

A Celebration of Pregnancy!

Doran Richards and Susan Tederick



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We give thanks first to our Almighty God. To Him alone be all glory, honor, and praise for writing His vision upon our hearts; that we may serve Him with all diligence! We pray His continued blessings in our endeavor to bring to light His blessings to us in the way of a child.

We give thanks to our husbands and families; enduring our work on this project, being ever so patient, loving and inspiring.

We give thanks to the Elders and their wives, of Christ's Covenant Church, who have been true shepherds to their flock; watching over us, guiding us and giving direction when needed.

We thank lastly, our dear friends, who have shown their support and encouraged us to keep going with God's grace working through us. Special thanks to Rev. Ovid Need and his family for their precious time toward helping to publish this manual.

*“Oh, give thanks to the LORD!
Call upon His name;
Make known His deeds among the peoples!
Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him;
Talk of all His wondrous works!
Glory in His holy name;
Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD!
Seek the LORD and His strength;
Seek His face evermore!”
~ Psalm 105:3-4*

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FOREWORD

As the births of my last few babies neared, I longed for some way to celebrate with those I loved the coming births of the blessings God had knitted so majestically in my womb. Loving celebrations of all kinds, I felt something missing as the momentous day drew near.

Over the years, I have attended celebrations as new mothers were “showered” with gifts to give their mothering days a well-supplied start. I have given bags of diapers to mothers who had several children and just needed a little extra something to cover those first weeks. Yet there have been so many births I have observed over the years of babies 2, 3, 5, 7, perhaps 10 or 13, occurring without much of a notice, except perhaps to the mother and father who labor faithfully to deliver and rear these children up in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

We are the Body of Christ, and as such, we all are blessed when one more child is born to His covenant people – through the gift of faith, one more Body part to do the work of discipling the nations, one more voice to be raised in praising the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, one more made in the image of God to glorify and enjoy Him forever. This is cause for celebration. This is reason for a Blessing God’s Way.

I am delighted to see this manual in print and in action across the nations, throughout the Body of Christ - a visible means of celebrating the covenant blessings of God; shiny, new arrows in the hands of a warrior; olive plants sitting so magnificently around the tables of God’s people; fearfully and wonderfully made hands to do the work in His kingdom.

This is the babe that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Shonda Parker, wife, mother, author of *Naturally Healthy Pregnancy*, *Naturally Healthy Woman* and *Mommy Diagnostics*

BLESSING GOD'S WAY MATERIAL LIST

Below you will find a list of materials that we hope will be helpful in planning a ***Blessing God's Way*** celebration. Feel free to gather the materials yourself. However, we encourage you, as a convenience, to purchase a kit (made with quality products) through our online Shoppe.

KIT MATERIALS

- Manual
- Invitations
- Herb packet for water foot bath
- Essential oils for massage
- *Yankee* Tea Light Candles
- Sand
- Tray for sand and candles
- ***Blessing God's Way*** brochures

MATERIALS FROM HOME

- Hairbrush
- Hair ties, pins
- Dried or real flowers
- Very warm water
- Basin for foot bath
- Lighter or matches
- Box of tissues
- Pillows
- Towels

PART ONE:

***BLESSING GOD'S WAY
REFORMATION***

OUR MISSION & INTRODUCTION

Blessing God's Way Mission

A celebration of pregnancy! We believe that pregnancy is a reward and gift from our Father in heaven and ought to be taught accordingly. At the same time, pregnancy should be a time of joy and celebration of the extension of His kingdom here on earth!

Introduction to Blessing God's Way

You have before you a manual for a ***Blessing God's Way***. The purpose is two-fold. First and foremost, we want to give honor, glory and praise to our God for His gift of children. The second is to create a gathering for women and families to come together to celebrate and give support to the mother-to-be during the blessed state of pregnancy.

The word *blessing* means “a short prayer for divine approval.” To *bless* a mother, we are invoking God's favor upon her for her “way”, the journey, through her transition ahead. Mothers need support and encouragement throughout this transition and having a ***Blessing God's Way*** provides this through scripture reading, praise to our LORD, singing of songs, and partaking in a meal together.

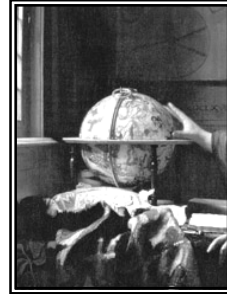
Before continuing on, please make a note that ***Blessing God's Way*** is an avenue for women and families to come together to give honor to God for the gift of children and to celebrate God's blessing to us in the way of a child. We are not advocating any particular point of view in the area of family planning. Each of us has our own relationship with the LORD, and we walk out our paths differently.

Blessing God's Way goes back to a simpler message. God is the Giver and Creator of the blessing of children, and children are a blessing, no matter how many you have.

MODERN WORLDVIEW OF PREGNANCY

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” ~ Ephesians 1:3

Do you think our society views pregnancy as a gift and reward (blessing) from our LORD? Not really. In some cases, different cultures view pregnancy as a sacred event, but they do not give honor where honor is due. We are to acknowledge God’s design as a blessing and rejoice in it. We would do well to teach it to our younger generations as a wonderful gift bestowed from our loving Father in heaven!



What greater gift can He give us here on earth? God has revealed to us His majesty through times of life such as pregnancy and birth, giving the world a clear understanding that this is a magnificent design wrought only by some higher power - God’s power!

“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.” ~ Romans 1:20-21

We would like to change the way society and our culture view pregnancy and the gift that God has bestowed upon us, one mother at a time. As Christians, we are to be a shining light unto a dying world letting our “light” so shine before men that we may glorify our Father in heaven. Let us help mothers be grateful for their pregnancies so they can then be a shining light unto those around them. God says “to be holy as I am Holy” and “let your light so shine before men.” As Christians, let us be set apart, showing the goodness of “being with child” and teaching the younger

generations the importance of the wonderful gift God gives us through childbearing!

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” ~ Romans 12:2

We need to honor God for His design, for His reward and for His goodness to us. He alone should be revered for His gift toward us in pregnancy. ***Blessing God’s Way*** gives an opportunity for women and families to come together and to help mothers experience the joy and honor that God has bestowed upon them with a child. Pregnancy is a blessing God’s way.

