



Samaritan Women- *Community AfterCARE Resources*

Assisting women coming out of jail and prison to live godly lives.

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Nancy Notes ...

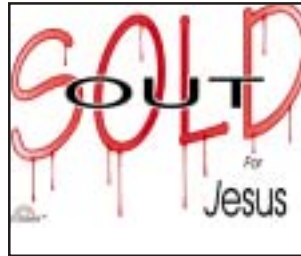
by Nancy Dixon

A New Year, what will it hold? What will happen that will be important to you? How will the world's happenings affect you personally? Will it just be another year, one day at a time that unfolds like years past or will this one be different and how? What are you seeking this year? If I ask you these questions, I also need to explain my thoughts on the subject.

I have been thinking about what I want for my life and what mark I want to make because I live. *I want to know Christ more and make Him know; that is my life goal.* Each year I review how I am doing and how I can grow and improve. The New Year is a good time to do this.

I choose Christ to be the center of my life. When I say that, it means that I want His blessing and guidance in everything I do. I belong to Him. He bought me with His blood when he died on the cross for my sins. That I don't take lightly.

It has been said that when people become convicted of a crime that they become "state property," that they have to follow what the person in authority says while in custody. **Well, perhaps you can say that I am in God's custody by choice.** Now I need to listen to what He is saying to me because He has authority over me. I know that He has my best interest in mind and that He wants to use me. That makes me feel valued and accepted. I want your life to count also. I believe that one of the best things that can happen to my life is to see you succeed in letting Christ rule your heart and your life. As you do that, He will direct you and you will have purpose and His blessings will unfold. He blesses those who are obedient to Him. With Christ in your life you can expect your life to become richer and fuller. God can and will use you to bless others through your lives. Look for God to demonstrate His power through your life



in increasing measure. I can say I see it in mine and I am amazed how God has stretched me and used me. I see it in others lives as well. Let's use this year ahead to draw closer to God ourselves and encourage others to do so as well.

In reading a devotion based on Isaiah 54:2, I was challenged. When Christ is your Lord, everything changes, He is not just "an add on" to what we are already doing. Radical change takes place. With this, we stretch our thinking and are open to God for Him to use and to guide us. Isaiah says, *"Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes."* Isaiah tells us that when God comes, you must make room for Him in your life. You must "enlarge the place of your tent" because God's presence will add new dimensions to your life, your family and your church.

As a Christian, how do you make room for Christ in your life? You repent of your sin. You allow Christ the freedom to do what He wants in you. You watch eagerly for His activity in your life and in your family and in your church. You live your life with expectancy that Christ will fill you with His power and will stretch you to do new things you have never done before in serving Him. We need to seek to please Him with our life choices. I can assure you I am still learning a lot. I still mess up and need to come ask for forgiveness and help often. But I am growing and so are many of you.

If Samaritan Women is to grow as a ministry, that means the individuals that make up Samaritan Women need to grow personally. It is wonderful and re-

warding to see that take place in many of the women's lives who come here at Samaritan Women. This year it is my goal to see more of you women really take off and let God take center stage in your lives. I want Samaritan Women to grow not only in the number of women who are helped but that our women will grow strong personally in their relationship with the Lord. That in turn will benefit every part of your lives and those around you. This can be the year like no other for you and me. God does want to bless us and He wants to make us a blessing to others. He wants us to build on a strong foundation, as it says in Matthew 7:24.

So what will this year hold? Only God knows. It will be good if we enlarge our thinking, *stretch* our faith and *don't hold back* in serving, *lengthen* our devotion to God and *strengthen* our stand for what is right and good. May all at Samaritan Women be a blessing and blessed by God this year. May you do all you can to please the Lord in the coming days.

Fun Fellowship Friday

The 2nd Friday of each month is set aside for you, your family, & friends to come join the fun, meet new friends, just relax & enjoy the evening.

January 9th

6:30-8:30 p.m.

Fresno Evangelical Free Church
Room 212
(upstairs in the Atrium Building)

Movie Night

Hot Dogs and Fixings Provided

Last Names A-G bring popcorn

Last Names H-P bring soda

Last Names Q-Z bring snacks

(Children's Program for Kids.)

Q&A

We want to hear from our Samaritan Women how they face certain situations in their life and can make practical applications to God's truth. At the beginning of the year, we're thinking of how we can make our newsletter more practical and informative to our readers and thought that on alternate months, we would provide Question & Answers from several of our women as well as volunteers who assist us.

