

Elaine Bickel

Child of God ~ Servant of God's People

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Daily Devotion



Invitation

A very dear friend of mine daily does what I would never want to do. She designs websites and all sorts of pamphlets, ads and notices. She is very good at this and although she never charges as much as most would charge, her work is consistently excellent. She has that gift. When it was time for her daughter's wedding announcements to be designed, she pulled out all the stops to do her very best work for her beloved daughter.

She completed the work ahead of time and was proudly printing them when a friend happened to notice the unthinkable. Right in the center of the invitation, in the section with the largest letters, there was one misspelled word. Having any misspelled word on an official invitation is always bad news since it means work will need to be redone; however, this was an especially embarrassing mistake since the one word she had misspelled was her daughter's first name. How could this be? She had originally chosen the name, over the course of her more than twenty years as the mother of this wonderful young lady she had written the name endlessly on forms, notes, letters and even in online comments.

My beloved friend was now the red faced owner of more than a hundred ruined invitations and the recipient of more than a few teasing comments by those who love her most.

Without a doubt, this all too human invitation making mother knows her daughter's name and the proper spelling on it. She has shared many meaningful moments with her from conception until this very day. She probably knows more about her daughter than anyone else on earth. Her love for her daughter is great. She'd lay down her life for her without even pausing to think about it, but human love and even the precious mother daughter bond have definite limitations. The amount of time this mother and daughter spend together will decrease as she keeps her Godly promise to be faithful to her husband. While their love will continue to grow, it will never be perfect because neither of them are perfect. God forbid, the day could even come when the challenges of age would make it difficult for her to even recognize her beloved daughter. While she may be willing to die to save her daughter's life, nothing she could ever do could save her daughter's soul.

While I did not miss an opportunity to join her in laughing at herself, I also thought long and hard about what I had shared with a group of awesome Christian ladies in Missouri recently. Each woman in attendance received a dog tag necklace inscribed with the words, "He knows my name", since we were focusing on Isaiah 43:1b, "Fear not, for I have redeemed you, I have called you by name, you are mine." I also thought about the comforting words of our Lord in Isaiah 49:15-16a, "Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands."

God knew our name before we had one. Jeremiah 1:5 tells us, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you. He never misspells our name when He daily, tenderly invites us to come into His presence and spend time with Him in His Word. He daily, tenderly invites us to speak to Him in prayer. He daily, tenderly invites us to come to Him to confess our sins and receive His blood bought forgiveness. Even though the invitation is clearly, unmistakably for us, we can sometimes ignore those invitations. Sometimes we are tempted to believe they are more specifically meant for some other great sinner. Perhaps, we would be wise to spend some time reading Christ's parable of the wedding feast in Matthew 22:1-14. Christ clearly invites everyone to the wedding feast. Those who ignore His invitation will miss much more than a party.

By Elaine Bickel