



REAL WOMEN!

Remember, He is Able

R. E. A. L.
Women!
R. elevant
E. ncouraging
A. live
• L. ionhearted

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For most people 2008 has not been an easy year. The global weakened economy produced financial pressures on almost every one. Many faced the fear of job cuts and some actually lost their jobs. Increased food, gasoline and heating prices also added stress to most families. Some people lost their homes, some lost relationships due to death or divorce. Each of these difficulties acts like stress tests and often reveal weaknesses in marriages and families. Preparing our minds for action (1 Peter 1:13 NIV) is definitely needed if we are going to head into the new year with strong faith.

Preparing your mind for 2009. Instructions for Prospering through Preparation.

1. Evaluation: Take the time to examine how the pressures of life that you faced in 2008 affected your life. What did the strain of these past few months reveal in your life personally? Your family? Your ministry? Your job? Did you find increased friction in your relationships?

We have no guarantee things will be "easier" in 2009, but we can prepare our mind for action so we can face the future with confidence, rather than fear. Remember, He is able.

Take the time to plan with your family. Discuss how the changing financial situation has affected your specific finances. This is not a time to cower in fear, but a time to muster your faith, your courage, along with God's wisdom and strength to see this season as a time of adventure and learning. Our country grew stronger after the Great Depression and you and your family can use this time as an opportunity to do the same.

Prepare your mind by seeing your family as a team who determines to believe God together to supply all your needs in Christ Jesus. You may have to have a conversation concerning the difference between "wants" and "needs" which is a great lesson. Pray together. Ask God for wisdom in stretching your finances. Look for creative ways to save or cut back on expenses. Talk together about changes you each need to make. Remember, He is able.

2. Release your faith and pray. No "woe is me" type prayers—pray in faith. Pray for government leaders to have God's wisdom in bringing solutions to every economic issue. Remember, He is able.

3. Keep on tithing and giving your offerings. And as you do, actively use your faith as you sow into His Kingdom.

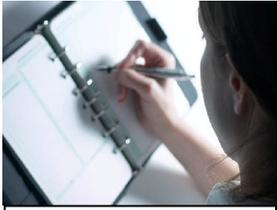
Do not let worry over take you. Minister to your children as

well. Let them know you are trusting God. Help them to develop their faith as well. As you prepare your mind for 2009 meditate on Matthew 6: 25-34 "That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? ²⁷ Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

²⁸ "And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, ²⁹ yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. ³⁰ And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

³¹ "So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?'" ³² These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. ³³ Seek the Kingdom of God—above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

³⁴ "So don't worry about



You saw me before I was born, every day of my life was recorded in your book;

Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. Psalm 139:16

(Continued from page 1)

tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.

4. Do not forsake the assembling of the Saints. Hebrews 10:23-25 gives us great advice. *Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.* ²⁴ *Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.* ²⁵ *And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.* Remember it is not just what you receive from your church service or small group meeting, but it is the encouragement and insight that you give to others as well. You may be some one's life line! Remember, He is able.

5. Decide to serve the Lord with gladness in every aspect of your life-to cheerfully approach your position as wife, mother, and daughter. To choose to work with a grateful and thankful heart

the calling of God in your life as an employee or worker in the church will set your spirit free. Remind yourself, He is able.

Finally:

When difficult times come, it is easy to lost sight of our Beloved Savior and what He has done for us. Take advantage of communion times to re-set your heart and mind on Him and His purpose in and through your life. Remind yourself of the truth found in Romans 8:18 *Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. Remember, He is able.*

A person who prepares their mind for action is a pro-active person. They do not simply re-act to their environment, they change their environment. Women of Faith arise. Become the voice of Faith, the voice of Encouragement, the voice of Hope and the voice of Truth. Truly, you will discover the very truth of Romans 8:35-37

³⁵ *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness,*

or peril, or sword? ³⁶ *As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long;*

We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

³⁷ *Yet in all these things we are **more than conquerors** through Him who loved us.* ³⁸ *For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Remember, He is able.

