

Lives of Fragrance

2 Corinthians 4:14-17

November 2025 | Vol. 4, Issue 5



Ruby Boveda encourages us to rejoice in the Lord even through difficult circumstances, looking up to Him and listening to His Word. Ruby's full article may be found at <https://beingwhohewantsmetobe.wordpress.com/>.

Look up and Listen

By Ruby Boveda

Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice. (Philippians 4:4). Rejoicing always can be quite a task at times. Trial-filled moments and disappointments can keep our mind fixed on the cares of this world, allowing us to forget God is working a master plan. Financial hardships, friendships lost, death, strained relationships, illness, disappointments, world issues: there are so many instances where rejoicing can be far from your lips. The day after having a stroke, on my way home, my speech was perfect, as though this major event did not just take place. The doctors were convinced I did not have a stroke either. The days to follow were devastating as the after-effects began to reveal themselves. Speech quality began to slowly deteriorate and thoughts were escaping. No longer could I hold a conversation or speak to people normally. Weeping became routine from the newfound confusion I experienced completing normal daily tasks. Reading was difficult as I could no longer comprehend words and definitions escaped me. My most valuable assets, communication and thought, had been stripped away, overnight. How could the Lord be glorified in this? How could I rejoice? The answer is by going back to scripture.

Mary Magdalene felt unloved and rejected by all. Tormented by demons, discarded by society, yet treasured by the Savior. Jesus found value in her, removed the scales of unworthiness from her eyes, set her free from demons, and restored her. Jesus had a relationship with her, knew her, and cared for her as no one had before.

John 20, I believe, paints the best picture of Mary's emotional state upon seeing the empty tomb with linens intact.

She raced to Peter and John, frantic to discover who took their Lord, and where He had been laid. Alone, she weeps inconsolably, crushed again, with a hopeless heart.

Rejoicing is far from Mary's lips. We can clearly see here that Mary was so distraught in her situation she would not see the Lord through her tears and did not know His voice through her heartache. Have you ever felt like Mary? Broken, lost, hopeless, helpless, without answers, maybe unable to continue on due to the severity of what has happened or what is to come? How can we rejoice despite circumstance? As we see in Mary's example, it is by stopping, by listening to our Father, and by looking up. Although she is clouded for the moment, when she hears the voice of her Father, she looks up. John 10:27 says, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me." Mary knew the one her soul longed for. Sweet friend, we can learn so much from Mary. We can rejoice despite circumstance if we know God and have a relationship with Him (John 15:14-15). We can rejoice if we remember what He has done for us (Psalm 103:2). We can rejoice knowing He is always leading us (Psalm 119:105). We can rejoice if we remember He always has a plan in action, even when we can't see it (Jeremiah 29:11). We can rejoice because we know He will never leave us, nor forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:6). We can rejoice because of the future that awaits us (Romans 8:18).

What are you facing today that is causing you to look down in despair? Look up! Remember Jesus has come to set you free and to give life more abundant (John 10:10)! Remember what He has done on the cross, paying the penalty for your sin, that you may be set free and given an abundant life (John 10:7-16)! We can continue our rejoicing heart by following Mary's example. She heard the voice of Christ and ran to tell others. To whom can you run to tell about what God has done, is doing, or to share hope of what He will do? Don't let one more moment pass where the enemy robs you of joy. Remember and look up dear friend. Jesus is alive, working a plan to bless your soul while bringing Him glory. Praise the Lord!

What's New

November 27th

Thanksgiving Day

December 6th

Women's Christmas Tea, 2-4 p.m., TBC Gym. Come for fellowship, Christmas carols, and sweet treats!

Weekly Opportunity

Women of Prayer, Tuesdays 12-2 p.m., Ambassador Room. Join with your sisters in Christ to sing to the Lord, to pray, and to enjoy sweet fellowship!

On The Pursuit of God

By Karen Krueger

The Pursuit of God by A.W. Tozer is a classic of Christian literature. Tozer, a pastor and prolific author, wrote *The Pursuit of God* in 1948. Tozer wrote to exhort Christians to seek whole-heartedly after God so that they might know and walk intimately with Him. Tozer does not give a formula for doing this, nor does he imply that this is easily come by. Instead, he gives Scriptural exhortation and examples from the lives of saints which help us understand the passion to draw closer to God. The Christian believer, having been regenerated, has a hunger and thirst for deeper knowledge of God. Tozer delightfully remarks, "The moment the Spirit has quickened us to life in regeneration our whole being senses its kinship to God and leaps up in joyous recognition. That is the heavenly birth without which we cannot see the Kingdom of God. It is, however, not an end but an inception, for now begins the glorious pursuit, the heart's happy exploration of the infinite riches of the Godhead. . .To have found God and still to pursue Him is the soul's paradox of love, scorned indeed by the too-easily-satisfied religionist, but justified in happy experience by the children of the burning heart."

