

Pullin' Weeds Plantin' Seeds

Temple Ladies Newsletter

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TUNE MY HEART TO THY SUSTAINING GRACE—GRATITUDE

By Twila Jones

2 CORINTHIANS 9:8—And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

AMAZING GRACE**

JOHN NEWTON, 1725-1807 (VERSES 1-4)

JOHN P. REES, 1828-1900 (VERSE 5)

Calling himself a “wretch” who was lost and blind, John Newton recalled leaving school at the age of 11 to begin life as a rough and debauched seaman. Eventually he engaged in the despicable practice of capturing natives from West Africa to be sold as slaves to markets around the world. But one day the Grace of God put fear into the heart of this wicked slave trader through a fierce storm. Greatly alarmed and fearful of a shipwreck, Newton began to read THE IMITATION OF CHRIST by Thomas a Kempis. God used this book to lead him to a genuine conversion and a dramatic change in his way of life.

Feeling a definite call to study for the ministry, Newton was encouraged and greatly influenced by John and Charles Wesley and George Whitfield. At the age of 39, John Newton became an ordained minister of the Anglican church at the little village of Olney, near Cambridge, England. To add further impact to his powerful preaching, Newton introduced simple heart-felt hymns rather than the usual psalms in his services. When enough hymns could not be found, Newton began to write his own, often assisted by his close friend, William Cowper. In 1779, their combined efforts produced the famous OLNEY HYMNS hymnal. “Amazing Grace” was from the collection.

Until the time of his death at the age of 82, John Newton never ceased to marvel at the Grace of God that transformed him so completely. Shortly before his death he is quoted as proclaiming with a loud voice during a message, “My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things: That I am a great sinner and that Christ is a great Saviour!” What Amazing Grace!

Amazing Grace—how sweet the sound—
that saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind but now I see.

‘Twas Grace that taught my heart to fear,
and Grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that Grace appear
the hour I first believed!

Thru many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come;

‘Tis Grace hath brought me safe thus far,
and Grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me;
His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.

When we’ve been there ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun,
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
than when we’d first begun.

**Osbeck, K. W. (1996). AMAZING GRACE; 366 INSPIRING HYMN STORIES FOR DEVOTIONS. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel

As we prepare to close this Bible Study and ready ourselves for Retreat, I can find no better subject to ponder than our Loving Heavenly Father’s Amazing Grace. It is His Grace that has saved us, sanctifies us, strengthens us, and satisfies us. It is His Grace that is All-Sufficient for our every need, task, and circumstance. What else can we do but thank Him and praise Him? Gratitude reveals to us His Sustaining Grace.

Please make plans to join us Monday, March 18, for the lesson on this most important step in the Tuning Process. His Grace is Amazing. Let us be thankful. 🌱

JAMES 4:6—But He giveth more Grace.

2 PETER 3:18—But grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

PREPARE TO ENTER THE HOUSE OF GOD

By Crystal Ratcliff

Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Ecclesiastes 5:1

As we look ahead to the Ladies Retreat, we begin to prepare months ahead. We pray over those who will attend the event, the speakers, the messages, the decorations. We take time to find just the right songs, decorations, and door prizes. A lot of work and prayer goes into preparing for such a large event, and as ladies of the church we recognize the need to be prepared. We do what we need to do to make sure that the Ladies Retreat is pleasing to the Lord and able to be used by Him for His honor and glory.

With all the preparations taking place, it seems fitting that we also look at how we prepare to enter the house of God on a regular basis.

I'm afraid that too often we come to church unprepared. We have lost reverence for God and His House. We see coming to church as a place we go rather than a place to meet with our Lord and Savior. We come in having no understanding that God wants to use the services to meet with us, and so we have no expectation that He will meet with us.

We are distracted by the things of this world. We are tired because we haven't made the preparations to get the rest we need to be alert. We are disinterested because we haven't allowed God to meet with us at church in way too long. We are content to go through the motions of "church."

God commands us to "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God..." This means that we are to be careful, to watch our step, to take care in how we enter the House of God. We need to take time to prepare our hearts and minds so that we are "...more ready to hear..."

Practically speaking, what does it look like to prepare to enter the House of God?

1. Go to bed. Preparing for church really starts the night before. I realize we are all different and some require more sleep than others. Get the rest you need. Enough said.
2. Clean out the clutter. Before church, be cautious about what you are taking in. Leave the television off. Don't "play" on your phone. Checking Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, etc. is not a way to prepare your mind and heart to meet with the Lord. This is easier on Sunday morning, and a little more difficult for evening services. It can be done though. Set a

time to "shut it all down" before services. And if you have kids at home, you should be helping them (maybe forcing them to) make those same choices.

3. Pray. Spend time praying before services. Sunday mornings are a great time to spend extra time in prayer. Pray for the services. Pray the Lord will prepare your heart and mind. Pray that distractions will be limited. Pray that you will be obedient. Pray that the Lord will meet with you.

4. Read your Bible. Take some time to read your Bible. Don't rely on the messages of the day to be your spiritual food. You need to study the Bible personally.

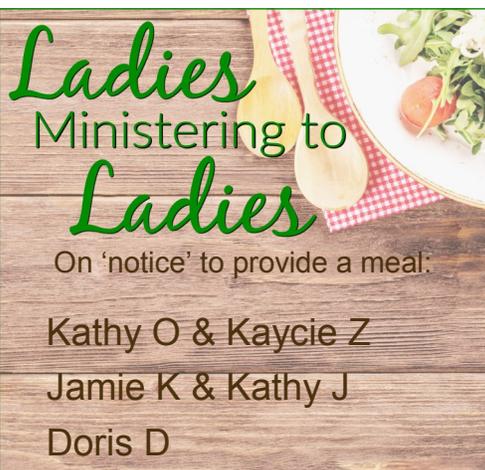
5. Actively engage in the services. Make the decision to listen with the intention of hearing what God has for you. It really is that simple. On the days when your mind starts to wander, snap your mind back to attention. On the days when you are tired, snap your mind back to attention and adjust your posture. Nodding off in church is often joked about, but it actually shows how disinterested you are in the message (unless you truly have a sleep disorder of some kind). Choose to actively listen.

The remainder of the verse is really the most convicting part. God tells us to be prepared to enter the House of God and to "...be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil."

When we go to church unprepared, we are giving the sacrifice of fools. And God said, "...to obey is better than sacrifice..." (I Samuel 15:22).

When we go through the motions of church—whether it is to satisfy our own guilty conscience or because we just haven't taken the time to prepare—we are actually doing evil. We are not revering God and His House as we should.

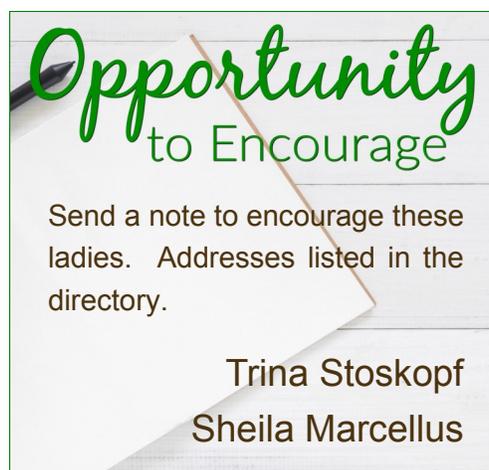
We need to recognize that when we head to church, we are entering in to the very sanctuary of God. We should be taking time to prepare, not just for the big events, but every time we enter into His House. 🌱



Ladies
Ministering to
Ladies

On 'notice' to provide a meal:

Kathy O & Kaycie Z
Jamie K & Kathy J
Doris D



Opportunity
to Encourage

Send a note to encourage these ladies. Addresses listed in the directory.

Trina Stoskopf
Sheila Marcellus



Verse Challenge

MARCH

2 Corinthians 9:8

Verse can be said to Crystal or Jodi at any service or at the Ladies Meeting.