

by Diane Lytle

It was a summer day like so many others as I made the half-mile trek to the outskirts of town. I felt lonely, friendless, misunderstood. I could avoid the stares and the whispers of the other women by running my errand while they were occupied with lunch. When I arrived, I found a stranger there—a Jew, one of those people who called us “dirty half-breeds.” He had the nerve to ask me for a drink of water! “Why do you ask me, Jew?” I spat out.

“If you knew who I was, you’d ask me, and I’d give you living water—water that brings eternal life!” he responded. I was curious. Where did he get this living water? “You will never thirst again with my water,” he added. What a deal. I could get water without walking all this way to the well every day. “Give me some of this water!” I pleaded.

Then it happened, as it inevitably did. He brought up the subject I always dreaded, the subject that always caused so much heartache: he wanted to meet my husband. “I don’t have a husband,” I hedged. When he said I was living with someone and added that he even knew I had been married five times before that, I was astonished. How could he know that? He must be a prophet!

This was my opportunity to discuss the big theological issues of the day, especially the one about the proper way to worship. I hoped to show him that even though I might have made some bad decisions, I had a handle on doctrine. He wouldn’t take the bait, though. He told me that those who worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth. The time and the place weren’t the issue at all!

“When the Messiah comes, He will declare all things to us,” I knowingly informed him. That’s when the man declared, “I am He.” Wow! The Messiah! Talking to me! It all made sense now. I couldn’t keep such good news to myself. I ran back into town and told everyone. I didn’t care what they thought this time; this good news had to be shared. For once they listened—first to me, and then to the man I told them about. “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.”

Can you relate to the woman in this true story? She believed in the Messiah, and you can too. His name is Jesus. He knows everything about you, and yet He wants a relationship with you. He came to earth to die for your sins and to rise from the dead so that you could have eternal life. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).



This conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman was adapted from the Bible. For the complete version, please read the entire fourth chapter of the gospel of John.



Where are you?

A runaway slave, Hagar crouched near a desert spring, shaken from intense conflict with her mistress and troubled about the future of her unborn child (Genesis 16). Hannah sobbed out her frustration only to be falsely accused (1 Samuel 1-2). Ruth felt the sting of prejudice (Ruth 2). Esther found herself backed into a dark corner in a palace lurking with conspiracy (Esther 1-10).

Shoved along by religious leaders, a young girl faced the embarrassing accusations of adultery—alone (John 8:2-11). Mary and Martha felt bewildered with the “unnecessary” death of their brother (John 11:1-44). A chronically ill woman, at the end of money and solutions, wove her way through the mob to seek healing one last time (Luke 8:43-48).

Pulled from her home in Holland, Corrie ten Boom endured untold tortures in Nazi prison camps for protecting Jews during World War II (*The Hiding Place*). Missionary Gracia Burnham was forced by terrorists to tramp through the Philippine jungles, then lost her husband in a gun battle during a long-awaited rescue operation (*In the Presence of My Enemies, To Fly Again*).

When we learn the outcomes of these stories, we can only conclude that God met these women in the midst of dire circumstances. To read of their lives is to see that God had a much bigger plan than they could imagine. Their accounts strengthen our faith and give us courage for the path we walk.

Where are you? As women in the 21st century, God meets us where we are. He grants what we need most: forgiveness, salvation, and hope. His ever-present grace enlarges our inner capacity to persevere as we believe His Word and cling to Him in the face of seeming impossible situations. He brings blessings into each day, most easily seen through the lens of a grateful heart.

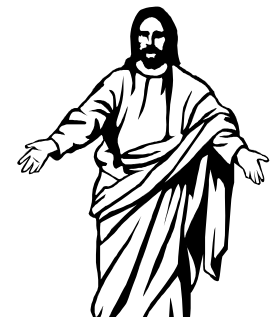
In this issue of *The Women’s LINK*, we continue our theme from the winter newsletter, that of exploring what’s behind the faces of women—their needs, concerns, and prayer requests. Understanding each other helps us offer support and encouragement. Remember, too, that no matter where we find ourselves, we can embrace God’s promises. He meets us where we are.

