

# Women's Life



August 2005

## Homework's returns

We all know that homework returns when schools reopen this month, but I'm thinking about the returns that homework gives to those with the perseverance and diligence to practice. Granted, some homework falls into the busy work category. However, well-planned homework assignments give students the opportunity to see if they have personally grasped the concepts that were presented in the lesson. When the teacher and fellow students are not present, a student needs to know that he/she "gets it" without any prodding or big clues from someone else. Teachers who love to teach go to work primarily to see this inductive method of discovery at work in their students. Often describing the motivation as "I love to see the light bulb go on," teachers know that students have practiced the skill as homework and now "own" it. Homework nets great returns in learning.

As Christians, we often attend outstanding sermons, seminars, Bible studies, retreats, and discipleship classes. We focus, listen, and sometimes even take notes on what is presented. "This is good stuff," we think to ourselves. "I want to remember to say this when I talk to my cousin in New York or as I deal with my own weakness in the area of over commitment."

Pastor Glenn writes excellent homework questions to complement his sermons. Oops, did I say *homework*? While the heading on the bulletin page says *Questions for Discussion*, these questions can be used in a group or privately as part of a devotional time during the week. Doing such homework helps equip and mature us until we "get it" about some aspect of God's character or God's way of helping us deal with a current situation in life. Consider the homework benefits available to you. Don't look at homework as a "have to" but as a journey of discovery.

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In my recent study of Ephesians 4 and 5, I really *saw* Paul's move in writing from contrasting light and darkness to living as wise or unwise. My culture may embrace more darkness (evil), so I need to live more wisely. Then my life can speak for Christ. I certainly don't practice this consistently, but I am so much more aware of the concept. I "got it" and work on less complaining about the world and more living wisely.

So how about a serious look at homework for us adults? If you take a course, join a Bible study or small group, or listen to a sermon, why not pick up the questions and answer them? You can attend the next class with original observations you gleaned through your homework. You'll find yourself excited enough to want to share your discoveries with others in the group. Can you imagine the Lord smiling down at us as we do homework, apply a concept to our daily living, and then share the insight we have learned with another person? I wonder if He thinks, "I love to see their light bulb go on."

*Flo Wolfe*



## **Did you know that SPEP has a mission?**

*Discovering in Christ the greatness of God and sharing those discoveries with others.* It involves:

*Christ-centered worship*—guiding believers and seekers to bless the Lord as they seek His blessing.

*A Christ-centered lifestyle*—a process of discipleship that transforms our personal aspiration and goals.

*A Christ-centered worldview*—learning how to understand ourselves, our culture, and our calling from a biblical perspective.

*A community of Christ-centered people*—biblically grounded relationships that foster spiritual growth and mutual care.

*Sharing Christ*—through the communication of His gospel and the witness of His Spirit's work within us.

## Book Report

Quite a few books have been important in helping me to grow as a Christian. Several, like *Mere Christianity*, *The Celebration of Discipline*, and *Knowing God*, have merited re-reading and deeper reflection. This spring another book has joined my Top 10 list: *Embracing Brokenness* by Alan E. Nelson (NavPress).

Since one of the dictionary definitions of *broken* is “reduced to submission; tamed,” Mr. Nelson uses the process of taming a horse to help explain what it means to be broken. Just as an unbroken horse is of little use, so an unbroken soul performs little good. The process of breaking strengthens the bond between the rider or caretaker and the horse. Rather than sapping the spirit, drive, and energy of the horse, the breaking process directs those things from being wild to being useful. So it is in our walk with the Lord. When we’re broken before the Lord, He can use us.

There are two kinds of brokenness. The subtitle of the book, *How God Refines Us Through Life’s Disappointments*, shows one kind: involuntary brokenness. Involuntary brokenness happens as a result of events such as sickness or injury, job loss, death of a loved one, or moral failure. The other kind of brokenness is voluntary—when we willingly submit to God. It includes the practice of spiritual disciplines such as prayer, solitude, fasting, and reading/studying the Word.

God will use brokenness to help us become the people He wants us to be. “You can go through it or grow through it. People who go through brokenness but rebel against it usually end up bitter, cynical, and brittle” (p. 44).

Reading this book helped me to understand brokenness in a fresh way. It’s increased my desire to submit to God’s will (voluntary brokenness). It’s caused me to reflect on how God has used the hard times (involuntary brokenness) in my life for His purposes. And (I like to think) it’s conforming me more to the image of Christ. If you desire to grow as a Christian, I would encourage you to get a copy of *Embracing Brokenness* and read it this summer.