We recently interviewed some of our people to ask them: How are you sold out (committed) for Jesus? What are the practical ways that help you to keep Him first in your life? How have you seen this work in your walk with Him?



This is what they had to say:



Mariana Gaede (Volunteer for 14 years - FCJ Chapel; Wednesday Bible Study Leader; Fun Fellowship Fridays) - When I invited Jesus Christ into my life when I was a young girl, I never dreamed that I would be here to talk about it 73 years later! God has been so good. As a baby Christian, observing those who had walked with God for many years, I would worry about how I would ever hold on throughout my lifetime. It was such a relief to me to realize it wasn't up to me, but up to God to hold me. Philippians 1:6 has always been very precious to me and has been proven to be true throughout my life. Now so many years later, as I look back, I can testify to the faithfulness of



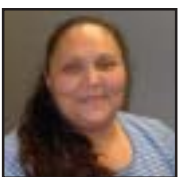
God. It's not been the result of my effort, but it's been God's gift 'so that no one can boast about it.' (Ephesians 2: 8-9) I'm like a little pencil in God's hand. He does the writing. My part is to be willing and obedient to be the little pencil in His hand. Two words that I feel are so important to living the Christian life are "trusting and obeying", trusting Him moment by moment to renew my mind (Romans 12:1-2) and obeying Him as he speaks to me through his Word. Even though I have failed Him many times, when I truly do this, I experience the joy of the Lord.



Angela Newsome (Samaritan Woman for 8 years) - I stay focused on Jesus by reading the Bible, praying, doing or attending Bible Studies and just seeking Him daily. I keep Him first in my life by acknowledging Him, praying and reading the Bible and by attending church regularly. As I do these things, I'm more aware of His presence, so that keeps me inline with Him and keeps me from doing my own thing.



Char Levis (Volunteer for 14 years - FCJ Chapel; Wednesday Bible Study Leader; Fun Fellowship Fridays) - I always try to put Jesus first in my thoughts. I try not to allow circumstances and feelings to dominate His presence. I give Him time with prayer, reading the Bible and just calling Him to my mind as I go through my day that He will help and guide me in the directions and the decisions that I make daily. As I **CHOOSE** to do that, I have peace as I go through my life knowing that He is with me through everything that happens. I am not alone and He is going to uphold me.



Dora Melendrez (Samaritan Woman for 4 years) - I put Jesus at the top of my list early every morning by reading the Bible and getting on my knees and praying to Him. When I wake up each morning, I thank Him for giving me a new day. Even if it's raining outside, there's sunshine because Jesus lives in my heart. I never forget where I came from and where He's brought me. By doing this daily, I have a new look on life. My eyes are no longer blind. The Bible says do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. (Romans 12:1-2) Our reward is not here on earth but when we get to heaven. Even when the hard times and troubles come, I have learned I can ALWAYS go to Him.



Health Tips - By Bobbie Lewis

Carbohydrates, Good Versus Bad

‘Every End is a New Beginning.’

That thought can fill our new year with promise and blessings.

Understanding the wonders of the human body is important to learning to live in peace, harmony and health. (God has made it clear in His Word that “We have the power to add to or take away the number of our days”, Proverbs 9:11. “He will satisfy us with life”, Psalms 91:16. “He will fulfill the number of our days”, Exodus 23:26.) First, God designed our bodies to have the ability to heal when given proper nutrition and care. Secondly, His love has provided the natural foods that can maintain our body, mind and emotions.

Eating is much more than enjoyment. It is a way to satisfy hunger. Eating is God’s design to continually re-

plenish our body with fuel for renewed energy and to maintain health. Isn’t it wonderful that God also made eating such a pleasure?

We are blessed that we do not need to be concerned with how the food we eat is digested in our bodies. Our bodies know what to do with the food God has supplied to turn it into the energy we need. For example, when we **CHOOSE** to eat complex carbohydrates found in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and beans, our entire system responds with health.

Carbohydrates are organic compounds composed of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen, as a sugar or starch. The most important carbohydrates are starches, sugars, celluloses and gums. Not all carbohydrates are created equal. We must stay conscious of the fact that refined carbohydrates (processed white flour foods, crackers, rice, noodles, cereal, biscuits, snack foods, etc.) are not healthy building or maintaining. Only unrefined carbohydrates (fruits, vegetables, peas and grains) are loaded with the vitamins and minerals.