“For you have formed my inward parts; you covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they were all fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.” ~ Psalm 139:13-16

FRUIT OF THE WOMB



The fruit of our womb is His reward, according to the Bible. What do you think of when you hear those words? God uses the term “fruit” many times in the Bible when referring to various aspects of our lives. As Christians, we are to bear fruit in our actions so that others see how we are children of the LORD. We can also bear fruit by bringing forth children. It is a sweet, delicious gift that has taken time to grow on a vine (the cord), and the baby is fed by the base of that vine, the placenta - just like we are to be fed by God through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. Jesus says, *“I am the vine, you are the branches”* (John 15:5).

What a beautiful picture the LORD has given us! God produces this fruit of our womb, not the mother, not the father. After the flood, He told Noah, *“Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth”* (Genesis 9:1). Our children are gifts, they are the fruit of our wombs, and oh how sweet and “yummy” they are! Below are more scriptures that speak of fruit.

“Your wife will be like a fruitful vine, in the very heart of your house, your children like olive plants all around your table.”
~ Psalm 128:1-3

“Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground...” ~ Deuteronomy 28:4

SERVANTHOOD

God has given us many scriptures in the Bible pertaining to different aspects that are covered in hosting or attending a ***Blessing God's Way***. By being a host to women and serving one another we can begin to exhort, admonish and encourage the women around us in the state of pregnancy.

“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God... If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Christ Jesus, to whom belong the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” ~ I Peter 4:10-11

How can we serve one another? How can we love one another? A ***Blessing God's Way*** gives us an opportunity to serve our fellow “man” by setting aside a time to honor the LORD for His work in a loved one’s life. Pampering the mother and helping her to be spiritually fed by God’s word for her transition is essential in our role as her friends and family.



How often do we wash each other's feet? How often do we humble ourselves in service toward others? We serve our families at home day by day. However, extending our love through service to others becomes obsolete in our society with today's busy schedules. You can change this by offering a little of your time to serve others outside of your home through hosting a ***Blessing God's Way*** for someone you know. What an example of servanthood this would be to our young daughters and future generations!

HOSPITALITY

Hospitable means treating guests with warmth and generosity. ***Blessing God's Way*** offers a time that you can practice hospitality. Bringing fellow women and families in our homes gives us an opportunity to be an example of Christ and what He has done for us.

"Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the LORD; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality." ~ Romans 12:10-13

Did you know you could use so many wonderful Godly characteristics just hosting or attending a *Blessing God's Way*?

Again, our intention for writing this manual is not to convert anyone's heart. The Holy Spirit changes our hearts and minds. He guides us, teaches us and gives us understanding that we might be pleasing unto the LORD. We pray that you will see servanthood and hospitality in the proper light - that would be a great sign of success for writing this manual.

SPECIAL SURROUNDINGS



We all have those favorite areas in our home where we can unwind and feel relaxed. For the ***Blessing God's Way***, we want to create that area plus an extra amount of “comfort” to the surroundings, if possible. The mother-to-be needs a place where she can see all the “pretties” around her. She can have joy and happiness by just looking around the room. A suggestion would be to touch the five senses in some manner:

- Get out special cloths or spreads to stretch out on the ground where you will gather;
- Fill the room with fresh flowers from the outdoors;
- Have candles burning to create a light that is pleasing and welcoming;
- Depending on the weather, use the outdoors to have fresh air blowing and crisp air to breathe;
- Make all the chairs, spreads and pillows soft and smooth to the touch;
- Have spiritual, encouraging music playing softly in the background.

SAMPLE SONGS FOR CELEBRATION

We have included songs in this manual that we feel will allow you to give praise and honor to God for His blessing to the mother-to-be. The songs also offer encouragement, inspiration, and exhortation during this joyful, but difficult, time in her life. Please feel free to copy them (may need to be enlarged) and distribute them to your guests so that everyone can raise their voices together.

“I will sing of mercy and justice; to You, O LORD, I will sing praises.” ~ Psalm 101:1



“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.” ~ James 5:13

*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, sing with grace in your hearts to the LORD.”
~ Colossians 3:16*

FELLOWSHIP MEAL



At the closing of a ***Blessing God’s Way***, the guests are asked to gather and partake of a meal together. Sharing fellowship with one another is part of this celebration. Always remember our food is from Him and of Him, being filled with the bread of life! One of the benefits of Jesus dying on the cross is that we can entertain and share a fellowship meal with our loved ones. Food is a blessing. It is also nourishing, sustaining and life giving.

“A feast is made for laughter.” ~ Ecclesiastes 10:19

*“But he who is of a merry heart has a continual feast.”
~ Proverb 15:15*

ADDITIONAL TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Breaking bread with one another is an intimate gesture. It should be sweet and lasting (not in a hurry to get everyone out and home when the clock strikes 2:00). We don’t mean to say that you should keep everyone in your home all day,

either, of course! Have a time schedule for the ***Blessing God's Way***, but don't be too harsh in sticking to the minute of it. Remember, we want to make a statement of "relax" to our mother-to-be and guests.

2. A ***Blessing God's Way*** is an intimate gathering for close friends and loved ones. When you make your invitation list, make sure you include people who are comfortable around one another. Everyone present does not have to be a Christian. We pray that by hearing the word of God at this gathering their hearts will be turned to Him. We know that scripture does not come back void!
3. When inviting women to a ***Blessing God's Way***, consider inviting husbands and children to take part in this celebration. Remember this is a time for the mother to relax, and sometimes having little children around would defeat that purpose. The focus should be first on the LORD, then on the mother, then on the rest of the family present. You can also invite their midwives or physicians, giving them an opportunity to get to know their clients better.
4. When scheduling a ***Blessing God's Way***, remember to do it close to the due date, but not too close. We want to give her this relaxation toward the end, but remember the golden rule of "going two weeks early or two weeks late." This is when it is most appreciated by the mother-to-be.
5. It would be nice for someone, the host or another guest, to start a scrapbook with all the poems, blessing and thoughts that were presented at the gathering. The expecting mother would then have the scrapbook, which she may like to look at while she is in labor. This can be very encouraging to her in her initial stages of labor. A ***Blessing God's Way*** scrapbook has been designed for this occasion. This can be purchased from us, or you can purchase a plain one from your favorite store.