Sarah L. Phillips

“...Be satisfied with your present [circumstances and with what you have]; for He [God] Himself has said, I will not in any way fail you *nor* give you up *nor* leave you without support. [I will] not, [I will] not, [I will] not in any degree leave you helpless *nor* forsake *nor* let [you] down (relax My hold on you)! [Assuredly not!]

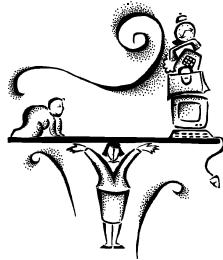
So we take comfort and are encouraged *and* confidently *and* boldly say, The Lord is my Helper; I will not be seized with alarm [I will not fear or dread or be terrified]. What can man do to me?”

Hebrews 13:5, 6, *The Amplified Bible*



“I work outside my home.”

Women work outside their homes for many different reasons. Some choose to do so because they love their profession, and it is fulfilling for them. Others work to “help ends meet” in a world that is becoming more and more expensive. No matter what the reason is for the woman, wife, or mother going to work, the pressures on her are often the same. We can NOT do everything we may want to do, the way we wish it could be done. Some women are able to hire help with a number of the many things that need to be done such as cleaning. Others of us have to find a way to do it ourselves. One of the largest hurdles for me and other women I know is trying to manage the home and children, making



sure everything is running smoothly. There may be wash piled high, clothes to be hung, dishes to be done, and children who need help with homework. Women who work outside need wisdom to choose what is best and most needful. We need to realize that we are one person and cannot do the job of three or four people. It is necessary to have our time with the Lord. We become dry and starved without the nourishment we receive from God's Word. We must find the time—no, we must *make* the time to spend alone with the Lord. The stress of getting everything accomplished at home, for the family, and at work will be overwhelming if we are without God's wisdom and guidance.

“My children's needs come first.”

How do we decide how to best school our children? I've wrestled with questions such as these: *The church has a Christian school. Does this mean I should send my kids there? If I don't, will I be thought of as unsupportive? What if I can't afford it or have other valid reasons to school my children another way? I've tried home schooling, but am not sure I feel qualified to provide the best education for them in the long run. Our area has some good public schools. If I send my kids there, will families view them as worldly or perhaps not let their kids spend time with them?*

and now have children in both the public and Christian school. What God has shown me over the years is that all of my children are different—uniquely and wonderfully made. We learn very early in their development that they each have to be disciplined and rewarded differently. Their interests are diverse. They have their own distinct needs. Could it be that our children will also have different schooling requirements? They may all do well in the public school, maybe not. Perhaps they will all love home schooling, or the Christian school, maybe not.

that decision. As a church body, we need to support each other no matter how each family chooses to educate their children, being careful that we don't look down on those who have chosen another avenue than we have. We all want our families to love and choose to follow Christ. Just as you and I have very different testimonies of faith, so will our children. God uses different circumstances in each person's life to bring him or her to Himself. Let's commit to encourage, pray for, and love all the young people of our church, no matter where they go to school.



My point is that each family has to carefully and prayerfully make

“I'm divorced.”

Divorced. Dreams shattered. The man I loved and with whom I thought I would spend my entire life somehow stopped caring. The one I depended on and the father of my children...only a shadow. Along with a piercing sense of rejection, I'm left with fear, shame, guilt, and embarrassment. I've lost security and companionship. I've become a single parent, the sole bread-winner, and the decision maker...alone.

Divorce is difficult emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually. I often feel overwhelmed, isolated, and vulnerable. As a divorcee, I have to work hard in the home and outside. I must depend on welfare, go back to school and work, or join the workforce for forty or more hours a week in order to support home and children. I'm always tired.

Added to this is the impression that many don't know what to say or do. Perhaps they feel afraid, figure it's my problem, or are too busy, so tend to overlook my situation.

