

## The Good Times

I was talking with a young friend the other day and she mentioned that this week would be “Family cookie baking” and how she was dreading it. It is an all-day project, and she is tired and sore from being on her feet the rest of the week and not how she wanted to spend a day off. Besides the cookies never tasted as good as they once did when she was younger. Something that had been a delightful and fun filled event had turned into a chore to be done and over. She talked about when her grandma was there and the fun in the kitchen. How they all went at it with enthusiasm but now Grandma was gone, one sister had moved out of state, her sister-in-law would be there, and they did not get along, her mother had her own way of doing things and was bossy, the list of complaints went on and on. I began dreading the event and I was not even involved! I told her that I could not relate to her experience because my mother and I had never baked together or made cookies together or did much of anything together. She did spend time in the kitchen with my Sister-in-law, but I was not wanted in the kitchen. My Mother had determined that I was hopeless and would one day starve to death. I did not hold the spoon correctly, I could never mix an ingredient properly, I was utterly useless to her in the kitchen. When my brother married, she found the daughter she yearned for. They would spend hours making goodies, one would make an Angel Food Cake with the egg whites and the other would use the yokes for a sponge cake. They were in synch with each other, and I was liberated. They crocheted together; I could not crochet because I did not hold the hook properly according to my mother. So, I purchased a How to Knit book and taught myself to knit. I learned to cook in Home Ec, and I was allowed to cook on Saturday evenings when I could make Hamburgers with the rule that my mother could not come in the kitchen. In later years she would praise the food I prepared when they came to dinner but still was not allowed in the kitchen when I was cooking. She discovered I could make a Meringue pie that was wonderful while she had always had trouble with her Meringue. I felt sorry for my young friend and suggested that what she was really dreading was the loss of those she loves. She is going to the cookie baking and I hope she draws strength from the memories of what was and what is now. I know she will not regret taking one day out of 365 to make her mother happy because her mother wanted and needed her there one more time. Jesus did as he was told and pleased his mother.

John 2:3-11 When the wine was gone Jesus' mother said to him, “They have no more wine.” “Dear woman, why do you involve me?” Jesus replied, “My time has not yet come.” His Mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water” so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.” They did so and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, “Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best for now.”

Lord be with us this holiest of seasons, be with our families may we appreciate the joy of being together and all our special memories. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry and his family. Be with those who are ill and those who grieve. Be with our church may we be the hands and feet of Jesus. Be with those who are mourning the loss of young lives in a senseless school shooting yet again. May the survivors feel your comfort and give them strength. Be with those who have suffered in the tornados this week. Be with our staff and leaders, give them guidance and direction. We thank you Lord for the food we eat, the shelter of our homes, and especially for your love that sustains us. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson

