

# Fit Favorites Devotional



**By Laurette Willis,  
Director of PraiseMoves**

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and in your spirit, which are God's" 1 Corinthians 6:20*

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**Fit Favorites Devotional Book –  
Devotions for fitness in spirit, soul and body**

By Laurette Willis

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## **Jesus said:**

“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”

“Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?”

“Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?”

“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

“Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith?”

“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” Matthew 6:25-33

## Seven Names of God in Psalm 23

One of my favorite PraiseMoves Scripture Sequences follows the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm.

A Scripture Sequence involves taking a portion of scripture (such as the Lord's Prayer or one of the Psalms) and linking it to a series of PraiseMoves postures. We flow from one posture to the next, seeking to mirror the beauty of God's Word as we meditate on the scripture and endeavor to glorify God in moving prayer.

In this way, we hope to express the foundation scripture of PraiseMoves, "For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:20).

### **There are HOW MANY Names of God?**

Our Father has many, many names in the Hebrew bible (some say as many as 144!), each describing a different aspect of His greatness and power -- from Adonai (The Lord; mentioned 360 times) to Yahveh ("I am that I am"; mentioned 6,800 times). Jehovah is an Anglicized translation of Yahveh.

Understanding the protection and provision of the Lord in this psalm of David gives us a picture of 7 other names for God. You may meditate on these during your prayer time, or as you enjoy the Ps. 23 Scripture Sequence:

#### **1. "The Lord is my Shepherd"**

- Jehovah Rohi (The Lord is my Shepherd and my Guide) - "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will GUIDE you into all truth" John 16:13.

#### **2. "I shall not want"**

- Jehovah Jireh (The Lord is my Provider, so I do not want; He supplies all my need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus, Philippians 4:19)

#### **3. "He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters"**

- Jehovah Shalom (The Lord is my Peace -- my calm in the midst of a storm) - "Now may the God of PEACE Himself sanctify you completely" 1 Thess. 5:23.

#### **4. "He restores my soul"**

- Jehovah Rapha (He is my Healer) - "And by His stripes we are healed" 1 Peter 2:24 (and Isaiah 53:5)

#### **5. "He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake"**

- Jehovah Tsidkenu (The Lord is my Righteousness; in Him I have right standing with God) "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin

for us, that we might become the RIGHTEOUSNESS of God in Him" 1 Corinthians 5:21.

**6. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me"**

- Jehovah Shammah ("The Lord is There"; He is our Ever-Present God)

- "For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you'" Hebrews 13:5.

**7. "Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies"**

- Jehovah Nissi ("The Lord is my Banner," my standard, He covers me) - "When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD will lift up a STANDARD against him" Isaiah 59:19.

"You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever." Amen!

## It's Your Harvest -- are you reaping?

***"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" Luke 10:2.***

In much of the Western world, it's harvest time. Having grown up on the suburbs of Long Island and in the teeming metropolis of New York City, I probably wouldn't have known it was harvest time except for the pumpkins and gourds Mom would use to decorate the house.

If you grew up on a farm or in a farming community, you know how exciting the yearly harvest time can be. All the weeks and months invested in preparing the ground, sowing the seed, pulling weeds and nurturing the growing crop have finally paid off.

Often farmers would hire laborers to come in and help them bring in the crops.

Think of all the seeds you've sown--just in the last few years. I don't mean seeds for physical plants or flowers, but the good words and deeds you have sown into the lives of others "as unto the Lord."

"The sower sows the word" Jesus taught in His parable of the sower (Mark 4:14). Have you "planted" Scripture-inspired prayers for yourself and loved ones in the areas of salvation, healing, finances, relationships, ministry, work...?

"Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap," the Holy Spirit tells us through Paul in Galatians 6:7.

Have you sown finances into the fertile soil of missions, your church, other ministries and Christian charities as the Lord directed you?

Have you sown kindness into someone's life this year? Did you show mercy in a situation just because God has been merciful to you?

Have you sown favor, generosity, compassion, gentleness in people's lives when you could have sown the opposite?

Have you given of your precious T-I-M-E or talents to help a child, offer a listening ear to an elder, help out at a church activity, offer a hug to a friend...?

How about the seeds of good health habits you've been adopting—and the seeds of self-control, patience, love...?

These are all seeds you have planted.

"...but the laborers are few," Jesus said. We understand this in the area of the harvest of souls in the last days -- every voice is needed to get the Gospel message out.

But what about reaping the harvest for these other seeds you've sown? Are you looking for your harvest? Are you praising and thanking God for it and "calling it in"?

