

MARCH DEVOTION

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted,
forgiving one another,
even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.
Ephesians 4:32

You probably will never forget the people who treat you with kindness and consideration. Their thoughtfulness lingers in the heart, and the warmth and acceptance you feel around them makes you want to be -where else? - around them! People are drawn to people, who, like angels, care for others and care about others in visible, practical ways.

Unlike money, fame or status, kindness is within reach of anyone who wants it. All it takes is daily determination to act considerately toward others (yes, even that irritating coworker who sits next to you) It takes attentiveness (despite your personal problems) to see the elderly woman struggling to reach an item on the shelf in the grocery aisle, the young mother with three toddlers in tow, trying to open a door or the teen who's desperate for someone to listen and to care.

This month, give special thanks to the kind and caring “angels” in your life. Those who leave a hint of heaven wherever they go. Renew, restore and nurture the “angel” in you with countless acts of kindness to others.

Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.

Daniel 3:24-25

God's presence with the three men in the fire not only freed them from the restraints that bound their arms, but it also protected them from what should have killed them. In addition to that, because of what the king witnessed when seeing them walk around, he told his guards to release the men. Thus, God's presence delivered the men out of the fire as well. God's presence is powerful. It brings comfort, protection and deliverance in the most trying of times.

There is a lot of confusion today between the connection of obedience to blessing. Many believers assume that if they are obedient to God, they ought to deserve a tangible reward. We live in a rewards-based culture, and that mentality has drifted into the Christian worldview in many ways. However, based on Scripture, many people were worse off in the tangible world when they obeyed. After all, Jesus' obedience led Him to a cross. It is only when we align our understanding of obedience with God's overarching sovereign hand of purpose (and even pruning) that we will be able to approach and go through our detours with faith, trust and dignity rather than doubt.

Far more often than not, the proof that you are on a divinely-designed detour will come from the realization of God's presence in the midst of difficulty. It will not come from the immediate removal of difficulty (although that can occur) but rather from the persevering and preserving power given to you by God Himself as you go through the detour.

God didn't keep Daniel from the lion's den; He met him in it. He didn't keep Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace; He joined them in it. The proof in knowing you are where God wants you to be in your detour is that God doesn't deliver you from it but rather joins you in it.

- Tony Evans

Sherry's Book Corner

Florida greetings ladies! Hope you are all well and in good spirits. I could ask if you were staying warm...but, I know you have been having some pretty warm temperatures since we left. We have been having some pretty nice weather here in Lake Placid, Florida. From now on, this is where Randy and I will live from the 1st of January until the 1st of April.

Just so you know, even though we are many miles away, our church family, who is YOU are always tucked away in our hearts. I have to say, our prayer link online and our card showers are always a blessing to me. It is like we are close by. When I found this book at the Lake Placid Memorial Library here in town I knew I had to share it with you. Many of you visit Florida for vacations and I thought you would enjoy these lighthouses. We are part of the lighthouse are we not ladies?

Until next time, may God bless you with a beautiful spring!

In Him,
Sherry

Adult Book:

Title: Florida Lighthouses

Text by: Kevin M. McCarthy

Paintings by: William L. Trotter

Publisher: University of Florida Press

Price: \$19.95

Kevin McCarthy has collected a variety of lighthouse legend, anecdote, and history for this enlightening book about lighthouses. Since some of Florida's lighthouses are open to visitors, Mr. McCarthy also provides a map and detailed directions for reaching each one.

You will also learn the construction, history, and operations of all of Florida's thirty lighthouses and its one lightship. This book was dedicated to all those keepers, both men and women, who have maintained the state's coastal beacons through storms and fog and who have therefore made the sea a safer place.

Kids Corner

Sunny skies to you my young readers! A special note to my Sunday School Class... I miss you and I will see you soon. I know you are in good hands with John and Brenda, but I still miss you. You are thought of and in our prayers everyday! When I came across this book at our local library I knew I had to share it with you. I may even purchase a copy for myself. It is full of all my favorite things you find on the beach. Also, it makes for good reading material for a book report at school and it is the perfect size to fit in your book bag.

