

July

Lemons in My Life

{ a Women's Ministries Program }



Ah, July! Warm weather, sunshine, long summer days. The garden is growing, flowers are blooming, bees are buzzing. Nothing beats sitting on the porch and sipping lemonade while listening to nature!

Speaking of lemons. Sometimes experiences in life can seem mighty sour! It's what we do with those experiences that count though! And God tells us exactly what to do with the lemons!

Bible Verse	Decorations	Theme Song
<p>Psalm 98:4</p> <p>Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth; break forth in song; rejoice and sing praises.</p>	<p>This would be a great program for outdoors on a sunny day, however, wherever you are, make the surroundings as cheery and bright as you can! Bright tablecloths in lemon or lime colors. Centerpieces: Place lemons or limes in a clear bowl. Surround container with greenery . Use coffee stir sticks and small flags with your theme title. Place one pick each bowl of lemons. Have a cheerily-painted tin pail at each place with napkin, silverware, lemon drops, and a small gift such as a bookmark or garden marker</p>	<p>Smile, Smile, Smile</p>
Food		
<p>Quick and Easy: Lemonade, Lemon Pound Cake with Blueberries and Whipped Cream</p> <p>Potluck: Ask ladies to bring favorite cold salads (you might want to assign a certain type in advance so you don't get all the same salads!) Provide rolls, herbed and plain butter, and of course, lemonade! Serve a lemony dessert such as lemon bars, cake, or cookies</p> <p>Planned Meal: Have a picnic! Decorate with picnic items and include all the foods typically found at a picnic – sandwiches, salads, fruit, etc. To make it extra special pack picnic supplies in baskets-one for each table, and let ladies unpack their lunch.</p>		
Activities		
<p>S.I.P. Sisters In Prayer</p> <p>Cut out heart shapes from lemon peels (a mini cookie cutter works great here). Have each woman take a heart. Pair women in twos. Have them talk about sour experiences they are currently going through. Commit to praying for each other's 'lemon moments' over the following month, using the lemon peel as a reminder.</p>	<p>Ice Breaker</p> <p>Sour Face Have each participant suck on a sour lemon ball and tell the group about an experience that was not pleasant – and how they managed to smile or get through it. Encourage one another in the journey!</p>	<p>Ministry</p> <p>Traveling Picnic Help people who are not able to get out and enjoy a picnic – pack a picnic lunch and take it to them! Make a list of people who could use a pick-me-up picnic, divide participants into groups or two or three, and plan to take a picnic on the road. Gather together sometime after the event to share stories (and laughs) about your picnic experiences.</p>

Devotional Thought

Lemons in My Life

Perhaps you woke up this morning thoroughly refreshed after a great night's sleep. The sun may have shown warmly on your face, and as you ambled toward the shower you just knew that today was going to be the perfect day! There might even have been hints of ethereal music playing in the back of your mind as you sat back to enjoy a peaceful worship.

Then the phone rang. Or the children started fighting. Or the toast was burned. Or...

Peaceful, perfect moments seem so few and far between in a world clamoring for our attention! How quickly we can go from feeling perfect to feeling frustrated, overburdened, stressed, or tired. The funny thing is that the situations that get under our skin and turn us sour the fastest are often the smallest things: children bickering, a relative or friend demanding more attention, toast burning, someone cutting in front of us. Not world changing events, not things that need life-saving attention. Just little occurrences that seem to turn a perfect moment sour in an instant.

God knew how easy it would be for us to turn from perfectly sweet to sour. In James 1:2 we are told to 'count it all joy when you fall into various trials'. Or, when life gives you lemons, put a smile on your face!

King David – whom we know had a lot of experiences with lemons-, says this about the irritants, troubles, and woes encountered: "But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love; for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble."- Psalm 59:16 He also says in **Psalm 98:4**- Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth; Break forth in song, rejoice, and sing praises.

We have much to be joyful about! Pick up your Bible and read about the good things God has done and wants to continue doing for you. Make praising God a priority. Then go out and share the sweetness with those around you.

A Ministry for Every Woman