Yet others have been an encouragement to me by demonstrating unconditional love. A divorced woman needs a few good friends willing to love above understanding. She needs laughter and kindness with

patience. She needs caring people who will give godly advice and guidance from time to time; it is hard to make so many decisions alone. She needs man-power: help with appliances, the car, emergencies, special occasions, and moving heavy items.

I appreciate little things like a hug, handwritten notes, smiles, handshakes, a small gift or book, sweet words of encouragement—even food items or financial support so my kids can attend youth functions. These “things,” given with love and grace, have been a wonderful encouragement to me over the years.

Knowing people care enough to pray is comforting and means so much. If correction is needed, please be gentle and forgiving, as the wound of divorce goes deep into a soft heart.

One of the greatest encouragements to me has been when godly people have reached out to my children. They *stop* and find out how they are *really* doing and feeling. They show concern for their spiritual condition and share God's Word when appropriate. They connect with them more than once or twice. Regular verbal and written support—and time—are very important.

Please don't ignore children just because their parents are divorced. They are hurting and feel the loneliness too. Yet, divorce doesn't have to be a penalty to them. Significant others offering the gift of friendship make all the difference.

Many times the church has been there for me; sometimes it has not. Yet, through the tears, solitude, and fellowship, God has revealed Himself to me in ways of hope of a future. God is always merciful and full of compassion. He provides what I need and lack.

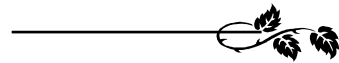
Can I help *you* as I'm able? Perhaps my gifts can contribute to your life. Together we can serve the Lord and make a difference for His glory.



Sincere thanks to all the ladies who have shared their stories in the winter and spring 2009 issues of *The Women's LINK*. Nameless on these pages, they are, indeed, real women. The circumstances in which they find themselves have defined them, sometimes in ways contrary to their choosing. Great effort has gone into putting their thoughts and insights into words. May their candid accounts heighten our sensitivity and find our hands and hearts reaching out in love. May we see afresh that, no matter what our role or situation, God is there, offering to us His grace and hope.



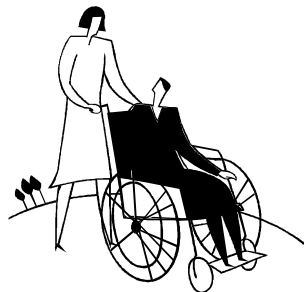
“I am a caregiver.”



The first time someone referred to me as a “caregiver,” I was rather shocked. I had not yet put that role on the list of who I am. As with most, I became a caregiver not by choice, but by circumstance. It meant someone I love became ill or disabled. It became my responsibility to care for whatever needs my loved one had - physical, environmental, financial, medical, etc. The “care giving” will go on for as long as I’m able to give proper care, or the loved one leaves this earth. And there is no allowance that my life may have already been full to the brim with other God-given “things to do.”

The challenge for me is great. Physically, I *must* go on and do what needs to be done. There are mental, emotional, and spiritual hurdles—these are the ones Satan uses to trip me. There is isolation and loneliness. The hardest hurdle for me is resentment. I can so easily ask, “Why me?” There have been times of exhaustion and discouragement where I’ve cried out, “When do I get to be cared for?”

You know the Answer to both of these statements. And in Him lie the blessings. Through being a caregiver, I am learning who God is. To the question of “Why me?” I must instead answer “Why *not* me?” God Most High does what He wills, and no one can stop His hand or ask Him, “What have you done?” “His works are true and His ways just and He is able to humble those who walk in pride” (Daniel 4:35,37, ASB). I’ve learned that what God does is always good (Psalm 119:68), whether I feel good about it or not. When I feel like my strength is gone and I cannot hold on anymore, He gives me His strength (Philippians 4:13).