Written by:

Martha Rodman

Statement of Faith:

We are becoming Relevant, Encouragers who are Alive to God and His Spirit, even to the point of Being Lion-Hearted!

Merry Christmas to each of you,

I pray His light will shine bright in you and through each of you. Remember, every light is important. If you need your light cleaned and refurbished, He is willing and able to do it! If you need more fuel, He has it in abundance. Thank you for being apart



of our Real Women family. Each of you bring joy to my heart. With His love, Martha

About Malana Ganz



Malana Ganz, the author of the article "Dealing with Grief" which begins on page 4, is a long time friend of Darryl and Martha., in

fact Darryl helped lead Malana to the Lord!

She and her husband, Steve, pastor Tree of Life Church in Eagle Creek, Oregon.

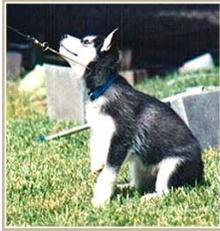
They have six children and nine grandchildren.

Thank you Malana for sharing your heart and helping remind us of this difficult part of life.

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Leadership Encouragement



A Puppy Parable

Picture in your mind a happy little puppy, so excited and eager for a walk with its master. Jumping, leaping and excited to explore their world, but after a few blocks the little guy gets tired and begins to whine. He lies down or jumps up to be carried. The owner has two options: carry the puppy or drag him along.

Leaders often face the same situation! The folks who began with great enthusiasm grow weary along the way and now leaders are faced with stragglers, whiners or sometimes drop outs. How can a leader re-focus tired and weary workers?

First of all, resist the urge to criticize or complain about how weak they are. In the example this was a young little puppy—it did not have the stamina produced by experience and age for a long haul. The puppy responded in a very natural way. It could be the same with your group. It is part of a leader's responsibility to pace their workers to their abilities. Not every one has the same endurance. They may be carrying other heavy loads than just what their duty as a deacon, Sunday school teacher, or office staff requires, so they may be tired from the "rest of their life". Marriage, children or financial stress can affect the team. Taking time to know and understand your team members as individuals can help you pace the race you are asking from them. They may not even be able to recognize why they are slowing down or wanting to drop out—they just know they are tired.

The first step should be in the form of encouragement. Perhaps the little puppy just needed a drink of water to be able to go a little farther. The same could be for your team! Give them a drink of appreciation and a word of support. Thank them for what

they have done, for what has been accomplished.

Feed them. Feed them truth as well as natural food! Re-state the vision once again.

Give them a time of rest. Take time to pray for them and their needs. Let them share their heart and concerns, provide a listening ear.

Resist comparisons to "the entire load" you are carrying, which may be difficult to do, but it really does not accomplish anything. If you stay focused on helping them recover their focus, you will all be blessed.

It could be possible they have gotten their eyes off serving Him and are bound to the fact they are serving *you*. In other words, they may have started the task with an understanding of God's call and purpose, but in their weariness, have forgotten that aspect, so they are seeing it from an earthly perspective rather than an eternal one. This can be a bit difficult to sort through, for most people are relational and do respond to requests for volunteers based on their relationships. God may or may not be the main motivation. If God is not, it may be time to help them lift their eyes to Him.

Remind yourself that as you help these young ones to grow they will eventually do just that! They will grow. How you are training them now will help them develop into their full calling and purpose. Finally, remember once you were young and some one needed patience to help you. Thank God for the good leaders that helped you build your stamina. Help your team do the same!



Go Team!

(Dealing with grief continued from page 4)

Each person bears grief differently. We have to give the respect of allowing each one to surface in their own time, in their own manner, with their own conclusions. Be kind, offer time, offer meals, offer prayers. Be a true friend: be honest and let them be honest. For some people talking is the only release, others, like Job, want silent companionship. Let your grieving friend tell you what it right for them, and don't push for healing faster than they can receive it.

