Boyfriends should not be permitted in the bedroom even if parents are home. Daughters may not understand these precautions. They feel invincible, above falling into sin. Of course, no young lady sets out to lose her virginity. But, as a counselor for more than twenty years, I learned that being home alone offered the opportunity and time for immorality.

Dress for purity rather than sensuality (1 Timothy 2:9-10). Our outward appearance is a visible, silent testimony of our Christian values. Our dress should bring honor and glory to God. We are to dress in a well-ordered, decorous, decent manner without causing shame or embarrassment to God, others, or ourselves. Revealing clothes awaken lustful passions in the heart of the beholder.

Proper dress not only helps prevent lust, but also preserves intimacy. It is so easy to get caught up in the latest seductive fashions. *RESIST.* Recently, my heart broke as I listened to moms in a televised interview with Barbara Walters moan over the way their daughters were dressing. The real heartbreak was how helpless the moms felt in stopping them. Exposed bellies and plunging necklines appeal to carnality rather than godliness. The Bible explicitly condemns the lustful look (Matthew 5:28).

Christian women, let's reject the seductive dictates of fashion and the downspiraling trends of our postmodern society. Instead, let's choose to honor God and elevate purity in the way we dress, the boundaries we establish, and in the Word we believe and proclaim.



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