To the second question, I know that God cares for me as no one else can (1 Peter 5:7). He has become my one true Friend (Proverbs 17:17,

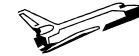
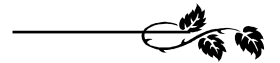
John 15:14,15). Not that I don’t have need of friends. I do. But I’m glad to know that I have a Friend who’s always with me (Hebrews 13:5), who shares my burden which may be too heavy for my other friends. It’s good to know that God is involved with my concerns (Psalm 138:8).

I remind myself that circumstances in my life are all part of God’s plan for me (Jeremiah 29:11-13). A dear friend reminded me that, in this role, given to me by God, I have the perfect opportunity to learn true love: to show love expecting nothing in return and receiving nothing in return. It is an opportunity to learn true humility, making it all about the other person and not about myself. I still have a long way to go in learning love and humility, neither “natural” for me. But God is teaching me contentment (Philippians 4:11). And while being a caregiver is not something I would chose, I am still surrounded by many blessings. Family and Christian friends encourage me, often unknowingly.

How can we help caregivers? First, PRAY. Pray not only for their physical needs, but especially that they would have patience, strength, and a proper attitude. Pray for wisdom and an opportunity to provide respite from the care or help in added responsibilities they may have. ASK. Find out how you can specifically pray or help fill a need or ease a frustration.



“Our family are missionaries.”



The faces of family and friends grew smaller and smaller, as we walked down the ramp to the plane that would take us to our first term of serving overseas. What awaited us on the other side of the ocean? Those first tearful good-byes were shed more than a quarter of a century ago. Over the years some of those good-byes have become the final good-byes when loved ones have been ushered into eternity.

Just what are missionaries? We are real people just like you. We have mountain-top and valley experiences. We have left immediate family behind, only to extend our family abroad. The missionary team have become “aunts and uncles” to our children. We give up seeing nieces, nephews, and grandchildren grow up, but readily “adopt” others on the field.

Our mountain-top experiences include being involved in planting national churches and having value as an important part of the team. Opening our arms to embrace the peoples of many nations and seeing them come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ have brought immeasurable joy.

Missionaries must also travel through valleys. Raising a family in a different culture, learning another language, and trying to stretch the dollar overseas are just some of the challenges we face day after day. Missionaries often struggle with wayward children. Many of our colleagues have grappled with how to care for aging parents. Should other siblings take full responsibility or should we interrupt or terminate our time overseas to assist in the care for our parents?

The definition of “home” to a missionary is where the Lord has called us to serve. It always creates an aching heart when people in the States ask the question, “Well, are you glad to be home?” Missionary kids who come back for college yearn for a sense to belong and to have friends. All of their friends are half way around the world. Have you ever considered “adopting” a college-aged MK?

How can a home church bridge the gap between their church people and the missionaries with whom they support? First, pray for us. Rather than

“Lord, bless all the missionaries,” pray specifically. Today with all the technology available, this can be done rather easily and inexpensively. Enlist your children and teens to get involved. You don’t know how many times we have wished for the phone to ring to hear someone just calling to encourage us in English!

Second, when missionaries come to visit or report, take the time to visit their display and speak with them. Do you know how awkward it is to stand in the foyer of a church and have no one or very few people stop to speak?

Third, remember that most of the missionaries’ closest friends have been left across the ocean. Please be a friend, or at least be friendly! We struggle with loneliness and want to be accepted by the churches that support us.

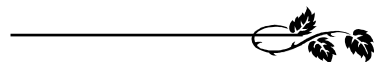
Finally, we desire to share our hearts. Be a good listener and we, your missionaries, will reciprocate by being an encouragement to you and your family.





“I am single.”

The Journey of Singleness



Single. Only those who have this label can understand the negativity that is often placed on us. However, what is most important is not the perceptions of others, but the value God sees in me. Being single is the place where God has me right now. I have a choice to accept it and live for Him, take matters into my own hands and attempt to change my life status, or become bitter at God. Focusing on God’s love is the only way to achieve true

peace and see the strength He gives during difficult times. I make it a priority to cling to His promises such as those found in Proverbs 3:5-6: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.”