I love the beach and I know many of you do too. I wish I could bring all of you kids down here in Florida and we could go exploring! Oh, how much fun we would have! When you think about it my young friends, God and all His creations can never be replaced by man. So we need to be good stewards of what God has given us. If any of you get to come to Florida for a vacation, I suggest you get a copy of this book and learn all you can about "Florida's Living Beaches."

Until next time, enjoy the everyday gifts God blesses you with!

In Him,
Sherry

Children's Book:

Title: Florida's Living Beaches

A Guide for the Curious Beachcomber

By: Blair and Dawn Witherington

Publisher: Pineapple Press, Inc.

Price: \$21.95

Age group: 8-adult

Blair and Dawn are Florida natives. They both share a love for the wilder parts of the state. All they have learned throughout the years have been compiled in this book. Blair is a research scientist with the FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute and Dawn is a graphic design artist and scientific illustrator. This guide book will lead you down 1200 miles of coastline, that is almost 700 miles of sandy beaches.

Beautiful and vivid colorful photographs highlight each item studied. You will learn subject such as, Relatives, Identifying Features, Habitat, and Did You Know. You will also learn everything on the beach has a story to tell.

Songs We Love

-Ruth Warren

Annie Johnson Flint was born December 24, 1866 in Vineland, NJ and died in 1932 in Clifton Springs, NY. Her mother died in childbirth before she was 3 years old and her father put her and her baby sister into a home where she wasn't loved or wanted. After living in this house for 2 years, she and her sister went to live in a Mr and Mrs Flint's home where there was much love. They were true Christians who loved the girls as their own and did adopt them.

Annie grew up, went to Normal School for a year and then became a teacher. After teaching a while, she came down with a severe disabling case of arthritis and finally had to quit. She spent her time writing poetry and hymns.

Her most famous hymn, He Giveth More Grace, was such a comfort to a missionary, Darlene D. Rose. She had been caught and put in a terrible Japanese POW camp in World War II while her husband was killed. Afterwards, she wrote a book called *Evidence Not Seen* in which she wrote:

"I had never shed a tear before {my inquisitors} during the hearings. But when the guard had returned me to my cell, and the sound of his footsteps had vanished--when I was certain no one could hear me--I wept buckets of tears. In desperation I poured out my heart to the Lord----When there were no more tears to cry, I would hear Him whisper, 'But my child, my grace is sufficient for you. Not was or will be but is sufficient.'

Just two weeks before I was brought to this prison, the Lord had laid on my heart to memorize a poem by Annie Johnson Flint. Now I know why. After drying the tears from my face and mopping the tears from the floor with my skirt, I would sit up and sing, 'He giveth more grace'."

None of us have any idea of what the future will bring or what burden we will bear, but our burdens will never outstrip God's all sufficient grace, because out of His infinite riches in Jesus, He giveth and giveth and giveth again.

He Giveth More Grace

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater
He sendeth more strength when the labors increase
To added affliction, He addeth His mercy
To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.

When we have exhausted our store of endurance
When our strength has failed ere the day is half done
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources
Our Father's full giving has only begun.

His love has no limit, His grace has no measure
His power has no boundary known unto man
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.

Macaroni & Ham Salad

- 1 pound of dry macaroni
- 1 can chunk pineapple in heavy syrup
- 2-3 apples
- ½ of a large white onion
- 1 pound of ham already cut in small pcs.
- 1 green bell pepper
- 1 small jar of mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon mustard
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 2 boiled eggs

Cook the macaroni but not too soft. Cut the apples, onion, and ½ of the green pepper into small pieces. In a large bowl add items to drained macaroni along with the ham, drained pineapple, mayonnaise, mustard and vinegar, plus add 2-3 spoonsful of the pineapple syrup. Mix well. Slice the eggs and the other half of the green bell pepper into long strips to decorate on top. Refrigerate.

