

TRUST GOD

*"I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly."
(John 10:10b)*

Simplifying was the goal for Lent 2010, which I shared last month in this newsletter. I have to admit Lent did not turn out to be simpler in the way I anticipated...In fact in some ways it was more challenging. Things on my 'to do' list changed. There was a bit more grandchild time and a bit less writing time. Unexpected crisis in and outside my family wrenched my heart. I spent a lot of my Lenten days saying "Thy will be done" and "Why?" to God. I was reminded that I wasn't in control of the events in my life and certainly was not able to 'fix' things in the lives of those I care about. The only thing I could do was turn to God and lay my concerns at the foot of the cross.

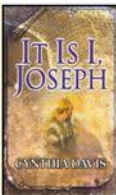
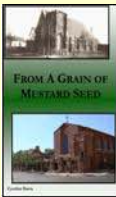
When in the middle of life's challenges, it is easy to forget that we are promised abundant life. In the parable of the Good Shepherd who 'lays down his life for the sheep' (John 10:1-18) Jesus promises us each that because we are His sheep, we can trust that we will 'go in and out and find pasture', because 'I know my own and my own know me'. As I struggled to release my concerns to God, I found the blessing of the comfort of that same Good Shepherd. After all, God cares more than I do for each member of my family and all of my friends, so I can trust God to do the best for each of them. (Not that I don't have to be reminded of that on a daily basis!)

Henri Nouwen says, "For as long as you can remember, you have been a pleaser, depending on others to give you an identity. You need not look at that only in a negative way. You wanted to give your heart to others, and you did so quickly and easily. But now you are being asked to let go of all these self-made props and **trust that God is enough for you**. You must stop being a pleaser and reclaim your identity as a free self."

Through Lent I was forced to acknowledge that 'God is enough'. Maybe that is the real simplifying of life. To release control of me and my agenda to God is the only way to let in God's abundant life and grow into a true identity in God. During a mid-Lent retreat, Bishop Bill Frey told us that through the Holy Spirit we become solid wood, not just a veneer over particle board. Like my grandson on the monkey bars in the photo above, we/I have to be joyfully willing to let go and quit hanging on because that's the only way to really have that abundant life! Until then Nouwen's prayer from *The Only Necessary Thing: Living a Prayerful Life*, rings true:

"Dear God, I am so afraid to open my clenched fists! Who will I be when I have nothing left to hold on to? Who will I be when I stand before you with empty hands? Please help me to gradually open my hands and to discover that I am not what I own, but what you want to give me. And what you want to give me is love, unconditional, everlasting love. Amen."

I invite you to join me during the Easter season (from April 11 until the end of May) when I'll be meditating about living more fully and abundantly as a 'free self', in Christ, based on Nouwen's book *The Way of the Heart* at my blog: <http://footprintsfromthebible.blogspot.com>.



Book excerpts, reviews, and study options can be found at:

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Signings & Sightings

April 11-May 30—Meditating on abundant life with Henri Nouwen's book, "The Way of the Heart" <http://footprintsfromthebible.blogspot.com>

June 1—Anticipated release date for *Mary, My Love**

June 4-5—Annual Chama Book Fair at Cookin' Books.

***Thanks to those who voted for their favorite cover. Check out the cover at <http://cynthiadavisauthor.com/signing.htm>!**

Recipe from Footprints

This year, newsletter recipes will be for beauty and home products that Women of the Bible might have used. Using simple household products, you can try out ageless beauty secrets.

This month, for other recipes using **Honey**, check out the new **Bible Beauty** page on my website!



Hannah's Honey Tonic

1-2 drops honey

Apply honey to wet fingertips and massage onto damp face. Do not rinse. Pat dry. Use for fine lines or blemishes.

Honey helps the skin absorb other moisturizing products, too and is often added to oils for this reason.

It probably goes without saying, but if you are allergic to any ingredient in these natural beauty products, please do not try them!