

“As a face is reflected in water, so the heart reflects the person.”

– Proverbs 27:19

"Make Me New"

(p. 691 in our hymnal)

Make me new, Lord Jesus, make me new
For it seems that in so many ways
I'm not enough like You.

Take this weary vessel I am in
And mold me once again
Take my life, take my spirit,
Make me new

My friend Niki, who moved to Albany, GA, from Grand Junction, CO, a few years back was recently talking about this song on Facebook. I don't think I had heard it before but a few of the lyrics caught my attention so I looked up the whole song. I really like this. So I thought I would share it.

It's Beginning To Rain

(William & Gloria Gaither/Aaron Wilburn)

It's beginning to rain, rain, rain, hear the voice of the Father
Saying whosoever will come and drink from the water
I will pour out my spirit on my sons and my daughters
If you're thirsty and dry lift your hands to the sky
It's beginning to rain

It's beginning to rain let the spirit direct you
To peace and to love where no hatred can stand
And the joy of Christ refreshes your soul

It's beginning to rain, rain, rain, hear the voice of the Father
Saying whosoever will come and drink from the water
I will pour out my spirit on my sons and my daughters
If you're thirsty and dry lift your hands to the sky
It's beginning to rain

From Breaking Free Day by Day Devotional

By Beth Moore

“And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.”

- Matthew 13:58

Five obstacles block our access to the benefits God wants for us:

- 1) **Unbelief** – which hinders us from knowing God
- 2) **Pride** – which prevents us from glorifying God
- 3) **Idolatry** – which makes us unsatisfied with God
- 4) **Prayerlessness** – which blocks us from His peace
- 5) **Legalism** – which stops our enjoyment of Him

These hindrances keep us separated from the birthright God intends for us.

“The Bible is a Christian’s guidebook, and I believe the knowledge it sheds on pain and suffering is the great antidote to fear for suffering people.

Knowledge can dissolve fear as light destroys darkness.”

- Philip Yancey

SCRIPTURES TO MEMORIZE:

"May the words of my lips and this meditation of my heart be pleasing, in Your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer."

- Psalm 19:14

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

- Philippians 4:6

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever."

- Hebrews 13:8

From the Kitchen

Crab Deviled Eggs

From "Taste of Home" Magazine

Ingredients:

- 12 hard-cooked eggs
- 1 6-ounce can crab meat, drained, flaked, cartilage removed
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 2 teaspoons Dijon style mustard
- 1 teaspoon basil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 3 dashes Worcestershire sauce
- Paprika

Directions:

Cut eggs in half lengthwise. Remove yolks; set whites aside. In a bowl, mash yolks. Add crab, mayo, onion powder, mustard, basil, salt, pepper, and Worcestershire; mix well. Pipe or spoon into egg whites. Sprinkle with paprika. Refrigerate until serving. *Serves: 24*

Lemon Thyme Bread

From "Taste of Home" Magazine

Ingredients:

1/2 cup butter, softened	1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup sugar	2 Tbsp minced, fresh thyme
1 egg	1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 cup buttermilk	1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup sour cream	

Directions:

In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg. Combine buttermilk and sour cream. Combine flour, thyme, baking soda, and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with buttermilk mixture, beating well after each addition. Fill greased or paper-lined muffin cups two-thirds full. Bake at 400° for 16 to 20 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. *Serves: 10*

Lemon Thyme Icing

Ingredients:

1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon minced, fresh thyme
8 teaspoons lemon juice

Directions:

In a small bowl, combine sugar, thyme and lemon juice. Add additional juice if needed to achieve drizzling consistency.

Crock Pot Lasagna

Ingredients:

- 1 pound ground beef, browned and seasoned to taste
- 30 ounces marinara sauce
- 8 ounces lasagna noodles, uncooked
- 4 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 1/2 cups cottage cheese

Directions:

Combine cooked beef with marinara sauce. Spread 1/4 of sauce in bottom of greased crock. Arrange 1/3 of noodles over sauce, breaking as needed. Combine cheeses in a bowl and spread 1/3 of the mix over the noodles. Repeat these layers twice and top with remaining sauce. Cover and cook on low for 4 hours. Let stand with lid off for 10 minutes before serving.

