



# Views from the Fish Bowl

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Newsletter for  
Ministers' Wives

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## Special points of interest:

- \* God promises to supply all our needs but not all our wants .
- \* Let your neighbors know what you believe at Christmas
- \* Bitterness always destroys the work of God.
- \* One person's idea can become a foundation for others.

## View from the Fish Bowl!

Christmas time is one of my favorite times of the year. I love getting out the decorations and making my house festive. It is the one time I don't feel guilty for spending money on my family and others. That is why I save all year for Christmas. Each week I put a little aside in a bank account just so I can shop and give at Christmas. I also love watching Christmas movies, all the yummy foods, and I enjoying all the traditions of Christmas.

Why, I ask myself? It's a lot of work. It's stressful sometimes, Do people really care what they get? There are those who dislike Christmas, because they think it's a money waster, its commercial, it's too much family in one place at one time. It's not really Jesus Birthday, it's a pagan holiday made better. Yeah I know all the arguments. Does that change my mind? NO!!!

If you grew up in a loving Christian home, which I did, and celebrated Christmas with family, and if you went to church as a young child and enjoyed being a part of the Christmas programs, then you are more than likely like

myself and enjoy the season. However if you did not grow up in such an environment and your family fought and griped about Christmas, then most likely you yourself struggle .



**Deck the bowl with lovely foliage!**  
Fa, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la.

Last year I remember shopping and coming across a real scrooge who hated the season. He was not pleasant to be around. The problem was he had been hired by the store to work the cash register. When I wished him a joyous Christmas he in no uncertain terms let me know how he felt. I felt very sorry for him and he received my prayers that day.

What can you do this Christmas to make it a time of joy for your family and others you meet?

First of all **see it as a time to share Christ** and

## Sketches of New Testament Women

### The Titus 2 Model: Part 8 (taken from God's Priceless Woman)

Titus 2:4-5 reads "so they may encourage the young women to love their husbands and to love their children, to be self-controlled, pure, homemakers..."

Last time we said we would continue more on homemaking in our next issue. This month we will look at budgeting and meal planning for the home.

#### Budgeting

1. Do not Presume on the Future. Our instant culture make self-restraint difficult. Instead of purchasing items on credit, wait until the item can be purchased with cash (Prov. 22:7; Romans 13:8) Frequently, during the delay, the item becomes available in a more economical way. (Continued on page 2)

## Titus 2 woman (continued)

2. Plan Ahead To Avoid Needless Expenditures. Grocery shopping is a major area where pre-planning saves money. Lack of time to thoughtfully plan menus or shop for bargains often leads to the purchase of more expensive, less nutritious “convenience” foods.

3. Check Attitude Towards Material Possessions. True happiness and lasting joy are not contingent upon financial status, but on the level of one’s relationship with the Lord. As Christians, we are stewards of the Lord’s money. We are exhorted to make use of the world, but not full use. (I Cor.7:30-31) Eternal matters should take precedence over temporal gain (Luke 16:9-13)

4. Learn To Separate Needs From Wants. God promises to supply all our needs (Phil. 4:19), but not all our wants (James 4:3). Evaluate current desires by asking questions such as these: Will it increase my effectiveness for the Lord? Is it frivolous or legitimate? Is the object essential or with creativity can the need be met without buying something new?

5. Remember a Dollar Saved is More Than a Dollar Earned. Only a portion of each earned dollar reaches the worker. Money is deducted from paychecks for taxes, retirement, and so forth. When a woman saves a dollar from grocery shopping, she saves a complete dollar. A woman who carefully spends the household funds may be able to contribute as much or more to the family income as a woman working full-time outside the home.

### Improving meal planning

1. Evaluate the Nutritional Value in Foods. Nourishment should be an obvious reason for eating, but unfortunately in modern times taste or price alone is often the criteria for food selection. The taste buds may not know the difference, but the human body is designed to be nourished by genuine food, not chemical substitutes. A woman is responsible to guard her family’s health.



**A penny saved... Is not very much!**

2. Consider The Aesthetic Quality of Mealtimes. More than a daily necessity of life, cooking should be approached as an art form. God has given us taste buds, a delicate sense of smell and a deep appreciation for texture and color. Little touches can make even a simple plate of food a thing of beauty.

3. Consider Social Needs. Upsetting topics should be avoided at the dinner table. The climate at meals should include esteem, mutual interest and love. Better a meal of vegetables where there is love than a fattened calf with hatred” (Prov. 15:17)

**“Digestion is enhanced by pleasant surroundings and tasty food.”**

## A Quiz on Attitudes

- I believe that love is
  - something that just happens
  - a matter of choice
- I believe it is natural to be
  - unhappy
  - happy
- I believe that life is
  - an unending struggle
  - a great adventure
- I believe that people who are optimistic are
  - unaware
  - trusting God
- I believe that if people really knew me they would
  - find me boring



I can use my own resources for happiness, not depend on others.

- enjoy me as a friend
- I believe that to get ahead in life I will probably have to
  - look out for my own rights
  - find God’s will for me
- I believe most men
  - take advantage of women
  - genuinely enjoy women
- I believe God gave me children
  - to be trained no matter how difficult it may be
  - to be enjoyed
- I believe that being a Christian
  - involves many sacrifices and hardships
  - is the happiest, most fulfilling kind of life there is

## Bitterness-What it does to us! What we Need to do with it!

Job 2:9 says: "His wife said to him, "Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!" Job's wife was bitter, bitter against God.

