

Monday Coffee Cup...

A bit of encouragement to bring a jolt of life to your day!



Daydreams and Poetry—and Getting Beyond...

On a day like today, I really just want to curl up by the fire with a cup of hot cocoa and a good book—not that I would get a lot of reading done... I tend to doze off pretty quickly in that setting—but I love it!! My husband thinks that I enjoy my sleep entirely too much, but oh, well. It does a body (and a mind) good. And, oh yes, I've included a classic piece of poetry for your reading pleasure—for just such a quiet moment... Well—Winter is definitely upon us, isn't it? What do you like to do to help the cold dreary days to pass by a little more easily? OK. So maybe you are one of those people that likes the bitter cold... Truthfully, I don't mind it AS LONG AS I don't have to be out in it! ☺ I prefer to be "snug as a bug in a rug" myself! Well, regardless of your opinion about the cold, let's find some common ground here...

We have just come through the holiday season, with all it's busyness, gift giving, parties, programs, etc. We remembered the Reason for the Season, and now the tendency is to want to settle back into routine. Yet, a new year does bring with it the opportunity to make some changes— "New Year's Resolutions" we like to call them. Last week I wrote that I hadn't really gotten around to making any yet. But this week I have a few more conclusions in my life. Would you like to know what some of those are? Maybe not. But I will subject you to them anyway! (LOL!)

First, is something that Pastor Scott challenged us with last week in staff meeting—that is, to live to glorify God. Now I'm sure we have all have said that phrase, but I have been asking God to "unpack" what that means for my life. So that's one of my goals—to walk every day, with eyes open, to discover what my life bringing glory to God should look like. (Be patient with me. I AM a work in progress...)

Second, I simply want to live each day well, if that makes sense. I'm not necessarily looking for "new" endeavors. Rather, I want my "everyday" tasks and responsibilities—and doing each of them to the best of my ability—to be my focus.

Third, I want to continue to grow as a person. I think many of us find this difficult—we don't want to be selfish, and we struggle to take time for ourselves. Yet, how can we be effective in our families or in anything else, if we are not regularly caring for—and strengthening—ourselves? For me, this includes a handful of things:

1. I will take more time to BE QUIET—to listen and to HEAR God's whispers.
2. I will JOURNAL more...so that I may actively remember what God is doing in my life. I have gotten out of this habit in recent years.
3. I will READ more—to keep an active mind, and to stretch and challenge myself as a person (Not just the Bible, but other books as well).
4. Overall (and I'm sure there are more things I can do to improve, but I will spare you for now...) - I want to be faithful in the small things—in whatever the Lord puts before me any given day. "Not my will, but Yours, Lord" - that's my prayer...

So, let me offer a challenge to you today: What will you do to grow this year? In case you are looking for ways to stretch your spiritual muscles, I'll offer a couple options you may want to consider...

1. Take a Life U class on Wednesday nights. These are just beginning, and there are lots of options.
2. Consider going on a Mission Trip—if you want to be challenged and stretched, this will do it! Get out of your comfort zone. There will be teams going to several countries in 2010, including Mexico, Indonesia, Ukraine, and more... (visit www.gracelandbaptist.org to find more info)
3. Take the PERSPECTIVES class on Tuesday nights—learn about God's heart for the world!

4. TRY SOMETHING NEW—Check out the Artists Fellowship, which meets the 2nd Saturday of every month at Graceland; Get involved in the Men's or Women's Ministries; If you are not part of a Bible Fellowship Class, be bold and check out a class this Sunday—there are lots of options out there. And life is so much better lived out with others!

Let's GROW this year! What do you say?? Are you up for it?!

-Carlee

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.

His house is in the village, though;

He will not see me stopping here

To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer

To stop without a farmhouse near

Between the woods and frozen lake

The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake

To ask if there is some mistake.

The only other sound's the sweep

Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,

But I have promises to keep,

And miles to go before I sleep,

And miles to go before I sleep.

...by Robert Frost

