

Spiritual Encounters at the Kitchen Counter



Joyce Roberts Lott

This devotional makes a great gift book, also. It is inspirational and full of devotions having to do with ordinary things in extraordinary ways. Each reading has the scripture at the top and a prayer at the end. After that there is space provided for the reader's ideas on objects in her kitchen.

SPIRITUAL ENCOUNTERS AT THE KITCHEN COUNTER

by Joyce Roberts Lott

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Joyce Roberts Lott

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ISBN: 978-1-64438-555-5

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Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., St. Petersburg, Florida.

Printed on acid-free paper.

BookLocker.com, Inc.
2019

First Edition

Scripture quotations from *The New International Version* Copyright
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THE TABLE

Psalm 133:1 How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!

Sitting at my table, sometimes I reminisce of occasions when I have prepared and shared a meal. Those times when individuals came together, a common bond was fostered. That was certainly true in my childhood. My parents, grandparents and I would often sit at a large table and share memories and laughter at a meal. I cherish such moments.

“Think this over carefully: The most charming hours of our life are all connected – by a more or less tangible hyphen – with a memory of the table.”— Pierre-Charles Monselet 1874. We can remember the table in mother’s kitchen, grandmother’s kitchen and other kitchens we frequented. There are memories at the table.

When we gather around the table to break bread with our loved ones and bow our heads for thanks, we can express our gratefulness for the time together, the blessings we have experienced, and the food provided. May the bond of love present and the prayers around the table make the bond last.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for the blessings of table fellowship with friends and family and for the bond of love. Lord, I think of the day when we will be with You. Lord, I am thankful that those who know You as Savior who will some day sit at Your table in Your Heavenly Kingdom. Oh, what sweet fellowship we will have then! In Your precious name I pray. Amen.

SPIRITUAL ENCOUNTERS AT THE KITCHEN COUNTER

Your encounter (object or experience) and its lesson:

BLENDER

Matthew 19:5 ...For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.

John 17:21-22 that all of them [disciples] may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

When my daughters were being honored with bridal showers, I gave each a blender. I had stressed that in a marriage two people's lives should blend into one. They were aware of a blender's capabilities, having used mine. They were familiar with how several distinct ingredients would unite into one as the blender worked, sometimes hitting rough spots and sometimes running smoothly, but always blending into one. It was not just a gift; it was a symbol.

A blender is a perfect gift for a bride-to-be. It can be used as a continual reminder that the Lord wants the blending of two lives into harmony.

Jesus had the same desire for his disciples in John 17:21-22 as he prayed for His disciples. He desired that they all be one. He desired unity. That is not asking uniformity -- all being just alike -- but united in the Lord.

Prayer: Lord, I pray for the husbands and wives to be as one. For those alone, I pray for them to have unity with others of the faith. In the name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.

Your encounter (object or experience) and its lesson:

SPIRITUAL ENCOUNTERS AT THE KITCHEN COUNTER

VANILLA

Psalm 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

James 4:8a Come near to God and he will come near to you. b Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

My vanilla bottle is labeled "Pure Vanilla." It's not imitation. It has no impurities in it. It contains 100% vanilla.

"Pure" brings to my mind the heart and the need for having a pure heart before our Lord and Savior. Often the words of Psalm 51:10 have come to me, just as if out of nowhere -- "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." I long to be pure.

Impurities can enter our lives if we yield to temptations. There are many battles in a life with the goal to remain pure. Having the Holy Spirit within us, we experience disappointment when we sin and when our heart becomes contaminated. We grieve the Holy Spirit, too.

The flavor and aroma of pure vanilla when added to oatmeal cookie dough or no-bake cookies are wonderful. Just as they are delightful, so is the fragrance and fellowship of Christians whose hearts and lives are kept pure. They flee from sin.

PRAYER: "Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole.... Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."¹ Lord, I truly appreciate Your sacrifice for me. Thank You that You forgive our sins as we confess them to You and turn from them. Lord, through Your strength, help me to be victorious over sin and not let it have a part of my life. May I be pure in heart. Thank You, Lord. In Your precious name I pray. Amen.

¹ "Whiter Than Snow" by James Hicholson, Inspiring Hymns, Singspiration Inc., Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506, compiled by Alfred B. Smith, p. 382.

