

the garden

-A monthly newsletter for moms who desire to blossom into all God created them to be-



Sowing the 'Seed of the Word' in Our Daily Lives Practical, Biblical Encouragement for Moms

For God so loved the world that He sent His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

The spring days and blossoms we now have provide us with hope of new life outdoors—and within. Soon we will celebrate Easter, the day we remember the historical event that changed the world: Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

Last year for Easter, I wrote about Heaven, and how because of what Jesus sacrificially did for us, we have the hope that we will be there one day with Him and our loved ones who passed on in faith, trusting Jesus as their Savior. For me, this Easter, I am experiencing the reality of this promise and its comfort. You see, this Easter will be the first one I celebrate without my grandma here. She went to be with the Lord

March 18, just shy of her 90th birthday on April 3. She's now reunited with her beloved husband, my dear grandpa, and her loving family and friends whom also placed their trust in Jesus. Going



through the loss of my grandma, especially right before Easter, has really given me an even deeper understanding of the incredible promise we have in Jesus. As I sat at her funeral, I was so sad to lose her here with us, but I drew such comfort knowing where she is right now

and knowing I will be with her again one day. Without my faith or hers, that funeral would have been unbearable and completely depressing... completely hopeless!

Instead, we can rejoice that because God loves us so much, He sent Jesus to come down and save us from our sins that separate us from God's holiness—sins that deserve the punishment of Hell. God knew we could never be perfect, so He sent a perfect sacrifice, our precious Jesus, to endure suffering and death—our *punishment*. His loving act of grace bought our forgiveness... something we could never earn. Cherish what Jesus did for YOU this Easter... and every day. -WL

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Dear Moms,
I can hardly believe it, but there is only one more newsletter of the season! I always take off for the summer to rejuvenate for the next season. I sincerely hope "the garden" has been a blessing to you and I want to thank those of you who have contributed to this newsletter and shared with others. We all appreciate it!

As I look ahead to the May/summer issue, I'd LOVE to include something from YOU! That issue will focus on "everything summer" and fun ideas of things to do with your child/children/family. I'd love some fresh ideas, stories, etc., so if you have one, please contact me and we'll work you in. I'd really love to include more moms, so please take a moment to think of something and send me an email. Thanks!

-Wendy



To Your Health: "Get Movin' in the Fresh Air!" To be all we need to be as moms, we need healthy bodies.

Ahhh, spring! -The fresh, warm air, beautiful flowers and tree blossoms, and the busy activity of surrounding wildlife! It's time to crack out of our "hibernation shell" and step outside for invigorating walks, biking, yard work, gardening, and more. For me, it's so enjoyable to get exercise while simply having fun outside. If you're interested in finding out how many calories you burn at your favorite activities to help you meet your health goals, check out www.healthstatus.com/calculate/cbc. They also have other health calculators and lots of good info. Enjoy being healthy! -WL, RD, LD



Nourishment For the 'Soil': *See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men...rather than according to Christ. Col. 2:8*



With Resurrection Sunday fast approaching, this verse challenges my heart as I contemplate how we will be celebrating with our children. As I look at how my children must view this most holy of celebrations, they must lean heavily towards the celebration of Easter, which we celebrate on Saturday. We celebrate it as the beginning of spring and a time of God's renewal. They receive gifts and candy in baskets. In comparison, I wonder how these gifts influence what my children think about the most important part of Easter, Resurrection Sunday. Boring? Will church pale in comparison to gifts and candy, let alone bunnies and egg hunts? I think that if we have to

"remember the true meaning" of the holiday, we may have already missed it. So this year we will be praying for wisdom on how to honor our Lord on the holiest day of the Christian year without simply following the "traditions of men." -Kim Green

I can relate to Kim's contemplations. Fortunately, we can make keeping Jesus the center of our celebrations fun too. I love the book, "The BEST Thing About Easter," by Christine Harder Tangvald, which addresses this. Our kids can learn about and cherish what Easter/Resurrection Sunday is about with some fun, Christ-centered traditions. We can guide them and put emphasis in the right place. -WL



Kitchen Connection:
"Resurrection Buns" -Great Activity!

Refrigerated, canned rolls or biscuits
1/4-1/2 cup melted butter 1 cup sugar
1 bag large marshmallows 2 teaspoons cinnamon

1. Mix your cinnamon and sugar together in a bowl.
2. Wrap each roll/biscuit around a marshmallow, sealing well. Explain how Jesus lived a pure and sinless life .
3. Dip the balls into melted butter, then dip them into the cinnamon/sugar mix, explaining that the cinnamon represents the spices used to anoint Jesus' body before His burial, and that the sugar represents Jesus' gift—the sweetest gift we'll ever receive.
4. Place the balls onto a greased, lipped cookie pan, leaving enough space between the buns to allow them to rise.
5. Pre-heat oven according to directions on the can and bake until lightly browned. Allow to cool. When the kids bite into them, they'll find they are empty... just like the empty tomb! Together, you can all say, "He is not here, He is risen!"

Family Traditions: "Good Friday Mourning Turns to Easter Rejoicing!"



Here's a way to add a deeper understanding of Easter...
On Good Friday, reflect on the magnitude of Christ's death. Have activities cease from noon till 3 pm, with older children watching a movie that includes Jesus' crucifixion. That evening, have a makeshift cross—perhaps made of your Christmas tree trunk to help show that the same baby Jesus Who was born on Christmas grew up to be our Savior Who died for us. Read 1 John 1:5-2:2 and talk about how our sins are what nailed Jesus to the cross. Have each person write down a sin they struggle with on a slip of paper and take turns nailing them to the cross. Say a prayer together expressing sorrow over our sin. Before morning, take the papers off and replace them with a purple cloth draped over the shoulders of the cross. **He is risen and our sins are forgiven!** His love for us saved us and that is what we celebrate on Easter. **REJOICE!** (Idea from "Homespun Memories for the Heart")



Family Traditions:
"Resurrection Eggs"



Resurrection eggs are a fun way to count down the days to Easter and pique our kids' interest in what Jesus did for us on the cross, and His resurrection from the dead! Each colorful egg contains a Bible verse that tells part of the Easter story and a symbol, like a rock to represent the one that covered Jesus' tomb. Kids can open one per day, so start on April 1st.

To make your own set, go to

www.rainbowcastle.org/resurrectioneggs.html ,
or you can purchase them at Christian stores or online.

Family Traditions:

"The Jelly Bean Prayer"



I put this in each year because it's a favorite with my kids... Brightly colored jelly beans can share the promise of Easter.

- Red** is for the blood He gave.
- Green** is for the grass He made.
- Yellow** is for the sun so bright.
- Orange** is for the edge of night.
- Black** is for the sins we made.
- White** is for the grace He gave.
- Purple** is for His hour of sorrow.
- Pink** is for our new tomorrow.

A bag full of jelly beans, colorful and sweet, is a prayer, is a promise, is a special treat. May the joy of Christ's resurrection fill your heart and bless your life.