“What do you want to do when you finish college?” My answer then and now is that I desire to be a wife and a mom. I always imag-

ined that after college I would be planning a wedding or at least dating someone with whom I would make life plans. Nevertheless, halfway through my senior year reality set in, and I had to start making my own plans. I learned then, and continue to discover daily, that one of the benefits of being a believer in Christ is that we never have to face these challenges alone. In each stage we go through, God is there to guide and comfort.

What to focus on as a single:

“Rejoice with them that do rejoice” (Romans 12:15). Bridal showers, weddings, and baby showers can be difficult to attend. Rise to the challenge; show love to those whom God has in different stages of life.

Get involved in ministry. This is rewarding and eye-opening; see others with greater needs than yours.

Enjoy the opportunity to be completely dependent on God. He alone can meet your every need.

Spend time with family. If you don’t have one or if your family is far away, adopt one.

Be willing to admit your struggles so others know how to pray for you.

Must Read: *Singled Out for Him* by Nancy Leigh DeMoss.



Tips for those who are not single:

Do’s:

Allow your husbands or your sons to show us random acts of kindness – clearing snow off our cars, assisting with household projects, etc. It is a huge encouragement to know that even though we may not have a significant someone in our lives, that are men who genuinely care about us.

Invite us to your home. We enjoy home cooked meals and evenings away from our quiet living rooms.

Talk to us, and include us in adult activities. While spending quality time with other singles is important, we also enjoy being involved in other adult gatherings.

Don’ts:

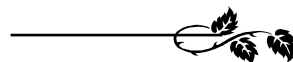
Please don’t ask other people about my dating relationships (or lack thereof). If you sincerely care, ask me, and avoid the gossip.

Don’t say phrases such as, “I know God has someone special out there for you.” “You would make such a great mom.” These are the desires of my heart, but hearing this when we can’t see how they can come true is difficult. Only God knows what is best.

Prayer Requests: contentment, patience, trust, and submission to God’s direction.



“I homeschool my children.”



It is a privilege and a blessing to homeschool my children. The time I spend each day with them is precious. As the years go by, time seems to go faster, so I cherish the moments we have together at home. I will say that schooling them is not always easy. With multiple children, some days I feel as if I’m caught up in a whirlwind, circling from child to child, helping them with their work. On the other hand, it is exciting to see them learn and grow from what I teach them.

When I am teaching, I think back to when I was in school. I remember learning what I am teaching my children now. I feel as if I am going through school again, and I am also learning new information as we study together.

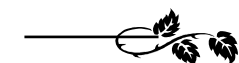
Homeschool moms need the support and encouragement from each other. A good way to receive this is to be a part of a homeschool support group. As moms, we compare notes about curriculum and techniques and share tips and ideas. Just chatting about how our week has been can be a source of encouragement.



I am thankful to have support from my family and friends as my children and I go through this rewarding journey together.



“I have elementary age children.”



I am a mom of elementary age children and, like every season in life, it can be a challenge. Many times, I feel I am in an afternoon rush-hour: homework, after-school activities, dinner, bed, and preparing for the next school day and work day. I have to make it a priority to stop and listen to the Lord, get into the Word, and enjoy what He has for me each day.

my children. Summit Christian Academy is another avenue of partnership with the body of Christ in providing biblical truth and investing in the lives of my children, family, and the families in our community. It is a blessing and a privilege to have such an impacting ministry as part of the church. I am also grateful for the support of church members.

You can uphold me with your smile, prayers, and the sharing of godly wisdom. I have been encouraged by those who serve in the children’s ministries at Summit, teaching the Word of God and having an impact on the spiritual development of

I think we can support one another by finding ways to be an encouragement. We can pray and learn from one another, no matter the stage in which life finds us (single, married, divorced, widowed, in health or illness, etc.). We all have lessons we can glean from one another. My prayer is that I will be a blessing to others and do my part in praying, encouraging, and serving, while sharing with them godly wisdom.