6. Taking and developing photos from the ***Blessing God's Way*** would be an awesome addition to the scrapbook when completed. Having the photos to view will be a treat and joy for the expectant mother and her family for years to come.
7. The ***Blessing God's Way*** manual is meant to be given to the mother-to-be after the gathering. It includes prayers and scriptures that can be referenced easily by her for the rest of her pregnancy and after.

PART TWO:
GETTING STARTED

OUTLINE FOR BLESSING GOD'S WAY

1. Choose either an indoor or outdoor special place to host the ***Blessing God's Way***. You will need the materials from the kit. Go out of your way to make the surroundings as inviting and pretty as you can (see Special Surroundings in Part One).
2. Gather the group in a circle. At this time you can introduce yourself and explain why you have chosen to do a ***Blessing God's Way*** (refer to mission statement and introduction at beginning of manual). Offer up prayer to begin. You could offer thanks to our LORD for the mother-to-be and the transition she is about to go through, for God's goodness in His blessing her family with a child, asking for guidance and strength for her upcoming delivery. You could pray over the time spent during the gathering, that it would bring glory to Him Who makes all things! (See the sample prayer below or make up your own.)



Sample Prayer for Opening Gathering:

We thank you LORD for this day, for this mother-to-be and her family, and for this time we have together to praise and honor You and Your work in our lives. Pregnancy is Your reward, and we pray Your Holy Spirit encourages this mother in her journey. Help us to acknowledge You in all areas of our lives, especially in time of pregnancy. God, You are holy and awesome, and we praise You for Your blessings and welcome them. Give us a humble spirit and serving spirit toward this mother. Please bless our time and the people gathered here today. We pray this in Jesus Christ's name, Amen.

3. Now would be a good time to sing the Doxology, which is a good opening song to give praise and thanks to the LORD. Again, you want to help all the participants to focus on the true reason for such a joyous occasion.

**Praise God from Whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below,
Praise Him above ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

4. Have all participants introduce themselves and share how they know the expectant mother.
5. Let's sing! Singing songs, giving praise and glory to our LORD, is a fitting part of this gathering.

"I will sing of mercy and justice; to You, O LORD, I will sing praises." ~ Psalm 101:1

"Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms." ~ James 5:13

Use enclosed song sheets to copy and hand out so that the participants may join their voices together. You could sing two here, one more later, or fit one in wherever you feel is appropriate. If you have favorite songs, please use them in place of the ones we have included in this manual.

6. Next, you can share how this gathering is to give glory to God for her child and encourage the mother-to-be by giving blessings from the heart and words of encouragement and support. You can speak of how God has designed our bodies for birth and that His grace is sufficient.

"A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. Therefore, you

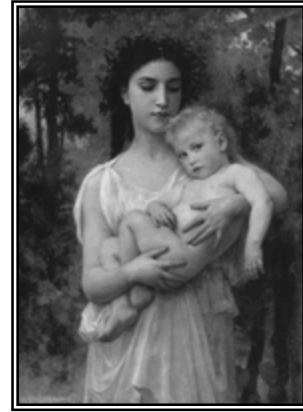
now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.”

~ John 16:21-22

Point out how 40 weeks (the time of gestation for pregnancy) is a number God uses over and over for transitions that bring about great change and blessings. The number 40 is often understood as the “number of probation or trial.” For example: The Israelites wandered for 40 years (Deuteronomy 8:2-5); Moses was on the mount for 40 days (Exodus 24:18); 40 days were involved in the story of Jonah and Nineveh (Jonah 3:4); Jesus was tempted for 40 days (Matthew 4:2); there were 40 days between Jesus’ resurrection and ascension (Acts 1:3). He describes to us that these times are for testing our hearts and minds, but that, in the end, the “promised land” is oh, so sweet to behold, making it all worth while!

“Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to your fathers. And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not... For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of the valleys and hills; ... then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.

~ Deuteronomy 8:1-10



7. Decorate the expectant mother’s hair with flowers (fresh or dried). Having the younger girls braid and brush her hair is very touching and they really enjoy this part.

8. Now you can get a bowl filled with warm/hot water and pour in the herbs with a few drops of massage oil. Make sure you have plenty of towels nearby. Let the mother-to-be soak her feet for a few minutes. Have her mother wash her feet, then the mother-in-law. Open it up to whomever would like to participate. Singing a song here would be nice.

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." ~ John 13:14

9. Massage the feet with the foot massage oil. Ask for others to come and help. You might also want to massage her hands, just to give the expectant mother a little extra pampering.

"Ointment and perfume delight the heart." ~ Proverbs 27:9

10. Now is the time to light candles. Share any special handmade gift, poems, blessings, or thoughts for encouragement. The lighting of candles is simply used to remind us that the LORD is our Light and gives us light. One person lights her candle and gives her gift from the heart, then the next person in the circle does the same.

"The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" ~ Psalm 27:1



Explain that the mother-to-be can re-light these candles when she goes into labor, being reminded of all those gathered at the **Blessing God's Way** and how they are supporting her in spirit.

Have the first person light a candle, place it in the tray, then present their words and/or blessing. The next person lights candle and does the same. Continue all the way around the circle.

11. Once all the prayers, blessings, and poems are gathered, give them to the expectant mother with a scrapbook for her to make a keepsake. Or, as suggested previously, give a scrapbook and contents to the guest who volunteered to compile it. Keep in mind that having it compiled for the mother-to-be to have before or during her first stage of labor is helpful.

“I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” ~ Acts 20:35

12. In closing, you may want to mention the “food train” sign-up. This is when those present get a chance to sign up to prepare a meal for the new family after the baby’s birth. Bringing a meal to a mother after the birth is a blessing, showing our love toward her and her family (see reproducible resources for food train sign-up sheet).

‘For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this “you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”’ ~ Galatians 5:13, 14

13. Now would be a good time to present the gift certificate. (See next page for suggestions.)
14. Finally, pray again asking a blessing on the food you are about to partake and for a blessing upon the mother and child. Invite everyone to stay and eat and be merry!

“So I commended enjoyment, because a man has nothing better under the sun than to eat, drink, and be merry; for this will remain with him in his labor all the days of his life which God gives him under the sun.”
~ Ecclesiastes 8:15

GIFT CERTIFICATE OPTIONS

Having guests contribute to a gift certificate is an option for a gift-giving idea instead of having the traditional “opening of gifts.” Gift certificates are especially nice if the celebration is for a second, third, fourth, etc., baby. This certificate could be given to the mother at the closing of the ceremony.