Helpful Facts About Foods.

GOOD Carbohydrates

Fruits - Vegetables - Peas - Grains (oats, millet, whole wheat, rye) - Beans (black, chickpeas, kidney, lima, ming or pinto)



Unrefined Carbohydrates:

- combat stress
- nourish our minds and bodies
- provide energy
- lower cholesterol and blood sugar
- prevent obesity and diabetes
- are low in fat
- loaded with vitamins, minerals and fiber
- help to build the immune system, preventing colds and other illnesses.

bad Carbohydrates

Fast food (fries, hamburgers, nachos, etc.) - Snacks (chips, candy, crackers) - Noodles - Rice - Tortillas



Refined Carbohydrates:

- remove the B Vitamins we need to stay calm and balanced
- are higher in sugar and fat and therefore contain more calories
- turn to sugar in the body
- lead to obesity, diabetes and hypoglycaemia
- are high in fat causing high cholesterol.

In the coming year, may you **CHOOSE** to honor your body as the Temple of God that it is.

Highlights

with Norma Mitchell



"ON YOUR CASE"... Susan Epp, Case Manager

"Ever feel like you are trying to climb a mountain by yourself? Sometimes life offers challenges that are no fun to overcome alone! What are the mountains in your life? Would you like someone to walk beside you through the challenge? Call Samaritan Women and schedule an appointment with myself or Liz Gonzales. We care about you!

Health Check - We are providing a \$15 gift card to the women who get a complete physical examination. Call and schedule an appointment with one of our case managers for further information.



2003 was a great year. I got a chance to meet a lot of women and see them make some choices and changes in their lives that will affect their future. I also had the opportunity to witness some divine transformations in the lives of our women. Those of you who write us from "inside the walls", thank you for making us a part of your lives. Every letter is read and answered. You'll always have a friend here.

THIS MONTH AT THE CENTER:

* **Friday Celebration Party** - Every Friday at 3 p.m., we will celebrate you! All women are invited. We will have games and refreshments. Women attending 2 or more classes each week will receive a free gift!

* **"Healthy Living Support Group"** - Every Wednesday at 1 - 2:30 p.m. We are learning a lot of things about how to strengthen our immune system and prevent future illness.

Kid's Korner...

The Children's Enrichment Center

with Nana Singh



What a joy to share music with children! They love music; it is one of the key activities here at the Children's Center that brings together children, moms and volunteers. Even at **Book Buddies** we try to include a song together. Music inspires, uplifts and creates community. One of the worst effects of living in our world today is the constant pressure to separate people, even within families, we are pressured to live in isolation. Here at the Center we do everything to counter that. **Book Buddies** pulls mom and child together to create



a lasting bond. Singing with your child builds confidence, self esteem, and is a great way to teach your child all the good things he/she really needs to learn. Plus it is an important way to build reading skills. At **Book Buddies** we play a different version of musical chairs; no one is "pushed" out, each child is singled out for blessing and recognition. One of our favorite songs is a great way to begin the New Year...Make **Book Buddies** a must on your calendar, **Thursdays 6:00-7:30.**

"Yes, I can"

"I can put my faith in Jesus, **Yes I can.** Thank Him for His loving kindness, **Yes, I can.** I can have my sins forgiven, Have a promised home in heaven, Win the battle when I'm tempted, **Yes, I can.** I can serve the Lord my Savior, **Yes, I can.** Each day grow to be more like Him, **Yes, I can.** I can read God's word and pray, Find His will and then obey, Share God's message of love today, **Yes, I can.**"



Adjusting to God's Plan

By Charles Stanley

Matthew 4:17-22

We sometimes do not like change, do we? For many people, in fact, change is a downright frightening proposition. However, we see within Scripture a truth that is as relevant today as it was to the disciples: if you want to grow, you absolutely must be willing to change.

For example, I have been a Christian for over fifty years now. And, at no point in those fifty years has God ever said to me, "Well, what do you want to do?" Instead, He always comes to me and says, "This is what I want you to do." Sometimes, God's call falls right in line with what I hoped would happen; other times, however, God's will requires me to step outside of my comfort zone and bring about some change in my life. That change—which is inspired by almighty God—is what spurs me to growth in the Christian life.



