

Women in Touch

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Women in the Word

Spiritual Spring Cleaning



Spring has sprung, ladies. Can you tell? We at least have more sunlight. And as the sun

shines into my windows I notice a lot of dirt in my house that the winter sun hid. Have you been antsy to do a little extra cleaning lately? I have been digging into drawers and closets. I'm itching to take down curtains. It's time for spring cleaning!

Spring is a time of revival and new life. Don't you long to bring that newness into your home? We want to turn things up-side-down, to scour and clean. We reach into all the dark corners in order to make it presentable, fresh and new again. We can't wait until we can open up our windows and let in some fresh air.

Sometimes we need to do the

same thing to our spiritual houses. We need to take stock and clean up and give them a good strong scrubbing. Spring cleaning, while worth the effort, will only last for a season, but spiritual cleansing has an eternal influence. We need to open up the windows of our heart and allow the Holy Spirit to blow fresh air into our soul. All of us grow stale at times and need freshening up. Remember who lives in our spiritual houses! **Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body. 1 Cor. 6:19-20.**

There are things that get tucked away in the backs of our spiritual closets that aren't needed. We accumulate grime and dirt on our spiritual floors and walls. We need to turn our spiritual house up-side-down and inside out in order to present our bodies **"living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God."** Romans

12:1. Don't just dust behind the bookshelves, dust off your Bible and get ready for some Spiritual Spring cleaning.

Just like when you clean your house, you must first evaluate what needs to be done. Only you really know the areas that need to improve. Evaluate everything. Is it pleasing to the Lord? **Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you — unless indeed you fail the test? 2 Cor 13:5.**

Next get the Junk out of the way. Are there things that are cluttering up your life? Are things like worry, anger and gossip getting in the way? Remember to think on things that are true and honorable. **Phil 4:8**

After you have gotten some junk out of the way, gather your cleaning tools. When you clean your house you gather together tools

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out of the way, gather your cleansing tools. When you clean your house you gather together tools like scrub brushes, soap and brooms. The only tool you need to clean your spiritual house is the Word of God. It is your all-purpose cleaning tool has everything you need. **For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.** Heb. 4:12

Now you can get out your cleaners. Cleaning our homes usually takes all kinds of cleaners. We need window cleaners, floor waxes, and disinfectants. When it comes to cleaning our spiritual house, all we need is one all-purpose cleaning agent; the forgiveness of God. It is guaranteed to cleanse all the grime and dirt which embodies itself as sin buildup. It's natural and organic too. **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** 1 John 1:9

It's time to get to work. If we've gathered all of our cleaning tools and supplies to clean our homes and even if we have evaluated what work needed to be done and *did nothing* it would not help us.

We have to use the supplies and actually do some work! The same is true with our spiritual homes. God gives us His Word and His precious forgiveness but we have to use them to keep our lives clean. **I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.** Ps. 119:11.

Spring is a marvelous season of renewal. I'm ready to get to work. Can't you envision the sparkle feel, that cool breeze blowing through your windows? **Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.** Ps. 51:10.

-Carol Kuenning



Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3:5-6

The Ladies ministries in the valley church cover a wide variety of areas. The following lists the points of contact for each area and the coordinating deacon or elder. If you want to help or know of a need, please contact the ladies.

Crafty Corner



The days are getting longer and before we know it, summer will be here. Here is a fun idea for homemade ice cream to make with your kids, or just to lighten the day and maybe feel like a kid!

Shake & Make Ice Cream

2 Tbs. sugar
1 cup milk or half and half
1/2 tsp. vanilla
6 Tbs. rock salt
1 pint-sized plastic zip bag
1 gallon-sized plastic zip bag

1. Fill the gallon-sized plastic bag half full with ice. Add rock salt and seal.
2. Pour sugar, milk/half and half, and vanilla into the pint-sized plastic bag and seal.
3. Place the pint-sized zip bag into the gallon-sized zip bag and seal.
4. Shake the bag for 5-7 minutes.
5. Open the small zip bag and enjoy!



Tips & Ideas

- *Make peppermint ice cream by adding 1/2 tsp. peppermint extract or 3 Tbs. of crushed peppermint stick.
- *Try topping your ice cream with sprinkles, nuts, or fresh fruit.

-Aspen Kuenning

Women Busy with God's Work

Proverbs 31:26-30

She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed, her husband also, and he praises her: "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all." Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

With May we begin to think of budding trees, flowers blooming and warmer weather. It may also remind us of our Mothers.

It does not need to be said how important a mother's love can be, who else can cure an ouchy by just a kiss, or who can say the right words when there are dueling opinions on who should eat the last piece of cake?

A few years ago I was watching a news story on children who were abandoned at birth, I cannot remember the country, but I remember they were abandoned due to poverty. Most of these orphans would be left in a crib with little to no human contact. The children would lay there malnourished, in soiled diapers with little emotion on their faces. They knew that their cries would go unheard and they would remain uncomfortable, so most would not even try to get attention anymore. How sad that must be, I thought, to never know or feel love from the one who gave you life.

The tasks that are before a mother may feel very mundane, unexciting, or unfulfilling. I would hope to remind the mothers just how important they are and how exciting, and fulfilling their job is.

Some of the new moms in our church expressed some great

thoughts. They didn't realize what the magnitude of being a mother 24/7 was until they brought their precious child home. They then had the realization as to what a full time job it is. There really is no such thing as a day off, or a 15 minute bathroom break, but the absolute joy their little one brings surpasses it all.

The new mothers may want advice from the more experienced mothers. Too bad the hospital does not give a "How to Handbook" with each new baby, why don't they, you might ask, because there is no such thing as a 'one-size fits all' fix it for children. The discipline measures used on one child may not work with another all of this can become very frustrating. It is important to seek advice from other Godly mothers. They expressed the desire to be a Godly mother and a joyful mother while raising their child (children). I am not psychologist but I would not hesitate to say that a being joyful and definitely being Godly would help children to be more content.