Target

www.target.com (click on gift cards)

One Step Ahead

www.onestepahead.com (click on gift center, then gift certificates)

Costco

www.costco.com (click on home and gifts, then gift certificates)

Natural Family Boutique

www.naturalfamilyboutique.com

1-866-672-7843

Blessing God's Way

www.blessingGodsway.com (click on Shoppe section)

1-888-218-2453

REPRODUCIBLES

In this section you will find songs, poems and prayers that you can reproduce to use during a ***Blessing God's Way*** gathering.

The copyrighted songs and poems in this section may only be reproduced for a ***Blessing God's Way*** celebration. Using the songs and poems for any other purpose requires permission from the copyright owner(s). We appreciate your honesty in this matter.

The following names are the authors of the copyrighted songs and poems we have gathered for this manual.

Shelly Stockton, *Lead Me & May the Words*
Melissa Taylor, *The Voice of the Lord*
Doran Richards, *Gift from God*
Rachel Himmelright, *Blessing*
Janet Miller, *Motherhood 101*

Food Train Sign-Up Sheet

Mother-to be: _____ Phone _____

NAME & PHONE

Day1 _____
Day2 _____
Day3 _____
Day4 _____
Day5 _____
Day6 _____
Day7 _____



GIFT FROM GOD

*I give thanks to You alone
Who sits on the throne.
To loan me this precious gift
And to call it my own.*

*May I always see, Lord
In every waking hour,
Your majesty and grace
In this delicate flower.*

*Help me, O God,
To guide and preserve,
This wonderful blessing
To love and to serve.*

Doran Richards 2001©

Blessing by Rachel Hemelright ©2004

The blessing of a child is the biggest jewel.
How indescribable is it to look into the face of your newborn baby?
How can words speak the joy and pain and beauty of seeing your child grow?
How can the finite be used to describe the feelings that run the gamut of the infinite?
God blesses this way, and the world scorns it.
The devil hates the gift of a child.
The devil seeks to destroy as many as he can, and corrupt the ones that live.
The devil seeks to lie and cheat so many of the joy of this gift.
So many buy into his agenda, going to great lengths to avoid God's greatest gift
Not so, you.
You have sought His face, and time and again he has blessed you.
You have seen the heartache of pain and have felt those emotions that words can not describe.
You have touched the face of your children, and perhaps seen there the closest thing to heaven on this earth.
You have seen something so shrouded in mystery, that even having seen it, you cannot describe its beauty,
God's blessing.
God's blessing, and you are the instrument of its arrival.
Through this child, God provides opportunity for us to see a picture of His relationship to us.
Through this child, God provides your family with a lifetime of deep and meaningful relationship.
Through this child, God forever alters the landscape of your life, and adds to it, creating a fullness never found in the empty philosophies of this world.
A touch of heaven in your hands.
A touch of the Father in your keeping.
A touch of the greatest mystery for you to kiss.
No matter how the world tries to explain it away and demonize it, God has ordained the gift of life as His blessing, His heritage, His beautiful picture
I ache for those who have missed it.
Some even in our family disdain the beauty and wonder of the child and what it means.
Only God can spark the life that is our soul.
Only a conception He ordained can bring everything together just so.
Only we were created using His breath and hands.
The rest He spoke, but for us He crafted,
His modeling in His image, Body, Soul, and Spirit.
And still this day He knits, forming us in the womb because He loves us.
Longing for our hearts, He chases us, and brings us full circle, letting us witness the mystery that is a baby, so we can glimpse His love for us at creation and still.

Two Little Hands

By William A. Ogden

I've two little hands to work for Jesus,
One little tongue His praise to tell,
Two little ears to hear His counsel,
One little voice a song to swell.

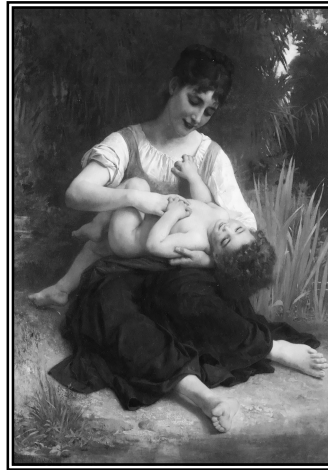
I've two little feet to tread the pathway
Up to the heav'nly courts above,
Two little eyes to read the Bible,
Telling of Jesus' wondrous love.

I've one little heart to give to Jesus,
One little soul for Him to save,
One little life for His dear service,
One little self that He must have.

Motherhood 101

An honor and a privilege
A requisition has been sent
Without a voice to tell
Trusted beyond measure
A life now in your hands
Do not assume you know
Direction can be found
Selfless hearts do best
Let love guide the way

Janet Miller ©2004



LITTLE PEOPLE

A dreary place would be this earth
Were there no little people in it;
The Song of life would lose its mirth,
Were there no children to begin it.

No little forms, like buds to grow,
And make the admiring heart surrender
No little hands on breast and brow,
To Keep the thrilling love-chords tender.

The sterner souls would grow more stern,
Unfeeling nature more inhuman,
And man to stoic coldness turn,
And Woman would be less than woman.

Life's song, indeed, would lose its charm,
Were there no babies to begin it;
A doleful place this world would be,
Were there no little people in it.

John Greenleaf Whittier

BE THOU MY VISION

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Be Thou my battle Shield, Sword for the fight;
Be Thou my Dignity, Thou my Delight;
Thou my soul's Shelter, Thou my high Tower:
Raise Thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always:
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

High King of heaven, my victory won,
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

Irish poem translated by Elizabeth Byrne -1905

The Voice of the Lord
(Psalm 29)

©2005 Melissa Taylor

G

vs.1 The voice of the Lord is o ver man y wa ters
vs.2 So give to the Lord the glo-ry due his na me

C²

The God of Glo-ry thun-ders
He sits as Ki-ng for ev-er

G **Am**

The voice of the Lord is o ver man y wa ters
The voice of the Lord, it makes the deer give bir-th

C **D** **G**

He is power-ful and full of ma-jes-ty!
He will give His peo ple strength and bless with peace.