Are you willing to be a laborer in your harvest, or do you expect it to come in all by itself?

In my prayer time and whenever I think of it during the day, I've been saying:

"Our harvest is coming in today! I see the harvest of our prayers and good seeds we've sown coming in today! Thank You, Lord for the harvest of souls saved, healed and delivered in our ministry and the ministries of our partners. Thank You for the harvest of favor, finances, health and success in every area where we've sown seed.

"We've sown bountifully and we reap bountifully--and give You all the glory for it! We're laborers in Your harvest, Father. We thank You for showing us where and what to sow--and in due season we shall reap and by Your grace we will faint not! Amen."

All I can say is I have seen some AMAZING things happen in the last few days I've been saying this in faith and thanksgiving. We have experienced tremendous favor, breakthroughs in several areas where there seemed to be barriers against us, open doors... God is faithful to His Word. "Whatever a man sows, that he shall also reap."

It's YOUR harvest to the glory of God. Are you reaping?

## What are You Seeking?

***"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" Matthew 6:33***

The world focuses on the physical reasons why we're overweight. They hand us physical solutions--which we hope will work. Maybe this time...

We think that the problem is that we simply eat too much food or the wrong kind of food--so the answer has to be the food. We've tried changing the types of foods we ate, or we ate them in different combinations, or measured portions. We put them on smaller plates or "loaded up" on vegetables first ("What are the 'free' foods?" was one of our first questions).

The world tells us we didn't exercise enough (if at all), so the answer has to be in the exercise. Perhaps if we changed the type of exercise we did, then we could eat as much as we wanted and never gain an ounce.

Clothing makes the man (or woman) we're told. We look for flattering styles, as well as the quick-fix. "Maybe if I got a more high-tech body slimmer with space age microspheres to hold in my tummy..." Black is slimming, so we wear black, or vertical stripes, or muumuus.

Am I saying that food, exercise and clothing are unimportant? Yes and no. They are part of everyday life, but focusing on them exclusively will not help us achieve lasting weight loss or freedom from overeating.

In Matthew 6:31-33 Jesus says: "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

So, if we want lasting change we are to seek the One who never changes. Instead of focusing on physical things that are temporary and subject to change (like food and drink), we're to search for that which has eternal value. The things of God are eternal and priceless.

The cool thing is that as a result of seeking the Lord and His way of doing things, those things we seek in the physical will come to us anyway.

Having sought self-centered goals and desires most of our lives, what does it mean to seek first the "kingdom of God"?

***What IS the kingdom of God? "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17).***

The kingdom is where the King rules. Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Jesus is as undeniably linked to the kingdom of God as He is to righteousness--so when we seek the Lord, we ARE seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

The most important thing I can do is to seek Christ--in every situation, every day--to learn His will for me and to follow after Him.

How pointless seeking weight loss is by comparison. All those years and dollars I spent following the latest secret weapon against fat--the newest potion, gadget or edict from the diet experts—were spent seeking the wrong thing.

Oh, some offered some temporary relief, like a band aid, but each one only dealt with the fruit of the problem, not the root of why I overate.

When I seek the Lord first, I am being obedient to Him. He will help me and meet my needs.

### **What are some ways you can seek the Lord?**

- Invest time in the Word every day by reading and meditating on what you have read. Jesus IS the Word (John 1:1, 14) and the "living bread" (John 6:51).
- Apply what you've read in the Bible to the situations in your life.
- Pray daily (commune and fellowship with the Lord--speak to Him and be sensitive to follow His guidance).
- Actively listen to good Bible teaching and preaching at church, on television and radio, CDs, and at Bible studies.
- Fellowship with other believers and encourage one another in the faith.
- Don't be an outsider or spectator at church. Enter in to praise and worship of our God through song, testimony, giving of tithes and offerings, and the reaching of the Word. Make it personal.
- Share with others what God has done and is doing in your life--this helps others in their seeking of God, too!
- Dedicate your day, your eating and activity to the Lord every day. Ask Him to guide and direct you to live and walk in a disciplined manner.

By looking to Jesus first, He will give you the wisdom, ability and favor to obtain whatever you need.

## Our Bread from Heaven

***"Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.***

***"I am the bread of life... Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever" John 6:35, 48-51.***

The manna God sent to daily feed the Israelites in the wilderness for 40 years was miraculous provision, yet this amazing food could only nourish their physical bodies. It couldn't fill their souls or give them eternal life.

Only Jesus can do that. He is our bread from heaven.