RU PRINCIPLE #9

We lose our freedom to choose when we give in to temptation. The consequences of our choices are inevitable, incalculable and up to God. Temptation is different for each one of us and all around us every day. Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines temptation as "enticement to evil". Now we may not think that eating that brownie is evil, or buying that dress we don't need or spending some extra money is really all that bad. But Proverbs 20:17 says *Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.* We feel happy when we do some of these things; it brings us comfort and satisfaction for a short time. So we seek that satisfaction or happy feeling more and more. Our actions are not those of someone following God but of a person trying to seek enjoyment away from Him. All of a sudden you look up and you realize you're overweight, have a closet full of useless clothes, or are in debt and you say 'How did I get here?'

I recently had a "How did I get here?" moment. I slipped on the ice and broke my 2 leg bones and an ankle bone, not only that, but it was a compound dislocation break, so I had emergency surgery. I was down and out for the count. In the Hospital for 3 days then into Pebble Creek for 3 days of rehab. It was about 4am on that first full day in Pebble Creek that I lost it. There is no other way to say it. I broke down. I cried out to God, and said help me, how did I get here? My life is a mess. I can't put weight on my leg. I can't do anything. I'm overweight, out of shape and just a mess! It was right then I realized that I'd been giving into temptation for a long time. Overeating and spending too much money. I was out of control. My consequences were that God set me down. (literally!) I pulled out my RU book and the challenge that I was on, was to memorize the definition of Security. "**Security is a well-founded confidence and complete reliance upon the One in Whom I can trust; my Sanctuary, my Refuge, corrupted by neither moth nor rust.**" Based on Hebrews 13:5 "*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*" also Psalms 62:8 "*Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us.*"

That is what I did, I poured out my heart to God. I sought refuge and sanctuary, and I found it! He opened my eyes to my sin, I repented and he forgave me for it! He can do that for you. We all have those places in our hearts we like to hold onto that are ours, not Gods'. It is time to open up and share those places. Repent if necessary and be forgiven. I can hear Steve Currington (founder of RU) on the video now yelling "FORGIVEN, FORGIVEN, CLEANSED!!!"

-Rene Cox

JUST PLAIN NEAT INFORMATION.....

Glass takes one million years to decompose, which means it never wears out and can be recycled an infinite amount of times!

Gold is the only metal that doesn't rust, even if it's buried in the ground for thousands of years.

Your tongue is the only muscle in your body that is attached at only one end.

If you stop getting thirsty you need to drink more water. When a human body is dehydrated, its thirst mechanism shuts off.

Zero is the only number that cannot be represented by Roman numerals.

Kites were used in the American Civil War to deliver letters and newspapers.

The song Auld Lang Syne is sung at the stroke of midnight in almost every English-speaking country in the world to bring in the new year.

Drinking water after eating reduces the acid in your mouth by 61 percent. Drinking a glass of water before you eat may help digestion and curb appetite.

Peanut oil is used for cooking in submarines because it doesn't smoke unless it's heated above 450°F.

The roar that we hear when we place a seashell next to our ear is not the ocean, but rather the sound of blood surging through the veins in the ear.

Nine out of every 10 living things live in the ocean.

The banana cannot reproduce itself. It can be propagated only by the hand of man.

Airports at higher altitudes require a longer airstrip due to lower air density.

The University of Alaska spans four time zones.

The tooth is the only part of the human body that cannot heal itself.

In ancient Greece tossing an apple to a girl was a traditional proposal of marriage. Catching it meant she accepted.

Warner Communications paid 28 million for the copyright to the song Happy Birthday, which was written in 1935!

Intelligent people have more zinc and copper in their hair.

MURGATROYD?

Murgatroyd? When was the last time you heard the word Murgatroyd? Heavens to Murgatroyd! Lost Words from our youth. Words gone as surely as the buggy whip! Sad really!

How about a "whatchamacallit"?