1. Bitterness implies that God isn't fair. Remember that God takes the bad that happens to us and turns it for our good. God is fair.
2. Bitterness breeds further discontentment.
3. Bitterness always destroys the work of God. Many homes and churches are split by bitterness.
4. Bitterness creates guilt and destroys the joy of the Lord.
5. Bitterness destroys the physical self. It is the biggest source of physical and emotional illness.
6. Bitterness destroys fellowship among believers.

### How to deal with Bitterness

1. **Learn to forgive.** (Forgiveness is unconditional) Forgive-

ness doesn't always imply there will be change. They may never know they are wrong. Forgiving is refusing to dwell on the past.

2. **Praise the Lord.** It is impossible to be bitter and praise the Lord.
3. **Be in the Word of God.** Don't get out of the habit of being in the word no matter how you feel.
4. Pray for the one you are bitter against. (James 3:13-16)
5. Love others. Find something nice you can do for that person.



## Fish bowl (continued)

keep the good news of Christmas before others. What a great time to bring up hope in Christ as our Savior. It can also be a great time with **children and grandchildren to help them learn the true stories of Christmas.** I was never able to **trick** my kids into believing in Santa. I felt it was a lie in which I was not willing to participate. So Santa became just a fun unreal character. My kids today think I was silly and most of them do not follow my example, but I wanted them to know what Christmas was really about. The manger scene at our house became the means of teaching the truth in a fun way. Santa did not play a major role. **Let your neighbors know what you believe** at Christmas by giving a gift of love with a Bible verse attached or inviting them to your open house, which also includes believers.

**Take time yourself** to read the Christmas story again as if its for the first time. Maybe read a good book about the Christmas passage. **Send out Christ cards with a clear message** of what Christ did for us, and of course **pray for opportunities** to be a light in our dark world.

**After Christmas we pray** for each of the families that send us a card . One card a day can last for half a year, depending how many people send you cards. Take this Christmas and make it a special time for Christ.

"Make a family tradition."



## Recipe Corner (Chocolate Molasses Spice Cookies)

I Watched this recipe being made on the Martha Stewart Website. It Looked and sounded really good. It was!

- 1 stick of butter
- 1 tab. fresh grated ginger (Cream these three ingred.)
- 1/2 cup brown sugar

While creaming in electric mixer put together dry ingred.

- 1 1/2 cups plus 1 tab. flour
- 1 tea. ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tea. ground cloves
- 1 1/4 tea. ground ginger
- A smidge of ground nutmeg

- 1 tab. cocoa powder

Add the mixed dry ingredients to your first 3 ingredients, alternating it with 1/2 cup of molasses and 1 tea. baking soda which has been dissolved with 1 1/2 tea of boiling water.

Then add 7 oz. of semi-sweet chocolate chunks. Chill 1 hour then roll into balls and roll in sugar.

Cook at 325 for about 15 min.



Yum, yum!

**Genesee and Bay Association  
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**Encouraging Ministers' wives in the  
Genesee District and Bay Area.**

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## **Let the Brainstorming Begin!** (Taken from Womensministry.net)

Are you wanting to start a new ministry in your church? Then here are some great ideas in how to brainstorm with a group.

### **How to begin:**

**Define the Issue:** Begin by clearly defining the topic, question or problem. This will be the main topic for brainstorming and might be as simple as, "How can we do ministry better?" or could be a more complex consideration. The point is to have clear focus.

**Gather a Group:** Secure a location, and invite the people whose brains you hope to storm.

**Gather the Goods:** You will need a flip chart or marker board to record ideas and paper and pens for everyone. You may like to have refreshments!

### **Helpful Hints for Brainstorms**

**All ideas have potential, so withhold judgment.** This is a free for all. Let them roll.

**Quantity is better than quality.** Focus on the number of ideas rather than whether or not the ideas are feasible, practical or helpful.

**Out of the ordinary is in.** The more wild, out of the box, unusual, surprising...the better. You never know!

**Build up.** One person's idea can become a foundation for others. Keep adding to the idea until the thoughts run dry.

### **6 Ways to Generate a Storm of Ideas**

**Ask in Reverse.** Looking at a topic from an opposing viewpoint opens up fresh perspective, so pose your question in reverse. Example; "What is women's ministry not?"  
**Write a Simile.** Ask each person to compare this ministry to something else by writing a simile. This insight lets you in on what others think about this ministry.

**Be a Journalist.** Ask the basic investigative questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

**Create Clusters.** Give each person a random word chosen from a dictionary. Ask them to write this word in a circle in the middle of a blank page. Draw a spoke from this circle and write a related word. Repeat for 5-10 min. to create new categories and subcategories. Share and discuss.

**Build a Cube.** A Cube has six sides, and so does this brainstorming idea. Take a closer look at you main topic by (1) describing it, (2) comparing it, (3) analyzing it, (4) associating it, (5) applying it and (6) arguing for or against it.  
**Close out the session with a discussion of the ideas.**

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