I've often found myself reaching for food when I wasn't physically hungry. Have you? I'd want to put something in my mouth to feed a hunger of a different kind. Loneliness, boredom, distraction, anger, sadness, emptiness and guilt are some of the things which have driven us to food. Yet food cannot satisfy these hungers.

The food may seem to fill us, but that's only a physical sensation (I'd often stuff myself until I was numb emotionally, but hurting physically).

**Question:** Have you ever eaten past the point of feeling "full"? How did you feel afterwards?

For years I didn't have a "full signal." I didn't really know when to stop. It was frightening sometimes. I avoided social gatherings where there was food, because I knew I couldn't control myself. Oh, I could put on a good show and act like I was a dainty little eater for a while, but I knew I'd eat more than this 5'2" body needed to eat.

I'd started using food to numb emotional pain when I was six years old. For the next 25 years I battled with compulsive overeating and all the emotional turmoil that goes with it.

After coming to Christ, I continued to fight with overeating—even though the Lord delivered me from alcoholism and smoking. Why was this issue with food so tough?

John 6:51 "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

**How can we "eat" non-physical food?**

We can consume spiritual food--the living bread, the flesh and blood of Christ--by feasting on the Word of God. Jesus is the Word made flesh as John 1:14 tells us. We can consume things in other ways besides putting them in our mouths and into our digestive system. Physical eating only satisfies physical hunger.

Spiritually feasting on the Word of the living God feeds our spirits and satisfies the hunger of our souls (mind, will and emotions).

If we feel our needs are not being met emotionally, we look for other things to fill that void. Some enter into unhealthy relationships; others become caught in an addiction to a substance (such as food, alcohol or drugs) or behaviors such as gambling, compulsive spending, or trying to control others through fear or threat of moods.

### **No Human Relationship or Thing Can Give You What You Need Emotionally**

Perhaps the reason our emotional selves are so hard to feed is that people and things of this world cannot truly nourish this part of us--only Christ can feed this part of us.

Okay, it makes sense that spiritually feeding on Christ can bring spiritual health, but why turn to Christ to meet our emotional needs, too?

**Because:** Taking from others can never truly satisfy us--only partaking of Christ and GIVING to others can do that.

God wants me to love others as I love myself. However, if I haven't been feeding on Christ I don't feel full of His love on the inside of me. I don't feel "lovely" or worthy of love. I may be self-critical and even hate myself. Feeling unloved, I'm unable to love unconditionally, and will try to compensate by "filling" myself in other ways, and exhibit various controlling behaviors to "make" people love me.

By feeding on the Word (reading and meditating and doing what you read in the Bible) daily, He will fill you. You will feel FULL!

Remember what Jesus said about the type of peace He gives, "Not as the world gives do I give to you." He gives from the inside where His Holy Spirit dwells.

Feed on these words today: "Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. I am the bread of life.'"

Right now ask Him to fill you. Don't try to figure out yet what that means. Just ask the Lord to fill you with His goodness. In Ephesians 3:19, Paul prays that the Lord's followers will be "filled with all the fullness of God."

## Ten Slimming Tips for the Holy-Days

***"Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy'"***

**1 Peter 1:13-16**

Holiday comes from the words Holy + Day. As blessed and special a time of year as Christmas can be, for many it's a stress-filled time. Stress and temptation can lead us to load up on unhealthy food choices.

Here are 10 great tips to help you keep from gaining weight this holy-day season!

1. Commit yourself and your day to the Lord - every day. Take Romans 12:1 seriously: "make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship" Amplified version.

2. Write down a daily food plan. This doesn't have to be complicated - just write down what you plan to have for breakfast, lunch, dinner and 2 healthy snacks. Do this during your prayer time in your journal or notebook. Commit it to the Lord. If you will be dining out and don't know what you will be eating, you can write that you'll make healthful food choices and will not overeat. Then commit it to the Lord.

3. Schedule PraiseMoves workouts and other exercise into your calendar. It's just too easy to let workouts slide this time of year - make a commitment to exercise and keep it. Your energy level and metabolism will be up, you'll burn more calories and you'll feel SO much better about yourself, too!

4. Limit your intake of calorie-rich beverages. Eggnog, mocha, and hot cocoa are packed with lots of calories. Avoid these beverages - instead try some festive herbal teas (such as Celestial Seasoning's Christmas blend special teas). Don't forget to drink more water, too. Winter weather and indoor heat can be drying to the skin -- and the whole body. It's important to keep well-hydrated for moist skin and your overall health and weight management.