Lead Me

Psalm 86:11 Shelly K. Stockton 2004 ©

Lead me, Lord I pr-ay and I will foll-ow You

Lead me, Lord I pr-ay and I will foll-ow You

you are my strong Tower My safe Re-fuge In You I shall not Want

you sat-is-fy you sat-is-fy you sat-is-fy

d.c. al fine

May the Words

Psalm 19:14

©2004 Shelly Stockton

May the words of my mouth, the med-i-ta-tions of my heart ho-nor

You, ho-nor You. May the words of my mouth, the med-i-

ta-tions of my heart ho-nor You, ho-nor You. And

I — wor-ship You For You — are my

Lord. I lift Your Name on high be-cause You sat-is-fy eve-ry

long-ing of my hearts de-sire.

'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus

PROVERBS 30:5
Louisa M. R. Stead, 1882

William J. Kirkpatrick, 1882

1. 'Tis so sweet to trust in Je - sus, Just to take Him at His Word;
2. Oh, how sweet to trust in Je - sus, Just to trust His cleans - ing blood;
3. Yes, 'tis sweet to trust in Je - sus, Just from sin and self to cease;
4. I'm so glad I learned to trust Thee, Pre - cious Je - sus, Sav - ior, Friend;

Just to rest up - on His prom - ise, Just to know, "Thus saith the Lord!"
And in sim - ple faith to plunge me 'Neath the heal - ing, cleans - ing flood!
Just from Je - sus sim - ply tak - ing Life and rest, and joy and peace.
And I know that Thou art with me, Wilt be with me to the end.

Refrain

Je - sus, Je - sus, how I trust Him! How I've proved Him o'er and o'er,

Je - sus, Je - sus, pre - cious Je - sus! Oh, for grace to trust Him more!

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Take My Life and Let It Be

ROMANS 12:1
Frances R. Havergal, 1874

HENDON
Henri A. C. Malan, 1827; *har. by* Lowell Mason, 1841

1. Take my life and let it be Con - se - crat - ed, Lord, to Thee; Take my hands, and
2. Take my feet, and let them be Swift and beau - ti - ful for Thee; Take my voice, and
3. Take my lips, and let them be Filled with mes - sa - ges from Thee; Take my sil - ver
4. Take my mo - ments and my days, Let them flow in end - less praise; Take my in - tel -
5. Take my will, and make it Thine, It shall be no long - er mine; Take my heart, it
6. Take my love, my Lord, I pour At Thy feet its treas - ure store; Take my - self, and

let them move At the im - pulse of Thy love, At the im - pulse of Thy love.
let me sing, Al - ways, on - ly for my King, Al - ways, on - ly for my King.
and my gold, Not a mite would I with - hold, Not a mite would I with - hold.
lect and use Eve - ry pow'r as Thou shalt choose, Eve - ry pow'r as Thou shalt choose.
is Thine own, It shall be Thy roy - al throne, It shall be Thy roy - al throne.
I will be Ev - er, on - ly, all for Thee, Ev - er, on - ly, all for Thee.

PUBLIC DOMAIN



To God Be the Glory (Crosby)

GALATIANS 1:4-5
Frances J. Crosby, *pub.* 1875

William H. Doane, *pub.* 1875

1. To God be the glo-ry, great things He hath done, So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
2. Oh, per - feet re-dept-tion, the pur-chase of blood, To eve-ry be-liev-er the prom-ise of God;
3. Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done, And great our re-joic-ing through Je-sus the Son;

Who yield - ed His life an a - tone-ment for sin, And o - pened the life gate that all may go in.
The vil - est of - fen - der who true - ly be - lieves, That mo - ment from Je - sus a par - don re - ceives.
But pur - er, and high - er, and great - er will be Our won - der, our trans - port, when Je - sus we see.

Refrain

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear His voice! Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, Let the peo-ple re-joice!

Oh, come to the Fa-ther, through Je - sus the Son, And give Him the glo-ry, great things He hath done.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

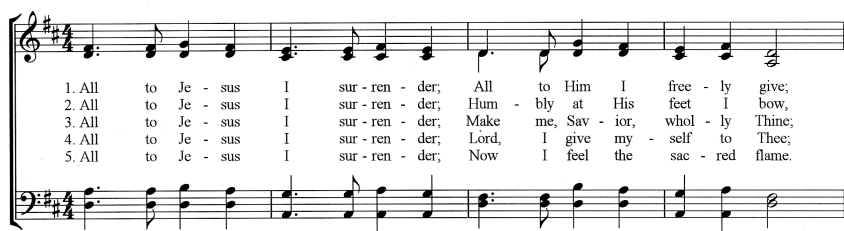
I Surrender All

LUKE 14:33

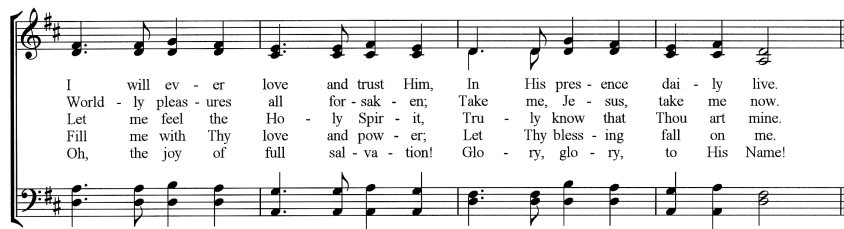
Judson W. Van DeVenter, 1896

SURRENDER

Winfield S. Weedon, 1896

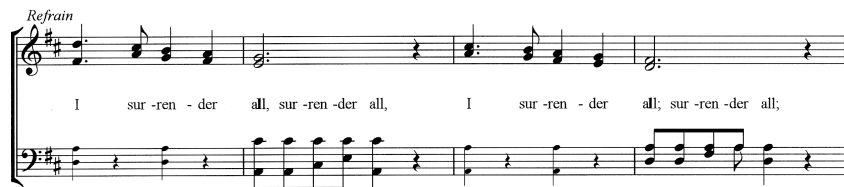


1. All to Je - sus I sur - ren - der, All to Him I free - ly give;
 2. All to Je - sus I sur - ren - der, Hum - bly at His feet I bow,
 3. All to Je - sus I sur - ren - der, Make me, Sav - ior, whol - ly Thine;
 4. All to Je - sus I sur - ren - der, Lord, I give my - self to Thee;
 5. All to Je - sus I sur - ren - der, Now I feel the sac - red flame.