These verses have been meaningful to me: Hebrews 3:13, Titus 2:7, and Psalm 127:3

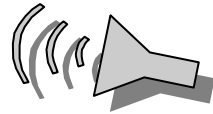


The Sound of my Faith

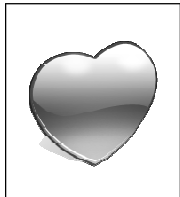


*O to be swept into worship
With that rhythmic gospel
That my soul longs to offer back to my God.
For it is He who has made my heart
Beat to the very music of His Word
And who has made my feet dance
To the celebration of His goodness and glory.
Great, grand voices that dig deeply into each word*

*Proclaiming and celebrating a personal encounter with the King of Kings
Despite daily struggles with the Prince of Darkness,
Scrape the sod off my heavy, downtrodden spirit,
And in a renewed lightness, with each crescendo,
I clap my hands even louder in amen agreement.
If I try to contain the song that is on my lips
When I hear of the many things “written aforetime for our learning,”
The very tears of my eyes cry out in protest,
For it is He who has created me and the sound of my faith.*



He who has created me and the sound of my faith



*Has sent me to a foreign land
To be swept into worship with a sweet, strange melody
In which my soul struggles to find release.
My heart searches for and my feet seek that which is muzzled
In a quieter, more subdued proclamation of truth, and so
In my heart I run to and fro,*

*Desperately looking for a way, a place, a means to celebrate.
And then it hits me. This is my portion.
My heart must beat silently to the music of His word.
My feet must dance within shoes that are laced and bound.
When my downtrodden, yet redeemed soul is scraped clean and given hope
By the “patience and comfort of the Scriptures,” I will not dare to shout “Amen,”
For my tongue will be bound. I will not clap, for my hands will be stilled.
The tears of my eyes protest inwardly, for this is my portion.
Shall I then cease to desire to be swept into that rhythmic gospel
That my soul longs to offer back to my God?
No, no, no, not ever!
For it is He who has created me and the sound of my faith.*



“I have physical limitations.”

I live with physical limitations caused by a slight birth defect, a genetic disease, and injuries. It is frustrating to me that I can't do the things I once loved to do. Bending, twisting, and lifting (all everyday actions for a woman) as well as taking short, change-of-direction steps and sidesteps (walking between pews at church) are becoming more and more difficult for me.

As my body constantly deals with the fatigue that comes from both life and from my body fighting itself, my spirit is refreshed and renewed by the fact that all of this is part of God's perfect plan for me. Romans 8:28 reassures me that even in this, God is working for my good. When I feel all alone, Hebrews 13:5 reminds me that God is always with me—He will never leave me!

I've observed that many Christians don't know how to relate to a person with limitations. Interacting with people with disabilities or limitations has always been a part of my life. The older I get, the more I realize what a blessing from God this has been.

Would you like to know how to interact with me? Please, talk and laugh with me. I may no longer be able to do the things

you are doing, but I would like to hear about your experiences. Maybe you could listen while I tell you about mine. While you may be able to lean against a wall and talk for a time, I can't. If I suggest we go sit down, or that we sit facing each other rather than twisting sideways to talk—it does not mean that I wish the conversation to be over—it just means I can't stand or twist any longer. I would still love to visit with you!

My spirit is refreshed and renewed by the fact that all of this is part of God's perfect plan for me.

Please don't be offended when I don't join in games, activities, or overnight events. I've sensed that participation often labels a person as friendly and/or spiritual while non-participants may be considered aloof or uncommitted. That's not always the case. I'm not making excuses to avoid doing something I don't want to do. The truth is, it's the very things I have always enjoyed the most that are becoming increasingly challenging for me. Remember, I do the same work as others *plus* my body “fights” all day every day—I'm tired. It's best for my overall health if I respect my limitations and get

a good night's rest in my own bed. Thank you for allowing me to be part of your events in ways that I am able.



It's difficult when people don't take the time to understand; it means so much when they do.

Would you pray for me? I would appreciate it if you'd pray that I would not give into discouragement, but rather seek ways to serve others within my capacities. Pray that I would learn to be content with the abilities the Lord has given me, rather than be envious of others and their capabilities. Finally, pray that I will remember that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and therefore I must not push it beyond what it can bear—I don't want to hurt His temple. Pray that I would have wisdom in this area.

By the way, I won't break. My feelings are not easily hurt—it's okay for your children to be around me. And you can ask all the “why” questions you (or they) would like!

The Sound of my Faith

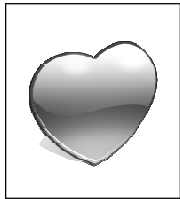


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In my heart I run to and fro,*

*Desperately looking for a way, a place, a means to celebrate.
And then it hits me. This is my portion.
My heart must beat silently to the music of His word.
My feet must dance within shoes that are laced and bound.
When my downtrodden, yet redeemed soul is scraped clean and given hope
By the “patience and comfort of the Scriptures,” I will not dare to shout “Amen,”
For my tongue will be bound. I will not clap, for my hands will be stilled.
The tears of my eyes protest inwardly, for this is my portion.
Shall I then cease to desire to be swept into that rhythmic gospel
That my soul longs to offer back to my God?
No, no, no, not ever!
For it is He who has created me and the sound of my faith.*



“I have physical limitations.”

I live with physical limitations caused by a slight birth defect, a genetic disease, and injuries. It is frustrating to me that I can't do the things I once loved to do. Bending, twisting, and lifting (all everyday actions for a woman) as well as taking short, change-of-direction steps and sidesteps (walking between pews at church) are becoming more and more difficult for me.

As my body constantly deals with the fatigue that comes from both life and from my body fighting itself, my spirit is refreshed and renewed by the fact that all of this is part of God's perfect plan for me. Romans 8:28 reassures me that even in this, God is working for my good. When I feel all alone, Hebrews 13:5 reminds me that God is always with me—He will never leave me!

I've observed that many Christians don't know how to relate to a person with limitations. Interacting with people with disabilities or limitations has always been a part of my life. The older I get, the more I realize what a blessing from God this has been.

Would you like to know how to interact with me? Please, talk and laugh with me. I may no longer be able to do the things

you are doing, but I would like to hear about your experiences. Maybe you could listen while I tell you about mine. While you may be able to lean against a wall and talk for a time, I can't. If I suggest we go sit down, or that we sit facing each other rather than twisting sideways to talk—it does not mean that I wish the conversation to be over—it just means I can't stand or twist any longer. I would still love to visit with you!

My spirit is refreshed and renewed by the fact that all of this is part of God's perfect plan for me.

Please don't be offended when I don't join in games, activities, or overnight events. I've sensed that participation often labels a person as friendly and/or spiritual while non-participants may be considered aloof or uncommitted. That's not always the case. I'm not making excuses to avoid doing something I don't want to do. The truth is, it's the very things I have always enjoyed the most that are becoming increasingly challenging for me. Remember, I do the same work as others *plus* my body “fights” all day every day—I'm tired. It's best for my overall health if I respect my limitations and get

a good night's rest in my own bed. Thank you for allowing me to be part of your events in ways that I am able.



It's difficult when people don't take the time to understand; it means so much when they do.

Would you pray for me? I would appreciate it if you'd pray that I would not give into discouragement, but rather seek ways to serve others within my capacities. Pray that I would learn to be content with the abilities the Lord has given me, rather than be envious of others and their capabilities. Finally, pray that I will remember that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and therefore I must not push it beyond what it can bear—I don't want to hurt His temple. Pray that I would have wisdom in this area.

By the way, I won't break. My feelings are not easily hurt—it's okay for your children to be around me. And you can ask all the “why” questions you (or they) would like!