5. Create or buy healthful holy-day treats. Try keeping your home free from sugar/fat-laden treats. However, if you simply have to make those Christmas cookies, then chew gum during the baking process to prevent snacking. Singing songs of praise or speaking the Word aloud will also keep you well-fed spiritually and emotionally, breaking temptation's hold. Jesus IS our bread from heaven!

6. Have fun being active. Winter is a great time to burn calories outdoors. Go skiing for a day or take the kids sledding. No snow in sight? No problem - take a brisk bike ride or power walk through the mall.

7. Use healthful ingredients. Your Holiday meal will taste even better when you seek out fresh, organic and low fat ingredients - and you'll feel better too.

8. Don't skip meals. This can be a dangerous time for your metabolism. Focus on eating small balanced meals every few hours to keep your metabolism going strong.

9. Focus on family not food. Since this time of year is big on both family and food, make an effort to place your focus primarily on your family. Feed on fellowship!

10. Stick to your plan. Remember, "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail." Using the above tips, write down a few ways you plan to avoid weight-gain this year. Post it someplace you'll see it – or place the list in your Bible and refer to it often.

By following this tips, you can actually see a drop in some excess weight over the Holy-days and a gain in spiritual peace, joy and fellowship with your loved ones.

## Plan B is Still Plan A – with God!

Do you look at each new year as:

A New Opportunity to Go Forward and Do BIG Things with and for God?

-- OR --

Another year to beat ourselves up that we are not where we thought we would be by this time in our lives?

Is it "Too late"? That's one of the biggest lies of the enemy. He doesn't have any new tricks -- just new ways to implement the same old, tired tactics.

He'll use what works against us until we wise up -- and RISE UP against him!

***"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" Ephesians 6:12.***

The enemy (satan) battles us in the realm of the mind – our thoughts. I used to think that thoughts such as, "I'm too scared to do that," "I'm no good," "I'll never get it right;" "I feel like such an idiot;" and "What's the use?" were MY thoughts.

They weren't.

They were the carefully planted thoughts of the enemy. He "plants" those seeds of doubt, discouragement and deception in hopes that we will speak them out loud and act on them.

All those thoughts say, "I guess God isn't big enough."

**WRONG!!!**

Do you see the importance of reprogramming our thoughts? In Romans 12: 1-2 we're told to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God and be TRANSFORMED by the renewing of our minds.

How? On the Word of God. We have to reprogram our minds to think God's thoughts such as:

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" Philippians 4:13 -- and --  
"I walk in great blessing and favor because Psalm 5:12 says God 'will bless the righteous and surround him with favor as a shield.' I'm righteous -- in right standing with God -- because of Jesus!!!"

"I'm a believer! I'm not a doubter. I walk by faith and not by sight -- I live by faith because 'whatever is not from faith is sin'" (Rom. 14:23).

### **Transformed by the UNDOING of Your Mind?**

Have you ever entertained demonically-inspired thoughts such as:

"God could never use me because I \_\_\_\_\_" (fill in the blank)?

"There was a great plan for my life (Plan A), but I made a mess of it, so now I'm stuck" (in Plan B, C, D or even E).

"I had a calling on my life to be a \_\_\_\_\_, but I \_\_\_\_\_, so now God can't use me."

Again, these are words of the enemy which say "God isn't big enough." Satan doesn't want you to succeed and fulfill God's plan for your life -- because he knows how many people's lives God would change through you. Yes, through YOU!!!

Instead of being transformed by the renewing of your mind, the enemy is trying to get you to agree with his plan for you to be: Transformed by the UNDOING of your mind!!!

### **"I've blown it BIG TIME!!!"**

A young man Paul and I knew whom I'll call Bob had a bright future in the medical field. A new Christian, he was a former New Ager (as we were) and was on fire for God.

The enemy laid a trap for Bob in the area of his greatest weakness. One night he was involved in an indiscretion -- with a young woman he later learned was a minor. Charges were filed against him. He lost his job and spent time in jail. It seemed Bob's promising future in the medical field (Plan A) was ruined forever.

Although he repented for his sin, Bob didn't see how God could ever give him another opportunity to have a successful, productive life. "I've made such a mess of things," he said.

The enemy whispered, "Your God isn't big enough."

Bob asked Paul and me to pray with him. As we were praying the words came to me, "With God, Plan B is still Plan A!" With God, all things are possible! He can turn anything around - if we GIVE it to Him.

The Lord touched that young man's heart with those words. He started to cry. He knew God forgave him. Bob was given the hope that God could still use him and make his life meaningful again. What Satan meant for evil, God was able to turn it to the good. Today Bob is serving the Lord by working in the medical field -- and his life is better than he could ever have imagined it could be.

### **What is -- or was -- Your Plan A?**

What do you have in your heart to do? By that I mean, what would you like to be doing right now if time, money, the past and "credentials" were not important?

Is there a book, song, painting, ministry, goal or dream on the inside of you?

Has the enemy told you it's "too late," "hopeless," "never going to happen"? Has he said you're "too old," "too young," "the wrong color," "not smart enough/don't have the right education/credentials," "too poor / thin / fat / bald / hairy..." you fill in the blank?

### **In other words, "Your God isn't big enough."**

As my country cousins would say, "Them's fightin' words!!!" Remember "we battle not against flesh and blood..."

You have mighty spiritual weapons to use against your enemy. You have the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17) and the mighty name of Jesus -- "at that name every knee must bow" (Philippians 2:10).

### **Ask the Lord to REDEEM Plan B, C, D or E**

Ask the Lord to make Plan A out of what seems to be the Plan B, C, D or E you're now living. He specializes in redemption (restoring things to their former condition) and making all things new.

By faith, write down your Habakkuk 2:2-3 "Plan A" vision from God:

"Write the vision  
And make it plain on tablets,  
That he may run who reads it.  
For the vision is yet for an appointed time;  
But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie.  
Though it tarries, wait for it;  
Because it will surely come,  
It will not tarry."

Write it down in faith and hold it up to the Lord. Ask Him to lead and guide you to the fulfillment of what He's calling you to do to make a difference in these last of the last days.

Realize that if He could use a donkey (like Balaam's talking donkey in Numbers 22:28), He can use you -- if you let Him.

"It's not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the Lord of Hosts" Zechariah 4:6.

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## **Be Busy – and Thriving!**

***“Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase” (Daniel 12:4).***

Once-upon-a-time the customary reply to the question, "How are you doing?" was "Fine, thank you. And you?" Today the answer is, "Busy!"

Is that you? Do you sometimes feel burdened keeping up with the schedules of everyone in your household? Are you finding it difficult to make daily quiet time with the Lord a priority? Is it a challenge to find time to relax - let alone squeeze fitness into your day?

Then you are "Busy" and the good news is that there are ways to incorporate health and fitness for spirit, soul and body into your day - and actually have more time and energy to do all you're called to do.

Hectic schedules seldom leave time for two very important parts of a well-balanced life: our relationship with God and keeping our body strong and healthy. Since our schedules may not suddenly allow us to have extra time, we must discover ways to make the best use of the time we do have. One way is a blending of the spiritual and physical for "Total Fitness."

God is interested in our priorities. He wants us to put Him first. Yet before I made time with the Lord a daily priority, I wondered why I never seemed to have enough time. Without realizing it, the rest of my life was suffering because I didn't have my priorities in the right order. We're to give God first place and seek Him first ("Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" Matthew 6:33).

When I began investing time in my relationship with the Lord first, I found the peace and wisdom to handle whatever came my way the rest of the day.

We don't often think of fitness being one of our life's priorities until we experience a health challenge. Then suddenly our physical health and well-being become very important to us.

Have you ever considered that your physical fitness (or lack of it) is important to God, too? I see it this way: I want to go to heaven, but I certainly don't want to go there before my time. We all want the Lord to look at us and say, "Well done, good and faithful servant," not "Well - what are you doing here so soon?"

The Lord delights to be a part of everything we do - even exercise. One woman I know respectfully calls Him her "Personal Trainer." Suddenly physical activity is no longer drudgery, but an extension of our worship time with Him. In His presence, the joy of the Lord

lifts and strengthens us spiritually, emotionally and physically. Building physical strength at the same time becomes an added bonus. Instead of dreading the workout, the brisk walk or whatever our fitness routine entails, we will look forward to being in His presence again.

That's one reason we delight in saying you can "Transform your workouts into worship" with PraiseMoves. By investing time in the Word (and Jesus IS the Word according to John 1:1 and 14), you will grow in your relationship with God.