The other day, a not so elderly (65) lady said something to her son about driving a "jalopy" and he looked at her quizzically and said what the heck is a jalopy? He had never heard of the word jalopy! She knew she was old but not that old.

Well, I hope you are "hunky dory" after you read this and chuckle.

About a month ago, I illuminated some old expressions that have become obsolete because of the inexorable march of time and technology. These phrases included "Don't touch that dial," "carbon copy," "You sound like a broken record" and "Hung out to dry."

Back in the olden days we had a lot of moxie. We tried to straighten up and fly right. Heavens to Betsy! Gee whillikers! Jumping Jehoshaphat! Holy moley! Peachy keen! We were living the Life of Riley and even a regular guy couldn't accuse us of being a knucklehead, a nincompoop or a pill. Not for all the tea in China!

Back in the olden days, life used to be swell but when was the last time anything was swell? Swell has gone the way of the D.A, the duckbill hairdo, penny loafers, poodle skirts, saddle shoes, and pedal pushers. Oh, my aching back. Kilroy was here but he isn't anymore.

We wake up from what surely has been just a short nap and before we can say, Well I'll be a monkey's uncle!/This is a fine kettle of fish! - we discover that the words we grew up with, the words that seemed as omnipresent as oxygen, have vanished with scarcely a notice from our tongues, our pens, and our keyboards.

Poof, go the words of our youth, the words we've left behind. We blink and they're gone. Where have all those phrases gone?

Long gone: Pshaw, The milkman did it, Hey!, It's your nickel. Don't yank my chain. Knee high to a grasshopper. Fiddlesticks! I'll see you in the funny papers. Don't take any wooden nickels.

It turns out there are more of these lost words and expressions than Carter has liver pills. This can be disturbing stuff! We of a certain age have been blessed to live in changeful times. For a child each new word is like a shiny toy, a toy that has no age. We at the other end of the chronological arc have the fond memories there are words that once did not exist and there were words that once strutted their days upon the earthly stage and now are heard no more, except in our collective memory. See ya later, alligator!

Rain

One rainy afternoon I was driving along one of the main streets of town, taking those extra precautions necessary when the roads are wet and slick. Suddenly, my daughter, Aspen, spoke up from her relaxed position in her seat. "Dad, I'm thinking of something."

This announcement usually meant she had been pondering some fact for a while, and was now ready to expound all that her six-year-old mind had discovered. I was eager to hear.

"What are you thinking?" I asked.

"The rain!" she began, "is like sin, and the windshield wipers are like God wiping our sins away."

After the chill bumps raced up my arms I was able to respond. "That's really good, Aspen."

Then my curiosity broke in. How far would this little girl take this revelation? So I asked... "Do you notice how the rain keeps on coming? What does that tell you?"

Aspen didn't hesitate one moment with her answer: "We keep on sinning, and God just keeps on forgiving us." I will always remember this whenever I turn my wipers on.

In order to see the rainbow, you must first endure some rain.

-Unknown Author

The Ant And The Contact Lens

Brenda was a young woman who was invited to go rock climbing. Although she was scared to death, she went with her group to a tremendous granite cliff.

In spite of her fear, she put on the gear, took a hold on the rope, and started up the face of that rock. Well, she got to a ledge where she could take a breather. As she was hanging on there, the safety rope snapped against Brenda's eye and knocked out her contact lens. Well, here she is on a rock ledge, with hundreds of feet below her and hundreds of feet above her. Of course, she looked and looked and looked, hoping it had landed on the ledge, but it just wasn't there. Here she was, far from home, her sight now blurry. She was desperate and began to get upset, so she prayed to the Lord to help her to find it.

When she got to the top, a friend examined her eye and her clothing for the lens, but there was no contact lens to be found. She sat down, despondent, with the rest of the party, waiting for the rest of them to make it up the face of the cliff. She looked out across range after range of mountains, thinking of that Bible verse that says, "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth." She thought, "Lord, You can see all these mountains. You know every stone and leaf, and You know exactly where my contact lens is. Please help me."