At times, though, our love chills and we become content with our salvation and in merely knowing about God, rather than increasingly seeking His presence. However, we are exhorted in Scripture to seek the Lord, to wait upon Him, to run to Him, to hide in Him, and to delight in Him! Tozer urges believers to yield to the Spirit's work, as He reveals what our hearts cherish more dearly than God. Loved ones, possessions, and the deep entanglement of sins of the self often keep us content with ourselves, so that we do not deeply hunger after God. Tozer warns against thinking that this is a work of self-improvement, but to recognize it as a work of God: "Let us beware of tinkering with our inner life in hope ourselves to rend the veil. God must do everything for us. Our part is to yield and trust. We must confess, forsake, repudiate the self-life, and then reckon it crucified." Ladies, I encourage you to read this book with urgency and compulsion, as you exclaim with deep yearning, "I must know God!" and then be willing to submit to His work in your heart and life.

Thanksgiving

By Karen Krueger

Thanksgiving. The act of attributing gratitude to a person for acts of kindness or gifts. A national holiday in the United States for the express purpose of giving thanks. Biblically, a profound offering of praise and thanks to God for who he is and for his wonderful works, most especially that of his great salvation. This year, let us encourage one another to lift our hearts with overflowing thankfulness to God for Himself! He has given us redemption through Christ; we have everything needful for life and godliness; and His Spirit dwells within us, sanctifying us and making us into the image of Christ. As we reflect on God, let us remember his goodness, his mercy, and his grace, and be thankful for His ongoing work in our lives and hearts.

All praise and thanks to God
The Father now be given,
The Son and Spirit blest,
Who reign in highest heaven

Now Thank We All Our God
Martin Rinkart, 1636

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Recipe

Diane Brown (Mrs. Stephen Brown)

Diane shares this recipe for a delicious sweet bread. She says that it is good for the Praying Grannies, so it will be good for you!

Carrot Apple Bread

- 1 large egg
- ½ c. Brown sugar
- ¼ c. Granulated sugar
- 2 tsp. Vanilla
- 2 tsp. Cinnamon
- ½ tsp. Ground nutmeg
- ⅓ c. Liquefied Coconut oil
- ¼ c. Sour cream
- 1 c. Flour
- ½ tsp. Baking powder
- ½ tsp. Baking soda
- A pinch of salt
- ¾ c. Grated carrots
- ¾ c. Grated apples

In a large bowl, combine the first eight ingredients. Add dry ingredients and fold together gently (don't over-mix). Add carrots and apples; fold gently to combine. Preheat oven to 350°. Spray 9x5 loaf pan with floured cooking spray. Turn batter into pan. Bake 45-52 min. or until toothpick comes out clean. Notes: Diane has doubled this recipe and baked it in a Bundt cake pan for 45 min. Greek yogurt can be substituted for the sour cream.

Blessings from the Retreat

Hanh Nguyen

This was my second time attending the Women's Retreat, and I am so grateful I went. Life had been so busy, and I really needed time to quiet my mind and refocus on the Lord. Stepping away from my daily routine and spending the weekend with so many amazing women of God allowed me to relax and be more present. I also had the blessing of growing closer to women I had not really gotten to know before. One of the most meaningful moments for me was being able to share what I was going through and having another woman pray for me. That is something I would not have had the courage to ask for in a regular church setting, but in this space I felt safe to do so. As a result, my anxiety lifted, and I was able to focus more fully on the present.

As 1 Thessalonians 5:11 reminds us, "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." That is exactly what I experienced at the retreat: encouragement, prayer, and genuine connection. I would encourage every woman to attend a retreat like this at least once. It is a wonderful opportunity for God to refresh your spirit, strengthen your faith, and surround you with sisters in Christ who will lift you up.

Lives of Fragrance is a publication of the Women's Ministries of Tulsa Bible Church. For corrections, comments, or written contributions, please email flnewsandviews@gmail.com.

Editor/Contributor: Karen Krueger

Contributors: Ruby Boveda, Diane Brown, Hanh Nguyen

Cover Art: Jennie Augusta Brownscombe, *The First Thanksgiving at Plymouth*

Editors/Design: Lydia Strobe & CTS