

August 10, 2006

## **Encouragement for Today**

Principle 1

### **“Sitting In Time-Out, Part 1”**

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#### **Key Verse:**

Lamentations 3:22-24, “Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, ‘The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.’” (NIV)

#### **Devotion:**

“Time for everybody to go to bed,” I commanded in a very dramatic fashion.

“But it’s still light outside,” my children protested.

I had no idea what time the clock said and frankly I didn’t care. Bedtime was going to rescue me from this disaster of an evening, and I’d had enough.

What started out as a relaxing afternoon of lying on the couch indulging myself in a good book, ended in total chaos. Three sentences into the first page, my three happy daughters who had been playing in the yard came thundering into the house having turned into grumpy, hot, messy creatures, intent on wreaking havoc in my sanctuary.

“Mom, my straw busted through the bottom of my drink,” one cried as she carried the dripping cup of sticky orange liquid through the living room, through the kitchen and parked in front of me on the den carpet. I jumped from the couch, grabbed the drink, and turned to find another creature standing behind me, her new church outfit covered in mud. Then started the whining in the kitchen from one staring down at the crock pot, “Why can’t we be like normal families and eat out at restaurants? We always eat at home.” I gave up on the book reading and with a frustrated huff called everyone to an early dinner.

To add even more drama to my bedtime announcement, I concluded by saying that after they got ready for bed they should go sit on their beds and moan.... for the Bible says that the Holy Spirit will lift up prayers on our behalf if all we can do is moan.

“So, the Holy Spirit will be tucking you into bed tonight. I am done!” I turned, grabbed the book I never got to read, and marched off to my bedroom. Mommy was putting herself in time out!

I plopped down on my bed and stared at the ceiling. Did I just tell my kids that the Holy Spirit would be tucking them into bed? What kind of mother does that? *A tired, exhausted, empty one*, I answered myself. One that did not turn her emotions over to the Lord today. One that did not take time before rushing into her day to ask the Lord to be her portion and to give her His perspective throughout the day. One that didn't take time to pray.

I pushed the book I'd been waiting to read all afternoon aside and reached for my Bible, opening it to Lamentations. After reading today's Key Verse, I was struck (and convicted) by several important things:

1. Because I didn't spend time with the Lord and let Him love on me that day, I allowed myself to be consumed by the annoyances and chaos around me. *And* I allowed my emotions to rule the way I spoke to my children.
2. Because I hadn't taken the time to allow God to graciously show compassion toward me that morning, I wasn't able to be gracious or compassionate to my children either.
3. Because I didn't wait patiently for Him to be my portion that day, I ended up dry and unfulfilled, with nothing to give to my family who so needed me to be patient with them as well.

Even Jesus, the Savior of the world, had to take time each day to ask for His portion. When He taught us to pray in Matthew chapter 6, he taught us to ask for our portion. Matthew 6:11 says, "Give us today our daily bread."

The reality is that we will all have days where our attitude is not what it should be. We all fall short. Now maybe you've never fallen as short as me - the woman who relied on the Holy Spirit to tuck her kids into bed! But there are areas that you will have to rely on God and His provision.

As mothers, it's easy to let our emotions run wild and operate based on how we feel. If we feel happy, we can be patient. But, if our stress level rises our patience easily slips and we can snap at those we love most. If we feel organized, we can be stable. But, if things start getting misplaced and disheveled, it is easy to feel angry and fly off the handle. This roller coaster of emotions is hard on mom and family. I've found the only stabilizing force when I feel my emotions running away is the Lord.

### **My Prayer for Today:**

Dear Lord, thank You for being the one stable and consistent force in this crazy world of mine. I am so grateful to know that I can choose to operate out of a spirit-controlled mind and attitude because You have made me a new creature. Help me to make this wise choice when I'm feeling pressed and stressed. And thank You for Your grace when I fall. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

### **Application Steps:**

Take a look at today's Power Verses. They are "portion" Scriptures that can help us live a spirit-controlled life where God is filling us and directing our thoughts, attitudes and actions.

Try praying each one of them on a daily basis. You can use note cards to write them down and place them in your Bible or various spots throughout your home where you know you will see them.

Remember, asking God to be your portion is a daily discipline. You can't control your reactions to life just by willing yourself to be in a good mood or to act godly. You must rely on God's strength, power, control and provision.

**Reflection Points:**

What kind of day are you having?

Are you feeling full or empty?

Have you asked God to fill you with His Holy Spirit for today, relying on His strength and His Word to make that happen?

**Power Verses:**

Romans 8:6, "The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace." (NIV)

Psalms 16:5, "Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure." (NIV)

Psalms 73:26, "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." (NIV)

Philippians 4:13, "I can do everything through him who gives me strength." (NIV)

Psalms 142:5, "I cry to you, O Lord; I say, 'You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.'" (NIV)

Matthew 6:11, "Give us today our daily bread." (NIV)

**Additional Resources:**

*The Bathtub is Overflowing, but I Feel Drained*; by Lysa TerKeurst

[http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources\\_bathtub.htm](http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources_bathtub.htm)

The Gift of Prayer, ETC Corner

<http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/etcJun04.htm>

*A Woman's Secret to a Balanced Life*; by Lysa TerKeurst and Sharon Jaynes

[http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources\\_secretBalanced.htm](http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources_secretBalanced.htm)