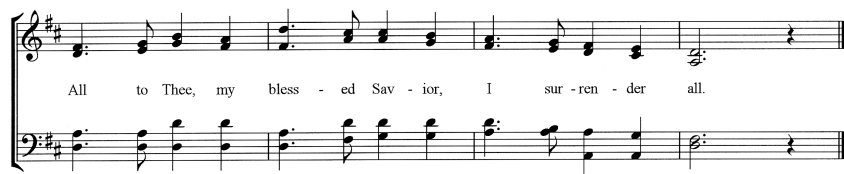


I will ev - er love and trust Him, In His pres - ence dai - ly live,
 World - ly pleas - ures all for - sak - en; Take me, Je - sus, take me now.
 Let me feel the Ho - ly Spir - it, Tru - ly know that Thou art mine.
 Fill me with Thy love and pow - er; Let Thy bless - ing fall on me.
 Oh, the joy of full sal - va - tion! Glo - ry, glo - ry, to His Name!

Refrain



I sur - ren - der all, sur - ren - der all, I sur - ren - der all, sur - ren - der all;



All to Thee, my bless - ed Sav - ior, I sur - ren - der all.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

PART THREE:

***PRAYERS & SCRIPTURES
FOR MOTHERS***

Blessings from God



PRAYER

LORD God, our heavenly Father, please help me to be grateful for Your forever loving care towards your children. I thank You for this gift and reward and rejoice in it. Please help me to be grateful for this design and process, bringing me ever closer to You, my LORD and Savior. Bless Your Holy name for this precious gift. I pray Your blessing throughout this pregnancy, helping me to be a shining light to those around me.

Let Your light shine, O God, to those who see me. In Jesus' name, Amen!

SCRIPTURES

"He will bless those who fear the LORD both great and small."
~ Psalm 115:13b

"And Mary said 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.'"
~ Luke 1:46, 47

"Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her." ~ Proverb 31:28

"Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, who walks in His ways... Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the very heart of your house, your children like olive plants all around your table. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the LORD."
~ Psalm 128:1-4

"Many, O LORD my God, are Your wonderful works which You have done; and Your thoughts toward us cannot be recounted to

You in order; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.” ~ Psalm 40:5

“So God created man in His own image; in the image of God, He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them.” ~ Genesis 1:27-28a

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” ~ Ephesians 1:3

Praising God



PRAYER

I praise Your Holy name, Almighty Father. I praise the work You have begun and will complete through Your Son, Jesus Christ. I lift up my hands to You, Who sits on the throne. I want to praise You in the morning and at noon and at night. May the Holy Spirit teach me to praise and worship You for Your continual blessings to me and my

family. May this child within me also praise You and worship You in truth and spirit! In Jesus' name, Amen!

SCRIPTURES

“Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies...” ~ Psalm 103:1-4

“Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but to Your name give glory, because of Your mercy, because of Your truth.” ~ Psalm 115:1

“It is good to give thanks to the LORD, and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; to declare Your loving kindness in the morning, and Your faithfulness every night...I will triumph in the works of Your hands.” ~ Psalm 92:1-4

“Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all the peoples.” ~ Psalm 96:3

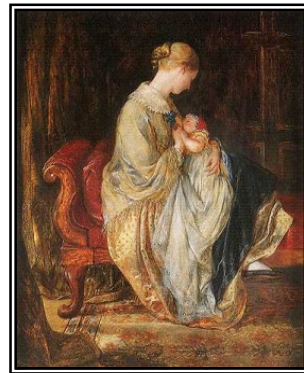
“I will sing of mercy and justice; to You, O LORD, I will sing praises.” ~ Psalm 101:1

“I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.” ~ Psalm 34:1

God’s Blessed Design

PRAYER

God, You created all things. Your design is perfect in all things. If I focus on Your wonderful works, it will help me to be truly thankful for this design and work in me and around me. You have formed babies, they are wonderfully made, praise be to You. Please help me to acknowledge Your design to those around me, especially in pregnancy. You made heaven and earth and all that is in it, glory be to You, Who sits on high. I pray that You keep this vision before me each and every day, in Jesus’ name, Amen!



SCRIPTURES

“Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and He who formed you from the womb; I am the LORD, who makes all things, Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself.” ~ Isaiah 44:24

“For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.” ~ Psalm 139:13-16

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.” ~ Jeremiah 1:5

“He has blessed your children within you.” ~ Psalm 147:13b

“Your hands have made me and fashioned me, an intricate unity.” ~ Job 10:8

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.” ~ Jeremiah 29:11

“Your hands have fashioned me; give me understanding, that I may learn Your commandments.” ~ Psalm 119:73

Peace Within



PRAYER

O LORD, my God, in pregnancy, we tend to have more anxieties and worries due to the hormones taking off to very high levels at times. But I do not want to use this as an excuse to sin. I need to address them, confess them, and trust in You, LORD, that Your grace is sufficient for the season You have me in. Speak to my heart, I pray, to alleviate

some of these anxieties, so that I may hold steadfastly to Your timing, joy, and light. Be my strength and my guide and help me to be ever grateful for the season You have me in. Thank You Holy Spirit for Your wisdom and knowledge. In Jesus' name, Amen.

SCRIPTURES

"Be still, and know that I am God." ~ Psalm 46:10a

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be known to God, and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."
~ Philippians 4:6-7

"And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you." ~ Luke 12:29, 31

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." ~ Matthew 11:28-30

Hope & Courage



PRAYER

My hope is in You, LORD, my strength is in You, LORD, my life is in You, LORD. It's in You, it's in You. I know that You are sufficient for me. Holy Spirit, fill me with hope for today and the future. I pray for courage to face each new day as it comes, with the trials and issues that are before me. Let me remember to always give You glory, honor and praise

forevermore! In Jesus' name, Amen!