Serves: 8

Skillet Tacos

From "Taste of Home" Magazine

Ingredients:

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 15 1/4-ounce can whole kernel corn, drained
- 10 six inch corn tortillas, cut into 1" pieces
- 1 8-ounce bottle taco sauce
- 1 1/4 cups shredded Cheddar cheese, *divided*

Directions:

In a large skillet, cook beef. (Season with salt, pepper, onion powder and garlic powder.) Drain once brown. Add corn, tortillas, sauce and one cup of cheese; heat through. Sprinkle with remaining cheese.

Texas Sheet Cake

From "Taste of Home" Magazine

Ingredients:

1 cup butter or margarine	2 cups sugar
1 cup water	1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa	1/2 teaspoon salt
2 cups all-purpose flour	1/2 cup sour cream

Directions:

In a large saucepan bring the butter, water and cocoa to a boil. Remove from heat. Combine flour, sugar, baking soda and salt and add to cocoa mixture. Stir in sour cream until smooth. Pour into a greased 15" x 10" x 1" baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 to 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. *Serves: 15*

Texas Sheet Cake Icing

From "Taste of Home" Magazine

Ingredients:

1/2 cup butter	1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa
1/4 cup milk plus	3 3/4 cups powdered sugar
2 tablespoons milk	1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions:

In a saucepan melt butter then add milk and cocoa. Bring to a boil. Remove from heat. Whisk in sugar and vanilla until smooth. Pour over warm cake. Cool completely on a wire rack. *Serves: 15*

An Excerpt from Women of Faith Devotional

What's a Good Friend For?

By Ann Luna

"If one falls down, his friend can help him up." - Ecclesiastes 4:10

What's a good friend for?

Propping open our hearts and airing moldy moods
Lighting up dark hallways through sad and lonely memories
Hanging high aspirations and replanting hope

Hauling heavy worries and pulling stumps of anger
Shading tender shoots of joy that venture upward through the muck
Grounding flighty passions during electrical storms of temptation
Shielding fragile egos from the harsh winds of criticism
Mending broken dreams and sharing golden moments
A good friend is a friend for good.

Who needs a friend anyway?

Only those who need someone to laugh with

Only those who need someone to listen

someone to love

someone to care

Only those who need someone

Only those who need

Only all of us

Barbara Johnson concluded this thought with the following prayer:

Lord, being human means being in need. We are not meant to walk through this life without caring people by our side. Thank you so much for giving us each other. Amen.

Lucky You:

(As presented by Luci Swindoll at a Women of Faith conference)

“If you have food in your fridge, clothes on your back,
a roof over your head and a place to sleep,
you are richer than 75% of the world.

If you have money in your bank, your wallet, and some spare change,
you are among 8% of the world’s wealthy.

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness,
you are more blessed than the million people who will not survive this week.

If you have never experienced the danger of battle,

the agony of imprisonment or torture or the horrible pangs of starvation,
you are luckier than 500 million people alive and suffering.

If you can read this message,
you are more fortunate than 3 billion people in the world who cannot read at all.”

“Say No More”

Excerpt from Women’s Devotional Bible

Who hasn’t wanted to shake her fist at God and scream, “Why?”

The question catches in your throat when you visit your friend who is barely recognizable, ravaged by chemotherapy. It comes to mind when a friend’s baby dies or a spouse has an affair. Why? *Why did my baby die? Why did my husband leave me? Why did we lose all our savings in a bad investment?* These questions wrack our thoughts and challenge our faith. How can a loving God allow so much pain?

When we consider the mystery of suffering, the story of Job inevitably comes to mind. At this point in the story, Job has suffered horribly, and he has boldly questioned God, protesting that he didn’t deserve to lose his family, his health and his possessions. Well-intentioned friends have come alongside him, offering unhelpful explanations and pat answers. Job has cried out to God, and God has answered him with amazing words and unfathomable questions. The Lord challenged him with questions that reveal Job’s limitations. No, Job does not have power like God’s. He cannot adorn himself with glory and splendor. He cannot judge the wicked. Only God is sovereign. Job is merely human. Job began to understand and bowed in silence to the Creator of the universe, saying, “I am unworthy ... I will say no more.” (Job 40:4-5).

But notice something else. God loved Job enough to be with him in his suffering – and that made all the difference. Job didn’t need to keep asking the questions because he had discovered that God himself was the answer. He didn’t need the specifics; he finally rested in the truth that God is God ... and that was enough.

Sometimes when we reach the end of ourselves, when we reach the end of the tears and the rage and the questions, when we are quiet, we hear Him say, "I am God. I am here."

"Then Job answered the Lord: 'I am unworthy - how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. I spoke once, but I have no answer - twice, but I will say no more.' " - Job 40:3-5

Breaking Free Devotional

by Beth Moore

"The result of righteousness will be peace;
the effect of righteousness will be quiet confidence forever."

- Isaiah 32:17

Joy will ultimately flow from obedience, and few things display God's splendor more appealingly!

A thought from Max Lucado:

*B*lessed are the available.

*B*lessed are the conduits, the tunnels, the tools.

*D*eliriously joyful are the ones who believe that if God has used sticks and rocks to do
His will, then He can use us.

Excerpt from Breaking Free Devotional by Beth Moore

"They are to teach what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands and children." – Titus 2:3-4

If we live long enough, each of us will be barren. Are we to assume our fruitfulness has ended? Do we exist until death only on memories and large doses of fiber? Why, then, does barrenness come to all women around fifty years of age? Were we meant to sit around for the next thirty or forty years and twiddle our arthritic thumbs? God is far too practical for that!

When older women pour their lives into younger women and their children, they are birthing spiritual offspring. Older women are a necessity in the body of Christ. God calls us to be fruitful and multiply until He calls us home.

Talking to God Through Secular Music

By Lesa Brassette

Okay, so I know this is gonna sound strange. I heard a contestant sing this song on American Idol recently. I had never heard the song before but suddenly I felt it was a love song of sorts from me to God. (I'm so weird ... this happens often!) Anyway, I see now it is a Beyonce' song. So read it with an open heart as a prayer if it fits your frame of mind This is one of my odd little love songs to my Heavenly Father.

Flaws and All

I'm a train wreck in the morning
I'm a jerk in the afternoon
Every now and then without warning
I can be really mean towards You

I'm a puzzle yes indeed
Ever-complex in every way
And all the pieces aren't even in the box
And yet, You see the picture clear as day

I neglect You when I'm working
When I need attention I tend to nag
I'm a host of imperfection
And You see past all that

I'm a peasant by some standards
But in Your eyes I'm a queen
You see potential in all my flaws
And that's exactly what I need

I don't know why You love me
And that's why I love You
You catch me when I fall
Accept me flaws and all
And that's why I love You.
And that's why I love You.

An Excerpt from: Women's Devotional Bible, *NIV*

WHEN FLOODS COME

A Natural Disaster hits a community, city or country, and the loss is mind-boggling. The media reports facts and figures to describe the devastation, but the tragedy doesn't hit home until we see the pictures and hear the stories. Tears. Faces etched in agony. Eyes roaming for lost loved ones. Families torn apart: a man who lost his son; a woman whose husband is missing; a child looking for a familiar face. The unbearable pain and sorrow become more personal.

Long ago there was a great flood. Noah and his family knew catastrophe was coming, so they built an ark at God's command. They followed instructions. They braced for impending crisis. They endured umpteen years of looking foolish. They faced criticism, ridicule, rejection. They plodded in the slow work of faith and love. Then the downpour came and the final command: "Go into the ark." So Noah led the eight members of his family into a floating zoo - out of harm's way. The devastation

of the world they knew had to be heartbreaking. But they followed God, and His grace saved them from the disaster.

When storms come in your own life, they may not be a calamity on the scale of a flood. But they bring just as much sorrow and pain – an illness, an accident, a betrayal. In the midst of the event, your decisions can help save you and your family. Let's face it; disaster can strike whether you're a saint or sinner. To survive requires spiritual preparation.

When you build your home on the foundation of God's Word, you can find safety despite the downpour outside. You can help those you love to weather the storm. Begin now to prepare your house for the storms that are sure to come:

Spend time in the Bible.

Strengthen your relationship with God and with a godly community.

Bring those you love before God in prayer.

When (not *if*) the tempest strikes, you will have shelter.

“The Lord then said to Noah, ‘Go into the ark, you and your family, because I have found you righteous in this generation.’ “ - *Genesis 7:1*

“There are some things you learn best in calm, and some in storm.”
- *Willa Cather*

For Reflection:

1. In the face of a flood, who would you take with you into the ark?
2. How are you preparing for the inevitable storms of life? How will your family benefit from your actions?
3. Has God commanded you to do things that may seem foolish to others? In what ways are you obeying him?

Related Readings:

Genesis 7:1-24 Hebrews 11:1-16; 1 Peter 3:13-22; 2 Peter 3:11-18