SPIRITUAL ENCOUNTERS AT THE KITCHEN COUNTER

Your encounter (object or experience) and its lesson:

THE COOKIE CUTTER

Matthew 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

I was looking through old photos and came across one of my three-year old grandson as he stood on the chair at my kitchen counter. I had taken the chilled cookie dough out of the refrigerator and began to roll the dough with the rolling pin. I gave him a small toy rolling pin. With his tiny hands, he rolled the dough.

Then I used a clear red plastic, church-shaped cookie cutter and the gingerbread boy cutter, two of my favorite shapes. He said, "Grammie, I want to." He used the church-shaped cutter and put it down several times on the dough, making many impressions of the windows, door, and roof.

As he used this beautiful cookie cutter over and over again on the same piece of dough, I thought of how his every action with the cutter made another impression on the pliable dough. What fun we had! He even, by himself, put his church onto the cookie sheet.

His every action with the cookie cutter had made impressions on the soft dough. What we do daily, over and over, can make our lives a certain type of pattern – good or not. At the end of the process, we put our lives "onto the pan." Some things have become part of our lives, and those things, just like the impressions of the cookie cutter, are marks of our lives. We may influence others whose lives are being shaped. We can be a good effect or not.

Jesus says to let our light shine. We are influences, hopefully for good for Christ. We have all kinds of wonderful reminders by Jesus to make good marks or impressions on others. May the impressions we make on the lives of others be of our letting His light shine through us.

SPIRITUAL ENCOUNTERS AT THE KITCHEN COUNTER

PRAYER: Lord, today, I will make marks on the lives of others -- good or bad. May I leave only a good impression or effect on their lives for Your glory. I pray this, not only just for today, but also for all the days of my life. Amen.



Your encounter (object or experience) and its lesson:

BIRTHDAY PEDESTAL PLATE

Romans 12:10 Be devoted to one another with brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

My lovely clear glass birthday plate is elevated on its pedestal to a high and honored position. There it holds a cake in a place of honor. It elevates the cake and the occasion in the eyes of those who are here for the celebration.

My birthday plate has helped in celebrating the birthdays of my daughters. On those special occasions I honored them by baking, icing, and decorating a cake and placing it in that honored place. I can remember a carousel cake with animal crackers around it and straws for the poles and ribbons for the streamers. Then there was a simple, elegant one with white shiny frosting and pink sparkles in the pattern of a stencil I had made with her initials. There once was one with a Raggedy Ann in the center. Oh, there were German chocolate ones, too. I invested much time in preparations to honor the person. I loved doing every bit of it.

In everyday life we are to honor and give preference to other individuals. To help them feel special should be a normal part of our lives. What joy compares to the joy we experience when we truly know we have helped someone feel special! If we put God first and have His love in us, that same love will touch and flow into the lives of others.

Prayer: Oh, Lord, how I remember special occasions and helping honor the birthday person. What a blessing those times were to me! Lord, may I give honor to You and to others, letting Your love flow through me to others. I desire to be a vessel of Your love. Use me in that way, dear Lord. Please bless those whose birthdays we celebrated on my birthday pedestal plate. Lord, may I treat those people in my life as if every day is their birthday. Thank You. In Your name, I pray. Amen

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Lori Lynn Lott on her birthday with her carousel cake on the pedestal plate.

Encounter and lesson:

The Memory With the Word

COFFEE GRINDER

Matthew 21:44 He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but he on whom it falls will be crushed.

Ephesians 5:2 And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

My electric coffee grinder takes coffee beans and vigorously grinds them until they are a fine texture. This grinding produces a wonderful aroma, just as those things which He brings into our lives are to refine us so that we give off a special spiritual aroma, characteristic of our Lord. The coffee beans are then useful to produce the hot, stimulating beverage. So we, too, will be useful for what God has planned for us.

The key in the above Scripture from Matthew is to fall on this stone, broken, and accept Him as Savior and Lord of our lives. It is important to go to the Lord and rely on His strength and wisdom in every area of our lives. The Lord is that stone. We need to come to Him before it is too late.

Prayer: Lord, I come to You. I want to surrender to You to do with me as You will. May I be a sweet aroma representing Your love to others. I desire Your plan for my life. Thank You, Lord. Amen.

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