**You can:**

- \* Take a walk and pray for half of your walk, then praise the Lord for answered prayer during the other half
- \* If with a friend on your walk, pray together, or encourage one another with the wonderful things God has done for you and people you know
- \* Work out to a Christian Fitness DVD (with the Word - such as one of the PraiseMoves, Slow-Cadence Exercise and Gimme Ten Workout DVDs)
- \* Memorize scripture on the treadmill or during a walk - ask the Lord for understanding and a new revelation as you feed on the "Bread of Life"
- \* Attend a PraiseMoves class (see our Certified PraiseMoves Instructors section at <http://www.PraiseMoves.com> )
- \* Start a Faith and Fitness class at your church using one of the PraiseMoves DVDs and a Bible study (small groups may work out to our DVDs as long as there is not charge for the classes – churches have also used my books "BASIC Steps to Godly Fitness" and "The Busy Woman's Guide to Total Fitness" as Bible studies)
- \* Invite a Certified PraiseMoves Instructor to give a class or workshop at your church, YMCA or Christian school!
- \* Try one of the dozens of quick exercises, fitness and nutrition ideas for your and your family in "The Busy Woman's Guide to Total Fitness"!

For the Busy Woman AND Busy Man, putting God first by combining faith and fitness is the smart choice!

## You CAN Redeem the Time

***"See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is" Ephesians 5:15-17.***

Aarrgh! Wouldn't you know the one day I'm writing about redeeming the time almost EVERYTHING seems to go wrong or take a lot longer than usual?!!! Technical problems, internet satellite problems -- it's almost funny! This must be a test of "the emergency broadcast system."

I asked, "Lord, how can I redeem the time in this situation to Your glory?" He showed me that like everything else in the Christian walk -- it's a choice. I hope this blesses you as it has blessed me.

### **It may well mean no more "wasted time." Is that even possible?**

First: What does it mean to "redeem the time"? To "redeem" means to "buy back" and "to recover the ownership" of something.

Wow! Do you see what I just saw in that last bit? We're to "recover the ownership" of time!

Well, who owns our time? I'll ask you that question. Where is the majority of your time "spent"? And by whom? Do you "own it," or does someone else control your time, thereby "owning" it?

### **Do you spend time -- or invest it?**

When I find myself running around in circles, losing things, on the tail end of another wild goose chase, I stop and say, "Wait a minute! Father, as David said, 'my times are in Your hand.\* I trust You to help me redeem the time. What can I do right now to make a difference?"

You know what He usually impresses on my heart? Two simple words:

### **"Praise Me."**

Praising Him in the midst of utter chaos? Stop what I'm doing and praise the Lord--won't that rob from the little time I already have if I'm pressed for time? How can that possibly help us "recover the ownership" of time, help us make the most of our time and keep us from wasting time?

When you praise the Lord, you are giving Him your time at that moment. "I praise You, Lord. You are my God. I give this situation to You, and thank You for working it out. I rest in You -- I refuse

to worry (to meditate on the enemy's thoughts). I turn my thoughts to You and praise You for who You are in my life..."

Giving God your time doesn't rob you of time, it increases your time because you are choosing at that moment to focus on God (with whom ALL things are possible, instead of on the harried, seemingly impossible situation at the moment).

You are redeeming the time, recovering the ownership of it, by giving it back to the One known in the Book of Daniel as the "Ancient of Days."

We make the most of the time we have by giving it to Him, and stating "Lord, my times are in Your hand."

## **How can we give God our TIME?**

### **1. Give Him the first part of your day.**

As soon as you awake greet Him and dedicate your day to Him. Here are some Scripture-based words you may want to say:

~ "Today is the day that the Lord has made! I WILL rejoice and be glad in it!"  
- from Ps. 118:24

~ "Lord, I present my body a living sacrifice to You, holy and acceptable, which is my reasonable service." - from Romans 12:1-2.

~ "The Lord is my Shepherd I do not want for any good thing today, for I trust You to guide me today, Lord. I am Your sheep and I follow You." - from Psalm 23

~ "Lord, my times are in Your hand today and every day. Thank You for guiding and protecting me, and helping me make the most of the time You've given me--for Your glory." - from Psalm 118:15

### **2. INVEST time with the Lord.**

Want more time in your day? The SECRET is to give the FIRST part of your day to the Lord -- in prayer (talking AND listening to the Lord), Bible reading, worship.

It doesn't matter the QUANTITY of time, but the QUALITY of the time you INVEST.

I'll put it this way: If you want God's best, give Him your best. If you want more time, devote more time to Him -- not as an obligation or as a (HUGE sigh) something you've GOTTA do (like some dreadful chore).

Okay, you say "I don't have A LOT of time in the morning to devote to prayer and Bible study."

That's okay -- give Him your BEST first thing in the morning. Devoting the first part of your day to the Lord is important because considering the full schedules most of us have, life (and the world) will quickly try to fill up the rest of the day so you don't ever find the time to invest in your relationship with the Lord.

Remember the scripture from Ephesians says we're to redeem the time "because the days are evil."