SCRIPTURES

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." ~ Joshua 1:9

"Hear my cry, O God; attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth I will cry to You, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I." ~ Psalm 61:1-2

"Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." ~ Isaiah 40:28-31

"Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness, 'The LORD is my portion,' says my soul, therefore I hope in Him!" ~ Lamentations 3:22-24

"And he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.'"
~ 2 Corinthians 12:9

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, Who comforts us in all our tribulation." ~ 2 Corinthians 1:3-4a

"I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me."
~ Philippians 4:13

"Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen you heart, all you who hope in the LORD." ~ Psalm 31:24

“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God.”

~ 2 Corinthians 3:5

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

~ Philippians 4:6-7

Never-Ending Faith



PRAYER

Heavenly Father, please give me faith. Holy Spirit fill me with peace, patience, and a positive attitude for the stages of pregnancy. Your timing is not my timing; grant me the wisdom to really understand this concept. Thank You, LORD God, for Your never-ending watch over me and this baby. Give me the grace to do and be what You have called me to be. Your will be done, and not mine own! In Jesus' name, Amen!

SCRIPTURES

“So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and cast in the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.” ~ Mark 11:22-24

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” ~ Hebrews 11:1

“Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.”

~ Hebrews 12:1b-2a

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.” ~ James 1:17

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” ~ Hebrews 11:6

Encouragement & Inspiration



PRAYER

Your word is encouragement and inspiration to me, LORD. Give me the strength to read Your word daily to guide me by the power of Your Holy Spirit. Thank you Jesus for being my ultimate encouragement for the work

set before me. I love Your word and pray the Holy Spirit hides it in my heart to draw upon in time of need. Grant me the inspiration that only You can give Your servant. Thank You for this, in Jesus' name, Amen!

SCRIPTURES

“But you be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded!”

~ 2 Chronicles 15:7

“Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the LORD!” ~ Psalm 27:14

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”
~ Romans 8:28

“I will lift up my eyes to the hills from whence comes my help? My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.”
~ Psalm 121:1-2

“To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven.” ~ Ecclesiastes 3:1

“He has made everything beautiful in its time.”
~ Ecclesiastes 3:11a

“A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. Therefore, you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.” ~ John 16:21-22

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” ~ Ephesians 3:20

Additional Prayers

Here are some prayers that might help you during your time of being “with child” and afterwards. Ask for others to pray, too. You will hopefully find peace and comfort from those prayers.

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

~ Philippians 4:6-7

On the Coming of a New Baby

(Mother’s Prayer)

Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Good Shepherd who dost delight in the little babes and dost gently lead those that are with young, I thank Thee for Thy marvelous mercy. Thou hast granted me and my husband the gift of a healthy child, and I cannot praise Thee enough for Thy loving-kindness. Thou hast guided the physician, given me strength during my pregnancy and delivery, and sustained me to this moment.

Give me a grateful heart all the days of my life, and enable me to be the kind of mother who will please Thee. Keep me conscious at all times of the holy trust placed in me by the gift of this child, and help me to bring my child up in Thy fear and favor.

Send Thy guardian angels to watch over my little one, and shield him/her from all danger of body or soul. Take my child into Thy kingdom, and give him/her an inheritance with all Thy saints.

Oh, Thou who hast given life to my child, be Thou our Good Shepherd, and lead us in paths pleasing to Thee. Amen.

~ Book of Prayer

Need of Jesus

Lord Jesus,
I am blind, be thou my light,
 ignorant, be thou my wisdom,
 self willed, be thou my mind.
Open my ear to grasp quickly thy Spirit's voice,
 and delightfully run after his beckoning hand;
Melt my conscience that no hardness remain,
 make it alive to evil's slightest touch;
When Satan approaches may I flee to thy wounds,
 and there cease to tremble at all alarms.
Be my good shepherd to lead me into
 the green pastures of thy Word,
 and cause me to lie down beside the rivers of its comforts.
Fill me with peace, that no disquieting worldly gales
 may ruffle the calm surface of my soul.
Thy cross was upraised to be my refuge,
Thy blood streamed forth to wash me clean,
Thy death occurred to give me a surety,
Thy name is my property to save me,
By thee all heaven is poured into my heart,
 but it is too narrow to comprehend thy love.
I was a stranger, an outcast, a slave, a rebel,
 but thy cross has brought me near,
 has softened my heart
 has made me thy Father's child,
 has admitted me to thy family,
 has made me joint-heir with thyself
O that I may love thee as thou lovest me,
 that I may walk worthy of thee, my LORD,
 that I may reflect the image of heaven's first-born.
May I always see thy beauty with the clear eye of faith,
 and feel the power of thy Spirit in my heart,
 for unless He move mightily in me
 no inward fire will be kindled.

Puritan Prayers & Devotions, The Valley of Vision

PART FOUR:

***NOURISHMENT FOR
MIND, BODY & SOUL***

Inspirational & Encouraging Quotes

A little here and a little there; having a small quote or sentence can be helpful in keeping our focus on the LORD and all He has done for us. We have included some inspirational quotes and thoughts which we encourage you to use as nourishment for your mind and soul.

"The mother's heart is the child's schoolroom."

~ Henry Ward Beecher

"God not only hears our words, He listens to our hearts."

~ Anonymous

"There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candles or the mirror that reflects it."

~ Edith Wharton

"No man is poor who has had a Godly mother."

~ Abraham Lincoln

"The spirituality of a child depends on what its mother and father are, and not on what they say."

~ Henri Frederic Amiel

"Let her avoid trouble of the mind...it should be most fitting she should be praising God for her delivery."

~ Nicholas Culpeper

"The LORD gives His blessing when He finds His vessel empty."

~ Thomas Kempis

"Yet for all God's good will toward us, He is unable to grant us our heart's desires till all our desires have been reduced to one."

~ A. W. Tozer

"It is good for us to know, as certainly as David did, that we belong to the LORD. There is no "if" nor "but," not even "I hope so." But he says, "The LORD is my shepherd."