In our society we are discouraged from telling our children no. They are bombarded by peer pressure, or commercials or society in general to wear the latest fashion, listen to the "coolest" music, or watch the "hippest" program. The simple word of "No" will go far in nipping bad behavior in the bud. What a powerful word. It all begins when they are young, "Can I have a sucker" "No" "WHANNNNNNNNNNNNNN" (that is them screaming in the grocery store). "That will be enough, the answer is "no". "Okay mommy, you know best". Now we all know that it's never that easy but lets say you give in once the screaming begins

because of embarrassment or perhaps just not knowing how to handle the situation, then when they become that 16 year old who knows everything and asks for the short skirt, the trashy CD, or the car that you can't afford, will they then respect the word "no"?

What an important job, teaching our children boundaries, not fun at the time of the crying but extremely important.

I have some quotes from a couple of our teen girls about their mothers:

Hmm.. well when I think of my mom, I, without fail, think of what a good role model she is because all my life she has been a stay-at-home mom. She always had dinner on the table, the house was always clean, there was always something sweet and baked around, and she was always there for boo-boo's. That influence has made me want to do the same thing; I want to be a stay-at-home mom! I can't think of anything more respectful that a woman could do. She worked to keep everyone in her family happy. I wouldn't have wanted to grow up any other way. *Stephanie Sutton*

My mother is the person in the world I look up to. She has always been there for me through the big things and the small, reminding me of the constant guidance we as Christians, have with God. I love my mom dearly and I have no idea what I would do, or where I would be, without her! *Melissa Berg*

Even though motherhood may seem like a thankless job it is noticed and appreciated by our children.

-Antoinette Collins and Kristina Collins

Helpful Hints

A few helpful household tips...

Wrap celery in aluminum foil when storing in your fridge. I learned this from my mother-in-love and it is really true.

When you get a bunch of fresh cilantro (or any fresh herb) and cannot use it all, wash and trim off the stems. Dry on paper towels then put in individual freezer snack bags. Freeze. When you need some fresh cilantro for salsa, soup or dips, just get a pack from the freezer, crush or chop and add your recipe.

To keep plastic grocery bag clutter under control, stuff your bags into an empty kleenex box (the large size box). This is a good way to keep them handy under the bathroom sink for the bath trash.

Have vinyl or linoleum floors that are dingy around the stove, doorways, or other areas? Use Scrubbing Bubbles bathroom cleaner. Spray it on, wait a few seconds, and wipe it off. Truly amazing how it will get the grease and grime out of the dimples!

-Melinda Crockett

Highly Healthy



Make Half Your Grains Whole.

Eat at least 3 ounces of whole grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice or pasta every day. To get whole grains, choose foods that name one of the following whole grain ingredients first on the label ingredient list:

- brown rice
- Bulgur
- whole grain barley
- graham flour
- Oatmeal
- whole grain corn
- whole oats
- whole rye
- whole wheat
- wild rice

from mypyramid.org Nutrient-Rich eating.

-Marcie McGill

Simple, affordable, wholesome nourishment...

At The Family Table



The delicious lentil recipe below comes from another of my favorite blogs:

www.PassionateHomemaking.com. It's loaded with healthy recipes and resources. This recipe is healthy AND frugal. Lentils can be purchased very inexpensively, are a terrific source of protein, and can take on the wonderful flavors of the sauces they are served in. I think the tangy-sweet flavors in this recipe would be popular with many children.

In case you were curious, the soaking step in the beginning of this recipe is beneficial in breaking down the phytic acid (present in grains, nuts, and beans) which allows for better nutrient absorption and digestion. If you would like to learn more, you can google "soaking grains."

-Andrea Smith

Book Review

Gods and Kings is the story of King Hezekiah, heir to the throne of King David. This is a well-researched fictionalization that brings the the Old Testament to life in a way that is not only entertaining, but educational as well.

Austin does an excellent job bringing the world of ancient Judah to life in all of its color, pageantry, danger, and intrigue. She breathes fresh life into the character of Hezekiah, creating a flesh-and-blood man whose struggles and weaknesses make his triumphs as one of Judah's greatest kings all the more inspiring. And the book lives up to perhaps the best measure of whether or not biblical fiction succeeds or fails - it inspires study of the actual biblical text.

-Aspen Kuenning

Sloppy Lentils

3 cups water
1 cup lentils, rinsed
salt to taste (optional)
1 cup chopped onion
3 tablespoons olive oil

15 oz can diced tomatoes
1/2-1 (6 ounce) can tomato paste
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup ketchup
1 teaspoon mustard powder

1 tablespoon chili powder
3-5 tablespoons molasses, brown sugar, or honey
1 Tbsp white vinegar
salt and ground black pepper to taste
4 hamburger buns, split

Allow lentils to soak over night in warm filtered water with 2 Tbsp acid medium (ie. lemon juice, apple cider vinegar, whey). Rinse and cook as described below. Combine water and lentils in a saucepan; season to taste with salt if desired. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until tender, about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Meanwhile, cook onions with the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat until the onions have softened and turned translucent, about 4 minutes. Add tomatoes, garlic, tomato paste, ketchup, mustard powder, chili powder, molasses/sweetener, vinegar, salt and pepper; simmer 5 to 10 minutes until thickened. Drain lentils and reserve cooking liquid. Stir lentils into sauce mixture, adding cooking liquid or water as needed to obtain the desired "sloppy joe" consistency. Serve on buns (topped with cheese, if desired). *Recipe by Lindsay Edmonds*