Finally, they walked down the trail to the bottom. At the bottom, there was a new party of climbers just starting up the face of the cliff. One of them shouted out, "Hey, you guys! Anybody lost a contact lens?" Well, that would be startling enough, but you know why the climber saw it? An ant was moving slowly across the face of the rock, carrying it.

Brenda told me that her father is a cartoonist. When she told him the incredible story of the ant, the prayer, and the contact lens, he drew a picture of an ant lugging that contact lens with the words, "Lord, I don't know why You want me to carry this thing. I can't eat it, and it's awfully heavy. But if this is what You want me to do, I'll carry it for You."

I think it would probably do some of us good to occasionally say, "God, I don't know why you want me to carry this load. I can see no good in it and it's awfully heavy. But if you want me to carry it, I will." God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called.

-Author Unknown

The Frog Race

There was once a bunch of tiny frogs, who arranged a running competition. The goal was to reach the top of a very high tower. A big crowd gathered around the tower to see the race and cheer on the contestants.

The race began...

No one in the crowd really believed that the tiny frogs would reach the top of the tower. They shouted, "Oh, way too difficult!!! They will NEVER make it to the top" and "Not a chance. The tower is too high".

The tiny frogs began collapsing, one by one except for those who, in a fresh tempo, were climbing higher and higher....

The crowd continued to yell, "It's too difficult! No one will make it!" More tiny frogs got tired and gave up... But one continued higher and higher. This one wouldn't give up! And he reached the top.

Everyone wanted to know how this one frog managed such a great feat.

His secret? This little frog was deaf!!

The wisdom of this story is:

Ignore the pessimism of others. It can take your dreams from you. Stay positive.

-Author Unknown



Always pray to have eyes that see the best in people, a heart that forgives the worst, a mind that forgets the bad, and a soul that never loses faith in God.

Becoming A Woman Of Excellence

A woman of excellence
Is what I long to be,
Filled with your godly wisdom
So it is part of me

A woman of integrity
No matter what I face,
Standing up for righteousness
And for your saving grace

A woman of destiny
Living out your plan,
Knowing where you'd have me walk,
Being guided by your hand

A woman of promise,
Standing on your word;
Holding on to all the truths
While carrying out your work

A woman of compassion
For the ones in the dark,
Those that do not know your love
And have darkness in their hearts

A woman that will never
Compromise the faith
With what the world may offer,
But will keep the narrow way

A woman who loves Jesus
And will only follow Him;
Gladly to give up the world
So His light can shine within

Lord, this is my earnest prayer
As a daughter by your grace,
Grow in me these qualities
As I walk with you in faith.

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Crockpot Lasagna Soup

Prep time: 10 mins

Cook time: 7 hours

Total time: 7 hours 10 mins

Serves: 6-8

Ingredients

1 lb ground beef (or vegetarian crumble)

3 cups of beef broth (or vegetable broth to make vegetarian)

4-5 cloves of garlic, minced

1 TB dried parsley 1 TB dried basil ½ cup chopped onion

1, 28 oz can of diced tomatoes

1, 6oz can of tomato paste

1 cup V8 (or any vegetable drink)

2 cups uncooked shell pasta

¼ tsp pepper ¼ tsp salt 1 cup of water

Optional topping- shredded cheese

1. First mix together the can of tomatoes, and tomato paste in crockpot.
2. Next add broth, beef, garlic, parsley, basil, onion, V8 and salt/pepper.
3. Cover and cook on LOW for 7-8 hours or on HIGH for 4-5 hours.
4. When 30 minutes are left of cook time, add in the 1 cup of water and noodles. Stir to combine. Put lid back on and continue cooking for 30 minutes.

Addition of optional shredded cheese can be added just before serving.

NOTE:

If you like your soup to have more liquid, feel free to add some extra broth and or water when you add the noodles.