If you will pull aside for a short while, under the protective arm of your Heavenly Father first thing in the morning - and tell Him that you are giving Him your time, your life, presenting your body, all that you are and all you do to Him - you will be AMAZED at how your time will be redeemed FOR you.

You can find 10-15 minutes during the day to read a section from the Bible and ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate its meaning to you. You will be changed.

By devoting time to God in the morning, I believe you will find projects and chores during the day will be done in less time. The phone rings and someone offers to help with a project. What used to take hours to do now takes minutes.

During your time with the Lord, you've been given you wisdom, ideas and insights you never had before. The Word has become alive to you, and impossible situations suddenly seem solvable.

You still have the same 24 hours -- but in HIS HAND, time seems to expand and you find yourself clicking off the items on your "To Do" list in record time.

### **3. What do You want me to do here, Lord?**

"Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one" Colossians 4:5-6.

Be aware of the moments when you find yourself waiting, or anxious, or with a person you'd rather not be with at the moment.

I find myself asking, "Lord, what do You want me to do here? Don't let me miss an opportunity you have for me. Please give me the words to say." He will do it. Trust Him to give you insight into the situation you're in, what you're to do and the words to say.

You will find yourself in the middle of "divine appointments" to witness to someone, to be a blessing, and to be blessed.

## **God "Rebukes the Devourer"**

"Recover the ownership" of time by refusing to let the enemy take your time.

Just like tithing--because you tithe and offer, God "rebukes the devourer for your sake" (Malachi 3:11).

When your times are in the Lord's hands, I believe He rebukes the devourer of your time as well.

Seriously --- do you think the enemy is going to try to take your time out of GOD's HAND????

No way!!! Glory to God!

\* Psalm 31:14-16 -

"But as for me, I trust in You, O LORD;

I say, 'You are my God.'

My times are in Your hand;

Deliver me from the hand of my enemies,  
and from those who persecute me.

Make Your face shine upon Your servant;

Save me for Your mercies' sake."

## Believe God Wants to Reward You

***"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.***

I remember when I first read that verse years ago. I saw only the first part of it, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him." It seemed like a "downer" kind of verse -- as if I were being scolded for not having enough faith. I thought it was saying it's impossible to please God.

### **WRONG!**

Right after the first part of the sentence is the word, "for." In this case it means "because." We wouldn't come to God if we didn't believe He exists, so we do have faith. Actually, everyone has the measure of faith in order to be saved (Romans 12:3), otherwise God would be cruel - and He certainly isn't cruel. Everyone has the measure of faith it takes to come to God.

Then I saw the word "and." It's a BIG word here. We who have come to God believe that He is God; that He is all He says He is - AND - that He is a REWARDER...

A REWARDER!!! That sent me on a search. I asked, "What is a reward? What is a rewarder? With what rewards does our Father reward us?"

Enter Mr. Webster (in dictionary form, that is).

re-ward - noun (from Old French regarde: see REGARD). 1. something given in exchange for something done 2. money offered, as for capturing a criminal.

See REGARD it says. "Okay," I thought. "I never noticed that connection before. Let me see 'regard.'"

re-gard - noun (see RE- & GUARD) 1. a steady look; gaze 2. consideration; concern 3. respect and affection -- v.i. 1. to look at attentively 2. to consider 3. to hold in affection and respect

"This is getting interesting," I said to myself. "I've run references in the Bible before... Hey! I can run references in the dictionary and get blessed, too!"

Re- is a prefix which means "anew" or "again." For example, "recover" means "to cover again."

Guard means to "watch over, protect and defend."

What does God rewarding us and being a "rewarder" have to do with guarding and protecting us?

Have you ever heard the expression "to ward off an attack"? I saw the word "ward" in "reward." One who wards off an attack is our defender and protector.

When we look to God to provide our needs, when we seek Him diligently (with perseverance), He rewards us in several ways:

1. He meets all our needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).
2. We become "wards" of His, under His protection and guardianship because we look to Him. He is our strong tower ("The name of the LORD is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe, Proverbs 18:10).

You might say we become "re-wards" of His --- "wards anew!!!"

3. We please Him. If it is impossible to please Him without faith, then it is not only possible but extremely probable that we DO please Him when we believe He is all He says He is, does all He says He will do, and we look to Him instead of to man to meet our needs.
4. We realize that the REASON He is pleased with us when we believe Him is because then He can GIVE us "rewards," and we have the faith needed to RECEIVE the rewards He has for us.

Our Father is a REWARDER -- and what do rewarders want to do more than anything else? REWARD!!! What does a fisherman want to do? Fish! What does a dancer want to do? Dance!