~ Charles Spurgeon

“Children are the hands by which we take hold of heaven.”
~ Henry Ward Beecher

“What we desire our children to become, we must endeavor to be before them.”
~ Andrew Combe

“Let parents bequeath to their children not riches, but the spirit of reverence.”
~ Plato

“I love little children, and it is not a slight thing when they, who are so fresh from God, love us.”
~ Charles Dickens

“I remember my mother’s prayers and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life.”
~ Abraham Lincoln

“Of all the rights of women, the greatest is to be a mother.”
~ Lin Yutang

“Mothers reflect God’s loving presence on earth”
~ William R. Webb

“Words which do not give the light of Christ increase the darkness.”
~ Mother Theresa

“When God thought of a mother, He must have laughed with satisfaction, and framed it quickly- so rich, so deep, so divine, so full of soul, power, and beauty, was the conception.”
~ Henry Ward Beecher

"A mother holds her children's hands for a while...their hearts forever"
~ Anonymous

“It is only by forgetting yourself that you draw near to God.”
~ Henry David Thoreau

“God has two dwellings: one in heaven, and the other in a meek and thankful heart.”
~ Izaak Walton

Resting In the LORD

You have rejoiced with the LORD at the wonder of first hearing your baby's heartbeat, seeing him/her for the first time during a sonogram and feeling the first kick. His grace was sufficient through the trials of morning sickness, your belly stretching beyond what you could have imagined, never-ending heartburn and those baby aerobics in the wee hours of the morning.

God's grace continues. Although you acknowledge all things happen in His time, why do you find yourself asking for His time to move faster? Now is the season when God wants you to lean more steadfastly on Him.

"Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." ~ Matthew 11:28-30

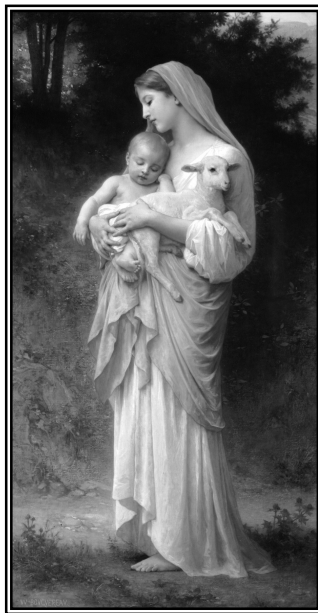
Savor a Moment of Rest:

- Keep a Bible next to your bed and when you wake in the morning, vow to read a Psalm to start your day.
- Gather a candle and praise & worship music, then close the door to your bathroom to take a warm bath for at least 10 minutes.
- Start a journal, writing your prayers and supplications with thanksgiving to the LORD our God, for the upcoming transition in your household. Take time each day to add to this journal.
- Seek out encouragement from women who are experienced with motherhood and childbirth which will give you emotional support.
- Share with your husband the beautiful aspects of Christ and His blessings and how you can both teach them to your child.

SUGGESTED BOOK LIST

Be Fruitful and Multiply by Nancy Campbell
Christ Centered Childbirth by Kelly J. Townsend
Culpeper's Book of Birth Edited and Intro by Ian Thomas
LORD of Birth by Jennifer VanderLaan
Meditations for the New Mother by Helen Good Brenneman
Mommy Diagnostics by Shonda Parker
Naturally Healthy Pregnancy by Shonda Parker
Naturally Healthy Woman by Shonda Parker
Post-Pregnancy Handbook by Sylvia Brown
Praise Her in the Gates by Nancy Wilson
Prayers for Expectant Mothers by Angela Thomas Guffey
The Ministry of Midwifery by Patti Barnes
The Holy Bible (of course!)

“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace.” ~ Numbers 6:24-26



CONCLUSION

From Doran Richards: I attended a blessingway ceremony last year that brought me to the writing of this manual. Here was a secular gathering celebrating pregnancy and the mother, but not giving honor where honor was due. I was saddened that Christians, overall, do not have a gathering that gives honor to the Giver of life. I was inspired by the thought that we could teach our children (sons and daughters) of the beauty and blessing of a child through a Christian gathering by way of celebrating.

I mentioned the idea of creating some type of Christian gathering for women and families to celebrate pregnancy to my friend one day. She liked it and there we were - on our way, our own journey, in making this manual for you and all families who would like to reform our culture's view on who is the author and finisher of pregnancy and childbirth.

There is a need for this. God is being taken out of the realm of childbirth in our culture, and this should not be. We should always see His goodness in all we have and do. Why should pregnancy and childbirth be any different?

We wrote down all our thoughts about *our* vision and prayed for *His* vision to be written on our hearts so that we may give all glory to Him for this project. It was amazing to see how, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the vision changed. I really felt like I was walking blindly, listening day by day, to what He would have us do. God always has a plan, and I am grateful to be a part of that plan in some small way.

"In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your path." ~ Proverbs 3:6

I believe this with my whole heart and soul. I am grateful to have worked on this project with Susan, a friend of almost 10 years. I always knew we were meant to work together somehow. Praise be to God, we are working together for His glory!

Let the words of our mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in Your sight, oh LORD, our strength and our Redeemer!

From Susan Tederick: I never cease to be amazed at God's awesome powers. When my friend, Doran, and I started this "venture", I had many hopes and expectations as to the outcome. God in His infinite wisdom, has used this project to help me grow and hopefully help others in the process.

While researching material to write this manual, I was blessed to have found a wonderful book (in the suggested book list), Prayers for Expectant Mothers by Angela Thomas Guffey. In this book, Mrs. Guffey has a prayer which eloquently depicts the "glow" that mothers experience during their pregnancies. Asking what others are seeing, she answers that perhaps it is the peace of God's presence. Mrs. Guffey continues with her prayer to be a light that cannot be hidden and one that guides others to His presence. This prayer affected me deeply when I shared it at a friend's ***Blessing God's Way*** gathering. For the first time, I felt as though the Lord had put a significant aspect of pregnancy in my heart.

What a tremendous responsibility it is to be a light that guides others. Even at a time when a woman may feel less than herself, through His grace, God will use her to be a shining light. My prayer is for you and others around you to see God's most awesome "glow".

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." ~ Matthew 5:14-16

We both pray this manual enables you to enjoy and relish the beauty of a child given by our LORD God. We have endeavored to give you a starting point for celebrating and rejoicing in the Lord with your beloved friends and family. Let's just make sure we are out there, in the world, giving thanks and praise to God, the Son, and Holy Spirit for the awesome work of the gift of children!

The LORD has given us many pictures in the Bible about children and childbearing. The scriptures are rich with wisdom and understanding in this area. Let us continue to search the scriptures in our endeavors to give Him praise, honor, and glory forever. Amen!

Blessings to you and yours,

Doran Richards and Susan Tederick