Can you imagine what it must have been like for the first disciples? Jesus' call demanded that they change every single thing in their lives! Think about it—they left behind their families, businesses, commitments, and homes. Moreover, they had to radically change their attitudes, practices, and religious beliefs about the Messiah.

Why did they do all this? It was because Jesus Christ looked them in the eye and said, "Follow Me." He didn't say, "Let's take a walk," or, "Show Me where you want to go." No, He said, "Follow Me." Still today, Jesus knows where He wants to lead you. Will you do what is required to heed the call, "Follow Me"?

After reading the scripture in Matthew, what did you learn?

1. What was Jesus preaching?
2. Who were the people that Jesus spoke to and asked to follow Him?
3. Did they follow Him? Right away or after they checked the turkey in the oven?

January 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						
Jeremiah 29:11-13, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."				Center Closed		
4 Take your children to worship.	5 ~Bible Basics, 10:30 am-Noon ~ Boundaries 1:00 - 3:00 pm ~ Personal Enrichment, 3:30 - 4:30	6 -Parenting (Court Approved), 9:30 am - Noon ~ Anger Resolution, 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.	7 ~*Bible Study/Support, 9-11 am at EV Free (child care) Boutique at Center ~Healthy Living Support Group, 1 - 2:30 pm	8 ~ Thursday @ The Movies, 1 - 3 p.m. ~ Book Buddies, 6:00-7:30 pm	9 ~Crochet & Quilting, 9:30 - Noon ~ Victory Over Substance Abuse, 1-2:30 ~ Incentive Party, 2:45 - 4	10 ~Crochet & Quilting, 9:30 - Noon ~ Victory Over Substance Abuse, 1-2:30 ~ Incentive Party, 2:45 - 4 ~ FUN FELLOWSHIP 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
11 Celebrate the Lord's Day with a group of believers!	12 ~Bible Basics, 10:30 am-Noon ~ Boundaries 1:00 - 3:00 pm ~ Personal Enrichment, 3:30 - 4:30	13 -Parenting (Court Approved), 9:30 am - Noon ~ Anger Resolution, 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.	14 ~*Bible Study/Support, 9-11 am at EV Free (child care) Boutique at Center ~Healthy Living Support Group, 1 - 2:30 pm	15 ~ Thursday @ The Movies, 1 - 3 p.m. ~ Book Buddies 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.	16 ~Crochet & Quilting, 9:30 - Noon ~ Victory Over Substance Abuse, 1 - 2:30 p.m. ~ Incentive Party, 2:45 - 4	17 ~Crochet & Quilting, 9:30 - Noon ~ Victory Over Substance Abuse, 1 - 2:30 p.m. ~ Incentive Party, 2:45 - 4
18 Worship your Lord and Savior at church today.	19  Martin Luther King Center Closed	20 ~Parenting (Court Approved), 9:30 am - Noon ~ Anger Resolution, 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.	21 ~*Bible Study/Support, 9-11 am at EV Free (child care) Boutique at Center ~Healthy Living Support Group, 1 - 2:30 pm	22 ~ Thursday @ The Movies, 1 - 3 p.m. ~ Book Buddies 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.	23 ~Crochet & Quilting, 9:30 - Noon ~ Victory Over Substance Abuse, 1 - 2:30 p.m. ~ Incentive Party, 2:45 - 4	24 ~Crochet & Quilting, 9:30 - Noon ~ Victory Over Substance Abuse, 1 - 2:30 p.m. ~ Incentive Party, 2:45 - 4
25 Worship with a church family today!	26 ~Bible Basics, 10:30 am-Noon ~ Personal Enrichment, 3:30 - 4:30	27 ~Parenting (Court Approved), 9:30 - Noon ~ Anger Resolution, 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Alumni Mtg, 6 - 8 @ Ctr.	28 ~*Bible Study/Support, 9-11 am at EV Free (child care) Boutique at Center ~Healthy Living Support Group, 1 - 2:30 pm	29 ~ Thursday @ The Movies, 1 - 3 p.m. ~ Book Buddies 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.	30 ~Crochet & Quilting, 9:30 - Noon ~ Victory Over Substance Abuse, 1 - 2:30 p.m. ~ Incentive Party, 2:45 - 4	31 ~Crochet & Quilting, 9:30 - Noon ~ Victory Over Substance Abuse, 1 - 2:30 p.m. ~ Incentive Party, 2:45 - 4