Control

Just how much control does anyone really have over their life, their actions, their emotions? None really though self-control is something that all should seek and practice Godly living to help achieve it. We all like to think we are in control of any situation, but how often have we found out how untrue that is. Anger or any other strong emotion can change a situation we thought we had control over and totally change the outcome. Outside forces are the most common means though that can change everything you planned or thought you had complete control over. If you are like me, you like to plan the day ahead when you wake up in the morning with at least a few things on a to do list in your head. How many times has the day come to an end with few and sometimes none of those things accomplished due to the needs of other things you or someone else thought more important. It just shows that control is a myth. We have no real control.

I had an example of this very thing brought home to me just a few weeks ago. I know I have written before about my drive to work and things that have happened or I've observed, but I had a recent event occur that reinforced to me just how little control we really have and how easily and quickly it can be taken away. I was on my way to work, and not far from home either when this event took place. It was a morning like any other in the winter months with some warm days with rain, and very cold nights. The salt trucks have been very good at keeping the roads clear. On this particular morning, the roads locally were just a little wet after the salting, but I failed to notice when the pavement turned from merely wet to black ice. Just after crossing over into that, I found a deer had been struck by a car and killed. It was filling half my lane and since I didn't want to drive over it, I slowed down a little and went around it. This was on a slight hill and when I had passed it and tried to get back in my lane and up to speed, that's when I discovered the black ice. My car started sliding and spinning though I was trying my best to regain control. I ended up sliding off the road and whiplashed backward into a tree anyway. When I finally stopped moving, the first thing I saw was a vehicle pulled up in front of me with flashing lights. It was a very nice young man who I found had been right behind me, saw everything and stopped to help. The first thing he told me was what a great job I had done to avoid rolling my vehicle. I had also somehow avoided hitting a brick framed mailbox in the process, too. He said that he had hit black ice like I did once and that was what had happened to him. He told me his name when he very first spoke to me, but now unfortunately, I can't remember it. As it turns out, he works in the ER at an Akron hospital and was on his way home. He also belongs to two volunteer fire departments, one being the one in the township where my

accident occurred. He totally took over the situation. He made sure I was okay first. And he asked me several times before the police arrived, "Are you sure you are okay" just to be sure. He put a flare by the deer to keep someone else from having an issue like mine. He called the police and waited with me until they came. All I did was sit in my car and calm down after the adrenaline rush. He took control of the situation entirely and did a great job of it, too. After the police came and did the accident report, I was then able to continue my way to work. After leaving from my accident though, I did see several others that were worse than mine that morning. A salt truck came by just moments after my accident, but we all found the black ice before it arrived unfortunately.

I believe God uses people to be His hands and feet, to help those in need. I believe He used this young man to help me. In talking to him I found out that he didn't normally drive that way to get home, but had been doing so for just a couple of days because of some road construction on the road he usually takes. And how amazing that he had everything needed – medical training, flairs, a cell phone to call the police, and flashing lights on his vehicle that are needed by all volunteer fireman. In this case I wasn't hurt at all, just shaken a bit, but having someone else take over gave me time to adjust and calm down quickly. He was easy to talk to and told me he believed that it wasn't a coincidence that he should be the one behind me that morning. Since I don't believe in coincidences, I see them as blessings, I told him as much. He smiled and agreed. He was a Christian, too though I don't think God only uses Christians to do His will. It's just easier with a Christian in a matter like this, where they take in the situation and then respond as Jesus would. That morning I lost control of my vehicle due to the black ice, and then gave up control of the situation by sitting back and letting someone more efficient and skilled do what needed doing. Scripture says "my God shall supply all your need" (Philippians 4:19), and right then that was exactly what was happening. Having "control" isn't always what we need. Sometimes we just need to "let go and let God". Keeping control of my car would have been a good thing, but knowing when to let someone else take charge is a good thing, too.

-LeuAnna Taylor

Have not I commanded thee! Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

- Joshua 1:9

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

- Galatians 6:2

