

My Cup Runneth Over!



Twenty years ago, I was going through some really unhappy days in my life. Even though I knew God was working on me, I still felt as though my heart would never heal. After having my heart broken over and over again by circumstances happening in our family, I had no joy left.

One day, while I was praying, the LORD impressed upon my heart to start having a few ladies over each month for tea. I had never done anything like this before and thought, "*God, are you sure you want me to do this?*" Being uncertain that what I thought heard, I actually heard, I continued to pray about this instruction over the next few days. Soon, I felt the Holy Spirit's presence even stronger with a response of, "Yes, you!"

"Who would I invite LORD? You would have to tell me." He told me that there were a lot of women in our church who were hurting, just like me, who needed a loving ear to listen to them. They would be able to share their heavy hearts over a hot cup of tea and some home made cookies. I thought to myself, "OK, here I go! I will do what the LORD has asked me to do."

It wasn't long before the list of ladies to invite began popping into my head. I was on a mission. I would seek out the ladies who were not involved in ministries, or just looked like they needed a big hug.

I found myself inviting women I didn't know well, including a Pastor's wife. This was a good way for everyone to get to know everyone else on a personal level. This would also give the women some room to relax and be themselves, away from the demands of their daily lives.

Although I was excited, I was also a little nervous. I had never hosted anything like this before! I had no idea what to do after everyone arrived, so I read up on "Tea Parties". Books by Emilie Barns and Patsy Clairmont were great! The LORD is so good he also sent several ladies over to help me! I have to say, It is not only a blessing, but also a lot of fun doing things with a Sister in Christ!

Although it was scary at first, I began to look forward to those tea parties! Each month would bring different women, with different backgrounds, and different stories. I felt as though their being in my home was a blessing to me! In reality, the LORD was using this time to be a blessing to all of us. I was blessing them, and they were blessing me! Only the LORD can work out such a beautiful choreography!

I learned that God can use the smallest, seemingly insignificant things to heal a broken heart, including mine. God took my broken, joyless heart and filled it to overflowing with happiness and joy. I now love serving Tea Parties for the LORD!

Romans 12:9-13 of *The Message*, says:

Loving from the center of who you are; don't fake it. Be good friends who Love deeply; playing second fiddle. Don't burn out; keep yourselves fueled and aflame. Be alert servants of the Master, cheerfully expectant. Don't quit in hard times; pray all the harder. Help needy Christians; be inventive in hospitality.

The NIV says it this way:

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the LORD. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

In closing, I am so glad that I know Jesus as my personal friend. A friend who heard my distant cry, and answered.

Story by Karen McNutt,
as told to Tammi Newsted