Our Father the Rewarder wants to re-ward you because He loves you as His own child and as such He wants to protect you -- to "re-gard" (re-guard) you -- to guard and protect you anew every morning. Let Him be your strong tower, your portion and your all-in-all.

Seek Him with your whole heart and let Him re-ward you with the desires of your heart -- His own heart's desires for you that He longs to fulfill through you.

Believe that the Lord wants to reward you. You can please your Heavenly Father today by coming to Him, seeking Him above all else. He will reward you with the greatest gift of all: Himself.

## Walking in God's Promises

***"For all the promises of God are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us" 2 Corinthians 1:20.***

"All the promises of God." One source lists 7,487 promises of God to mankind in the Bible. That's over 20 years of promises if you stood on one each day!!!

### **How can we walk in the promises of God?**

Is that different from "standing on the promises" as the lovely old song says?

Both have their merit.

Standing: immovable, firmly fixed, feet planted on the solid rock of the truth of God's Word. We put the enemy on notice that he cannot knock us over; we're "standing fast in the liberty by which Christ has made (us) free and (we will) not become entangled again with a yoke of bondage" Gal. 5:1.

Walking: mobile, moving, active; unstoppable, determined, strong. It reminds us of the 10 lepers who were "healed AS THEY WENT" (Luke 17:14) -- they got up and got MOVING! (I like to say, "Keep on 'wenting!'").

### **Walking in the Spirit**

In Galatians 5, the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul encourages us that by walking in the Spirit we will walk in victory over the flesh (our carnal nature with all it's selfish, self-centered, "me-me-me" wants and desires).

### **How do we walk in the Spirit?**

Well, do you know how to walk on water? Walking on the water of the Word, that is!

One way to walk in the Spirit is to walk in the power and knowledge of God's Word. Jesus said, "The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

When my mind is filled with what the Word says about some challenge I'm facing or some trial I'm going through, I am less likely to react in ways contrary to the Word of God.

For example, if you will meditate on the attributes of love from 1 Corinthians 13, you'll begin thinking about the character of love more. As you think about it, and

say these words of Scripture aloud, they start to become a part of you - stored up as treasure in your heart, quickly becoming a part of the way you look at life.

So, when someone cuts you off in traffic, you will hopefully be less likely to blow a gasket. You may find a line from Scripture will come up from your heart to your mind (and I don't mean shouting "get thee behind me satan!" at the offending driver!).

Rather, verses such as, "Love takes no account of the evil done to it (it pays no attention to a suffered wrong)" (1 Cor. 13:5 Amp.).

We begin to identify with the character of Love ("God is love," according to 1 John 4:8).

Walking in the knowledge of God's Word quickly takes the sting of offense out of these trying situations. The enemy would like nothing better than for you to have a wall-eyed fit, rev the engines and speak all manner of evil against someone else -- hurting yourself, and your witness.

### **The Unknown Scripture?**

I've discovered that the Holy Spirit seldom brings a scripture to my remembrance I've never heard. It seems I have to have it in my heart FIRST before He will bring it to my remembrance.

### **So, How do you get the Word into your heart?**

"Keep your heart with all diligence for out of it spring the issues of life" Proverbs 4:23.

As important as reading the Bible is, hearing and speaking the Word aloud are also important, claiming the promises of God for yourself and your loved ones ("Faith comes by hearing and hearing and hearing by the word of God" Romans 10:17).

We tend to put more credence in what WE say than what someone else says. Speaking with our own mouths what God has said in the Bible has a powerful effect on us, renewing our minds and transforming our lives (Rom. 12:2).

AND - if you've been a PraiseMover for a while, you know by now how much we LOVE combining Faith and Fitness, making the Word of God a part of our everyday lives. Any opportunity to "Transform your Workouts into Worship" -- we're all over it!

A book of Bible promises is a valuable tool, as is a concordance (even the concordance in the back of your Bible), or websites such as

www.Biblegateway.com where you can find scriptures and Bible promises to address any situation you are facing.

The Lord said He would never leave us nor forsake us. Knowing He is in our heart by faith (Eph. 3:17) is more than a comfort, it's a fact.

Likewise, you have the Manufacturer's Manual for Life on Earth -- the Bible. Don't leave home (or be home) without it!



***✓* hope that these devotions have been a blessing to you.**

***Please feel free to visit me at***  
***<http://www.PraiseMoves.com>***

***And contact me at [praisemoves@gmail.com](mailto:praisemoves@gmail.com)***

***May God richly bless you,***

***Laurette***