

## Heavenly Humor with a Whole Heap of Humility

I sensed early on that this year's Ladies Christmas Tea was going to be different. Different for a variety of reasons, but primarily because I had no idea what the Lord wanted me to share this year. I mean let's be honest, it's not rocket science is it? Christmas is about God coming to earth as a baby, hope bursting forth in glorious day, the light shining in the darkness, an amazing love story, a love that endured the shame and pain of the cross for mankind – it's about His plan's and purposes for each one of us...but everything I mused upon just fell apart or left me with a clear lack of peace sensing no confirmation from the Lord.

So, the day arrived, I was still without any specifically anointed words to share (let alone having prepared anything in German); having quickly showered and dressed, I checked the clock...20 minutes to go before the guests were due to arrive. The thought came to me, perhaps one of the other two believers would have something to share. That must be it! A somewhat elusive peace came upon me. Elusive because suddenly the house filled with the all too familiar smell of burning bread...my cheese and fig toasts were charred and so were my nerves. As I proceeded to have the pre-Christmas meltdown that is common to all (it is isn't it, common to all?), the doorbell rang as our first guests arrived, yes 15 minutes early, just as Ava approached with tears streaming down her face confessing she has just spilled glitter all over the floor. I opened the door and welcomed them with a wimpy Merry Christmas, a strained smile on my face, and a heart filled with stress... did I mention that my hair was still wet?

As the morning progressed 4 of the invitees were over 40 minutes late. I found myself consumed with providing directions to lost guests, or trying to fill the food trays with something to eat! The long and short of the day – we had 14 ladies – from 7 different nations attend. We somewhat successfully had a cookie exchange, gift exchange and several ladies made some new friends. However, what was painfully missing from my vantage point was the spoken gospel. Can you imagine it? One of our two major outreaches of the year and the true message of Christmas isn't shared!

Ah...the shame and guilt that followed. What a miserable failure this outreach event was... yes, the ladies all enjoyed themselves, had sweet fellowship and plenty of sweets to eat, but did they



hear the gospel? This missionary got a big fat F for the day. Another sleepless night followed, as I lay in bed thinking, re-thinking and playing the event over and over in my mind.

Morning came, I felt like I had a massive hangover, yes too many sweets, but the spiritual battle from the day and the night were excessively oppressive. Daniel was scheduled to work, so I was left to host the church alone. Feeling like a fraud, I just wanted to crawl back into bed and pull the covers over my head. But somehow by the grace of God I forced another smile on my face and welcomed the Gemeinde for church....quietly praying that no-one asked about the party.

However, as I sat and listened to Friedl preach about hope and humility I finally heard the sweet voice of the Holy Spirit speaking to my soul, reminding me that it's not about me, or what I can say or what I can do... recognizing that He, the Holy Spirit can do more with just a kind word, or a hug than a thousand well thought out, pre-planned words that could come spewing out of my mouth.

Confessing my guilt once again, to the Lord as well as to the church, guilt of pride, of arrogance, of thinking that somehow yesterday was all about me and what I was going to accomplish for the Lord...or not, as was the case. We shared communion together and that overwhelming sweet peace flooded my heart and soul once again.

As I sat pondering the message – I found myself laughing... laughing because finally after 3 ½ years of listening to sermons in German, countless hours of searching for one word to understand, grasping for concepts of an overall message – this was the message I understood! Seriously Lord? Did it have to be a message on Humility? Heavenly humor always surprises and finds ways of humbling me!

Shamefully, I consider, just how important do I think I am? How often do I depend on my own strength, resources, or wit to attempt to glorify God? Had I not repeatedly asked for something to share and His response was silence. Did I really think that I was in control of the events of the party? Is He Sovereign or not!?

Yes, He is! The Lord was totally in control of the day – from the burning appetizers, to red & silver glitter spread throughout the house, both the early and the late comers, to the stressed out mess that I was... He was and is doing infinitely more than I can ever think or imagine. He was doing things his way yesterday, as well as today!

The following day, one of the two believers who attended the Tea, shared tearfully with me that as she sat and looked around the room she was overwhelmed with the ladies the Lord had provided to me for ministry. When I shared how I felt that I blew it, she was quick to share what I didn't know was that she and the other believer spent their whole time engaged in conversations sharing their faith and witness!

OK, so 3 ½ years later I return to the realization that He doesn't need me, yes He wants me – but He is more than capable of ALL things ... remarkably without my help!

Amazed at His Never Ending Grace—Kathleen