

HUGS

Heartfelt, Uplifting, Guest Stories

DEVOTIONS FROM OUR CHURCH FAMILY
FEBRUARY 27, 2020

Choices

Born in Calvert City, I have been able to attend Calvert City Church of Christ early on and, now in my later years. Years ago, my grandparents, Wiley and Lena Howard, moved to Calvert when Kentucky Lake covered their home-place.

Growing up in a church family of schoolteachers, I knew I wanted to be a member of the Church of Christ and a schoolteacher. (Proverbs 22:6): "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it." At an early age, my brother and I knew where we were going on Sundays and Wednesdays year-round. It might be a gospel meeting at home or away or visiting church members at home or away. When we graduated from high school, we knew we were going to college. Church and education were "big" in our family. When I graduated from high school, my dad graduated from college and my brother graduated from the 8th grade. My mom found her place in the cafeteria.

I did become a teacher and received my master's degree. My dad, my brother and I taught school in the same system—different subjects. After marrying, I continued until our first child came and my husband and I agreed that I would be a stay-at-home-mom. I enjoyed substituting for many years. Then three precious grandchildren came along and "Nana" school became my fulltime job.

Looking back, I still love my choices. I can be involved in our grandchildren's activities at church and school. This part of my life has truly been a blessing,

watching our grandchildren grow. (Ephesians 6:1): "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

--Linda Jo Smith

Be Mary First, Then Martha

One Sunday night after worship Jimmy and I were hurrying home because we were hosting the youth devotional. We had fixed breakfast, and everything was ready except for scrambling the eggs. The eggs were finally done, and we were ready for a period of eating and fellowship.

After eating it was time for the devotional and everyone headed to the living room—everyone but me, because I was feeling an urgent need to clean up. Austin Johnson, our youth minister walked up to me and said in a kindly voice, "Mrs. Marilyn, you can come join us for the devo if you like." At that very moment I thought, "Oh my! I am being a Martha instead of a Mary." I am referring to the scripture, John 12:1-8, where Martha served, and Mary anointed the feet of Jesus.

I don't believe Jesus was condemning Martha's act of serving. He was using the timing of the act as an example. Mary's act of devotion to Jesus was the more important of the two acts. They were both good deeds, but which act was the most needful at the time? In John 12:8, Jesus said: "For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have

me.”

I needed to clean up, yes. But what was the most important act for me at that time? Yes—go sit down for the devo--listen, sing, and learn from God’s word.

When the occasion arrives next time, I want to remember to be a Mary first and then a Martha.

--Marilyn Smith

I Believe

(Romans 15:13) “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”

Do I believe because my parents did? Do I believe because the bible tells me I should? Do I believe because I think I should? Do I believe because other people think I should? Though these may be contributing reasons, the core of my belief is deeply rooted in the fact that I know God is real, and he is who and what he says he is.

I believe the Bible is the word of the one true and living God. He speaks to me through his word and guides me by his Holy Spirit. I cannot see his face or hear his voice, but I believe he is caring for me and giving me what he knows I need, not necessarily what I think I need. I believe.

(Romans 8:28) “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.” This scripture confirms that God is actively working in our lives and not merely observing the lives of his children.

As we walk in the light as he is in the light, (1John1:7) God reveals himself to us in sometimes unexpected ways. We have only to pay attention, wait, and believe. God’s Holy Spirit lives within us, he is alive, real, and is ever-present—God. I believe.

--Mary Smith

A Preacher’s Kid

I am so thankful to God for blessing me with wonderful, loving Christian parents. When I was born, my dad had been preaching for one year near Milan, Tn. My parents, as some would say, are from the “old” school. Well, as I see it over the years, I call that a complement.

My parents met at Freed Hardeman University and graduated there. My dad was from Huntingdon, TN and my mother from the Mississippi delta.

Not only did my dad work full time at the congregation, he also worked full time in carpentry. My mom worked for 3 years outside the home but worked full time at home with four children. In addition to their employment, they raised a large garden to feed the family, of which they taught us all to work hard in. At that time, I

thought it was torture. However, as the years have passed, I find working in my garden to be relaxing—getting away from my everyday routine, while preparing healthy food.

My parents taught us to be faithful children of God (Hebrews 10:25). We knew each time services were held, we would be in church to worship God.

Truthfully, as a young child/teenager, I did not always see the need for attending every service. However, as I have matured, I have seen just how important what they were teaching me about not forsaking the assembly of God’s people really is.

As I became older, I made it a point to regularly tell my parents how proud I am that they taught me about Jesus and of being faithful.

I pray that the influence of my parents’ teaching will influence others to follow Christ.

--Sandra Smith

Contentment

Each Sunday morning, two men from the Calvert City church of Christ go to the Calvert Convalescent Center to do a devotion and serve the Lord’s Supper to some of the residents. As I did this a few Sunday’s ago, something stuck with me.

- I am not a well-educated person--but I love the Lord.
- I am not a rich person--but I love the Lord.
- I am not a handsome person--but I love the Lord.
- I don’t live in the nicest house on the road--but I love the Lord.
- I don’t drive the nicest truck--but I love the Lord.
- I don’t remember things like I use to--but I love the Lord.
- I don’t see as well as I use too--but I love the Lord.
- I don’t get around as good as I use to--but I love the Lord.

Probably every one of us has said one of these things, or maybe even several of them.

In Matthew 6: 25-39, Jesus tells us not to worry. Paul, in Phillipian’s 4:10-14, writes about contentment in every situation. So, no matter what our worries or situations are--we all have one thing in common---we all love the Lord.

Let us all strive to be content with our present lives.

--William Smith