*Carroll Mantell* (she and her husband, Bob, are missionaries with Wycliffe, serving in JAARS in North Carolina)

### This month in history

The first Saturday morning  
childrens' programs aired:

Aug. 19, 1950

First potato chips invented: Aug.  
23, 1853

Waffle iron invented: Aug. 24,  
1869

Chop Suey invented: Aug. 29,  
1896

### Did you know?

In the 1600 & 1700's it was the responsibility of the woman giving birth to provide refreshments for her attendants. With names like *groaning cakes*, they must have been eaten during labor.

Usually a midwife and family members were there to help, but sometimes every married woman in the town came.

### Special Days in June

August 4 is National  
Chocolate Chip Day

August 12 is Middle  
Child's Day

# Cooking

Microwave cooking cuts down on oven use and saves air conditioning costs. Here are some tips:

- 1 - Covering most foods will speed up cooking.
- 2 - Use round or oval dishes, instead of square or rectangle, for more even cooking. Or arrange the food in a circle around a square dish.
- 3 - If you are cooking two foods at the same time, choose foods that take about the same amount of time to cook.
- 4 - Heating continues after food is removed from the microwave oven, so allow time for this additional cooking.
- 5 - Arrange chicken pieces so that the thicker, meatier portions are toward the outside of the dish and the thin, bony parts are toward the center.
- 6 - Foods containing sugar and fats cook faster.

Many of your family's favorite recipes can be converted to a microwave recipe.

- 1 - To figure microwave cooking time, start with one-fourth of the conventional time.
- 2 - Always undercook—if more time is needed, you can always add another minute or two.
- 3 - Use less liquid because there is not as much evaporation.
- 4 - It may help to find a recipe that is similar to yours that is written especially for microwave ovens and use it as a guide.

(from Cyndi Roberts' advice in the  
*July Wives of Excellence Newsletter*)



## *Micki's Corner*

Glenn loves electronics. He loves looking through catalogs of wondrous things that plug in. Right now he is digitizing all our music so that he can play it over the wireless network he's set up—instead of hunting for a CD each time.

It involves the computer, the TV, the receiver, and another little thing that sits on top of all the rest. His dream is one remote “to rule them all.”

We're on our fourth universal remote (that's if you don't count the Star Trek phaser one). They all seem to control things for awhile. Then a piece changes and that's the end. Through it all, I just keep learning how to use each new remote and tell myself that learning new things is good for brain health!

Our TV died recently. He “taught” his third remote to work with the new one and then went out to a meeting. It took me a while (much longer than I care to admit) to realize that every time I tried to get a channel with the number six in, the TV went off.

It was so ridiculous, I couldn't help but laugh. And it started me thinking that there is One who really has control. God knows the end from the beginning. Nothing slips through His fingers. He is never distracted by one thing and misses something else. And He never has trouble with His six button!

The best part of all—He's not remote either. He is always with us and in control. We can talk to Him, work with Him. He's always prepared for the things that surprise us. And He always has what we need when we need it. His circuitry works perfectly.

We may never have the perfect universal remote, but we have something much better!

*Micki Parkinson*



## *Thoughts and things*

*Touchstone Magazine's* July/August issue included an article called *One Big Ad Campaign—How the Media Try to Separate Your Children from Your Values* by Rod Dreher.

A recent study found that the average 10 year old has memorized 300-400 brands. Another study published in a scientific journal found evidence that brand knowledge can influence your preferences by activating brain circuits that have to do with memory, decision-making and self image. This has led to a new field of advertising called *neuromarketing* that attempts to light up that brain circuitry.

His advice? Some things he suggested were:

- 1 - Be aware of what's happening. TV is emotional, not rational. It encourages immediate reactions—reactions without thought.
- 2 - Limit exposure to ads. Watch non-commercial programs or record programs to skip through commercials.
- 3 - Raise critical children. Help them learn critical thinking. Watch with them and talk about the messages being sent. Apply Christian beliefs and your own values when you talk to them, so that they will have the tools they need to judge what they see.

Also: PBS's *Frontline* recently aired a program called *The Persuaders* that looks at advertising and how it works. You can watch it online at: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/persuaders/view/](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/persuaders/view/)



### **Behind the Scenes of *Women's Life***

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