

# Courage to be YOU

by Melissa Michaels



# Women's Prayer Calendar

## October 2009



Do you ever secretly envy the women who seem to have it all together? The ones who manage (all at the same time, of course) to have their nails done, a chic hair cut, the perfect house, creative activities for their children, organized closets and a magnetic personality?

Do you quietly long to "find yourself" and "have balance" but you fear you missed the memo on how to juggle an overwhelming list of priorities? Do you feel like you might have permanently lost yourself a few years back in an avalanche of laundry mixed with insecurities and unrealistic expectations?

All the choices for how to spend our time every day can be downright overwhelming. I'll admit I used to get exhausted just thinking about all I should be doing. When my kids were young, some days I was lucky to take a shower, let alone accomplish anything else. I could never measure up to my own expectations.

It seemed like everyone else could do it all, but I couldn't even figure out which things to do first! I would drop too many balls when I became paralyzed by the options and would end the day frustrated by my inability to juggle with a smile on my face. I thought surely something was wrong with me.

So, how do you find peace with yourself and the season you are in?

### Amazing Things Happen When Women Pray

This Women's Ministry Calendar is simply a reminder that there's power in prayer. Use it each day to say a special prayer for those listed on that day. We try to keep up, but if we've omitted your name, please fill out a communication card and let us know you'd like to be included on next month's calendar. There is POWER in prayer!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
				Leticia Berry Bobbie Fluharty	Pastor Bill & Kathy Birdwell	Carol McCracken Cassy Richardson
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ann Burgos Theresa Sample	Peggy Murillo Karen Schaefer- Faust	Pastor Nick & Michele Lego Sawyer Lego	Linda Persoon Allison Thomas	Robin Kumpel Shirley Ristow	Helen Ward Susan Ortiz	Ann Shotzbarger Nancy Henderson
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Virginia Brown Candace Suiter	Pastor John & Cheryl Birdwell	Bekah Riede' Virginia Waddle	Cameil Kimble Amy Dones	Patty Nelson Beverly Gordon	Lisa Stoner Tui Marion	Adina Henderson Virginia Gatton
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Yvonne Savage Jo LaChance	Pastor Mark & Niki Dye Caden Dye	Janessa Osborn Ruth Savage	Kim Jasper Stacie Ward	Tina Raaf Ying Hong	Vicki Cox Suzie Wink	Stephanie Nelson Holly Genco
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Lucina Stanley <i>(Ms. Lucy's last Sunday before retirement)</i>	Diana Burgos Bonnie Thomas	Joyce Mager Marion Ratliff	Pastor Rod & Nancy Marion Tony Marion	Gerrie Mustard Dezirae Perry	Carole Phillips- Cone	Mae Jakubowski Katrina Chischilly



Here are some tips that have encouraged me along the way:

### **1. Get to know your heart.**

What makes your heart beat a little faster? What are your passions in life? God gave each of us special gifts and things that He has planted in our heart to share with the world. We are all unique! We don't have to have it all together or keep up with someone else's priorities -- we can find beauty and peace living the life God intended for us. Our life might look a little messier or less "put together" than our neighbors, but we can find fulfillment in being authentic and true to who we really are. Let yourself discover and develop the passions God gave you.

### **2. Be purposeful.**

Living a balanced life doesn't mean we do everything perfectly. It is less about doing EVERYTHING and more about being purposeful with what we actually do. Pray about your top priorities, surrender to what God has for you to do in life right now, and do the best you can to grow in those areas and keep them in balance.

Take pleasure in the things you decide to focus on! Whether it is keeping up with the dishes, serving the community or playing with your kids, find fulfillment in your special purpose each day. There is a time and season for everything -- some things you really love doing might have to wait for another phase of life. Be patient for God's timing! The things you choose to focus on may not look as impressive as what your friends do, but if you live purposefully you will care less and less about what other people think.

### **3. Embrace imperfection.**

This can be a tough one for some of us! We feel God can't use us or we can't fully enjoy life or care about others until we can attain a certain level of perfection. "I will have the neighbors over WHEN we get this and that done around the house." It is hard to admit, but many of us hide behind our imperfections. Those imperfections become an excuse for our inability to live out God's purpose in our life.

We can become easily self-conscious about our homes, the way we decorate or our looks and lose sight of more important things in life. We need to give ourselves permission to be "in process" and focus our attention on finding contentment with what we have been blessed with. Once we can accept our imperfection and remove that roadblock, we can find new freedom in becoming all that God calls us to be.

### **4. Resist comparing yourself.**

I love reading magazines, books and blogs. I love shopping and

looking at beautiful things. I get a lot of encouragement and motivation this way! But I need to keep myself in check by not overwhelming my senses with too many suggestions. When I feed myself a steady diet of things that distract me, I quickly become overwhelmed and discontent.

I'm not just talking about avoiding ideas that are beyond my means! Even TOO MANY simple ideas or suggestions of things I "could be doing" can give a sense of not measuring up and being behind before I even get started! I find it really important to protect my mind from overload and distraction so I can focus on what I've determined God has called me to right now in my own life. Feeling balanced and content requires a balanced diet of input. Comparing myself to others on a regular basis is not healthy or productive for me.

### **5. Have Courage!**

Finding contentment in who we are and purposefully living the life God planned for us takes real courage. It is oftentimes easier to drown ourselves in discontent in the life we live and pronounce ourselves failures for not being as talented or accomplishing as much as our neighbor.

Allowing God to use us right where we are, (in spite of our imperfections), having the courage to say no to input that distracts us, and the resolve to live purposefully in the season we are in will open the door for us to become all that God intends us to be.

### **This is a lifelong process!**

I still struggle with these issues and I certainly do not have it all together. But I try to make peace with the season I am in. I just focus on today (sometimes one hour at a time!). I haven't arrived, that is for sure, but I am slowly growing in confidence of who I feel God created me to be.

**Good to know, we don't have to be perfect or do it all!**

### **About the author:**

*Melissa Michaels* is an interior decorator, a pastor's wife at a brand new start-up church in Washington state, and a mom of three.