



## Food For Thought: Spring

"It is God who saved us and chose us to live a holy life. He did this not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan long before the world began - to show his love and kindness to us through Christ Jesus."

~2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1:9

Spring is around the corner and God has started waking everything up from this long, cold, and dreary winter. The changes started out so subtle that I barely noticed the transformation of life going on around me. Not that I noticed it much differently in years previous, but this year seemed different. Maybe it was the seemingly harsh winter, or the bitter cold, but somewhere I forgot how wonderful this time of year was. Spring started, I think, with the Robins returning. Then, the plants started budding, Daffodils began popping, grass showed signs of greening and before long, there were signs of life everywhere. God's bounty was undergoing a rebirth. Spring brings so much beauty and wonder that it reminds me that God loves us and perhaps giving us a slight taste of what eternity with Christ might be like. We often forget to see and value the bounties that God spreads before us. We get so caught up in the concerns of our daily lives that we are only aware of those needs that loom in front of us - the next work deadlines, the children's new shoes, the car repairs, or the bills that are due at the end of the month.

God gives us many wonders made by His hands. Each can be pleasing to our souls if we would only take the time to appreciate them. Spring makes its own statement, so loud and clear that I'm reminded that as the gardener, I am but only one of His instruments and not the composer. I'm sixty-three and there isn't a day that goes by that I don't notice something different that He has touched. Whether it's a stray crocus in the middle of my weed-free lawn or the unusual bright red color of the finches this year, His works are everywhere. Are you awake? Are your eyes open? Do you see them too? Is your heart receptive? "His Beauty is all around us, but how many of us are blind to it!" exclaimed famed cellist Pablo Casals. God saw what he had made and saw that it was good. Do you take the time to see what God has created? Are you able to be receptive and totally present in the moment? There all kinds of wonderful and amazing things around us. An important part of our spiritual lives is learning to pay attention. "Consider the lilies," Jesus said. Take a moment and stop and stare in awe and behold the works of the Lord.

When your life is stressful and your problems seem overwhelming, you need to remember that pleasure can lie in the heart. It has long been known that attitude affects perception. Luci Swindoll, authoress and a Woman of Faith, said, "To experience happiness, we must train ourselves to live in the moment, not running ahead in anticipation of some future date nor lagging behind in the paralysis of the past. With wholeness and sensitivity we must live in the here and now."

Try this. Those mundane things of life - a sack of groceries, a phone call, a carpool, a meeting - can also be reminders of God's generous blessings. That van full of children you are ferrying to the soccer game is full of bright faces that have eager young hearts. A simple phone call to a friend can remind you that you are rich in support and loyalty. A crowded grocery aisle can be seen as a place of plenty and choice. These small wonders can make you smile with joy if you open your eyes to the value of the life in the here and now. If you look into your heart you can also see you too are a wonder created and loved by God.

Today is a good day to value life just as it presents itself to you. Open your eyes. Open your heart. Consider the Lilies, and receive God's priceless gift of life.