Watch for signs that the grief has turned to depression. There may be someone who specializes in grief counseling or prayer counseling that can step in to help. The key here is honesty with the griever. Let them know your concerns and hear them out. Forcing someone to take action, unless they are endangering themselves or others, may break your relationship – and it may be the only healthy relationship they have.

Finally, be prepared for your own miracles as you watch the end of a Christian's life. Truth will out, the Holy Spirit will mature His fruit, and relationships will deepen. Grace will be there for you to receive comfort from the Lord, even if you are angry. Let your honesty with God forge a new kind of friendship with Him, one where your emotions are open and the communication is real.

So how did my grief after Mamma's death play out? I still cried, I still had to sorrow my father's loss, I still spent several weeks feeling like I was wearing sunglasses, not seeing the colors brightly or the future clearly. But it passed, it passed. Some days it still visits me, but the sadness is from loss of companionship, not incapacitating grief.

And always expect the fulfillment of the scripture in regards to your grief:

It came to pass.



Building Together Across Generations

Dealing with Grief

By Malana Ganz

I want to tell you the story of my encounters with grief and what I have learned over the past year. I hope it helps any of you in a similar situation.

My mother died at 42 after a long battle with ovarian cancer. I was 13, my sister was 15. My brother was married and expecting their first child. Each of us bore our grief differently.

My father took the death as hard as anyone in love with his wife would, but his upbringing and personality caused him to take refuge in the daily tasks and accomplishments that would order his mind and provide for his family. His sense of purpose gave him the time to let his emotions heal almost behind the scenes, quietly and without fanfare. He admitted to us later that he thought he had been cold and unfeeling during that time. Perhaps he was battered by grief enough to feel disconnected, but we saw him as kind and compassionate. We sensed his withdrawal, but my sister and I were withdrawn, too.

My brother's grief was devastated him, but his wife was wise and caring and helped him through it. I don't remember seeing them much in those days.

My sister found the grief overwhelming and cried through the night for weeks. She couldn't attend school, saw a psychiatrist for a while, and kept my father from sleeping while she sobbed at his bedside.

I was appalled with my sister, to the point that hearing crying made me angry for many years. I became a clone of my father in many ways, mimicking his detachment and focusing on function. The grief sat unresolved inside of me and I didn't know it.

This last year, my stepmother of 39 years (Mamma) was diagnosed with untreatable, terminal cancer. I was assaulted physically by my grief, ending up in the physician's office concerned about heart palpitations. After eliminating my heart as a health risk, I got some strong talk from the Dr about taking care of myself. He suggested anti-anxiety drugs. I tried something different.

My husband gave me a period of grace to "cocoon" myself from the world. I spent a week mostly in my bedroom with no responsibilities but to find a place in the arms of Jesus. I read the Word, prayed, played the guitar, took walks, decaffeinated myself, turned off the TV, and got a lot of sleep.

In the middle of this time I found an unusual cry vocalized straight out of my heart: "God, I HATED it when my mother died!"

Where did that come from? Of course, the anticipation of watching my stepmother die had reopened the wound from my mother's death. I had NEVER been honest about how painful it was. When I first became a Christian, I at least was able to say that I missed my mother, but that was the extent of my honesty. I now had to face the childhood wound and mourn the death of both mothers.

The first time I visited Mamma after her diagnosis, I really didn't want to go – yet I knew I needed to. Mamma was a Christian, but struggled with doubt and emotional instability. I had no idea how her fear of death and pain would exacerbate that. What I found was a woman who took the time to speak to our family from her heart in a way she never had. She expressed appreciation and admiration for us. She spoke with new gentleness. She was honest in a way we had never seen.

I went in fearful, and went home so impressed with God that I cranked up the CD player and drove for three hours singing with the windows down, wind blowing in my hair and hope growing deep inside.

How had God done this miracle in Mamma? I didn't know, and I didn't care. What I DID care about was that I could face death with Mamma as believing adults, and await her home going with hope.

R.E.A.L.
Women

Encouraging

Entertaining

Edifying

Excellent

Established

You are important to us.

Share your ideas, thoughts or suggestions.

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