



Chapter 21

My Cup Overflows

“You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.”

PSALM 23:5B

“Please help me load the car, and then you can start reading your book; I’ll be right there.” Alex gathered his backpack for the day’s on-the-job homeschool training. The coffee I made over an hour ago sat untouched in the pot. What started out as a hot latte was converted to a cold frappe left over from the early morning brew.

The cup that I pulled out of the cabinet was the only coffee cup that I owned. It was pink with flowers and had a broken handle. I recently looked at a few garage sales for a replacement but never found one. This was not something I was interested in spending a lot of time doing. The broken handle was not a problem for me anyway, since the cup still fit snugly in the car’s cup holder.

“It looks like you need a new coffee cup, Mom.” Alex made a similar comment every time I used that broken cup.

“I’ll get one soon,” I’d answer. My heart was touched when he noticed small things like that.

Later in the week, I went to use my old broken cup when it cracked in two when I poured hot coffee in it. As we walked out the door to the car, Alex suggested, “Let’s pray, Mother. You need a new coffee cup.”

“Great idea, Alex. Let’s pray.” I was humbled by his readiness to seek his Heavenly Father.

On our way to work, he prayed, “Lord, you know that my Mom’s heart’s desire would be to have a shiny new coffee cup. I pray that soon she will be able to buy one. Thank you, Lord.”

We finished work early that day. On the way home, we passed by a department store, and I decided to stop on the *spur of the moment*. I knew we could not buy anything, but I just had the itch to look.

“Why are we stopping here?” Alex asked with an innocent curiosity.

“Oh, I just want to browse,” I answered nonchalantly. We wandered through the aisles and eventually made our way to the back of the store where there was a clearance table of dishes. Stacked with the rest of the colorful glassware, there were coffee cups of every imaginable size and color.

A pretty orange mug on the table was set aside with no match in sight. *Hmm, this isn’t too bad. It’s on sale*, I told myself. I headed to the check-out line with the cup in hand and waited for my turn. Alex was standing close behind me.

“Mom, are you going to buy that cup?”

Leaning toward him, I whispered, “Yes, it’s on sale.” He watched me reach into my purse for my checkbook.

I was next in line to check out. “Mother, are you sure you’re going to write a check for one coffee cup?” He whispered in a soft and caring manner. My conscience started to tug at me, reminding me that I had taught Alex to wait for the right timing when buying anything new. My budgeting priorities were being put to the test.

Ouch, I thought. *He knows me too well, I can't write a check for one cup. What am I thinking?* I returned the coffee cup to the table with the other marked down glassware.

During the ride home, we had a chance to talk about what happened in the store. Alex's perception of the incident in the store was encouraging and insightful.

"That's what happens when we just want to look, Mom, right?" he sweetly asked.

"You're right, Alex. I was tempted when I made the choice to go into the store just to look at the cups."

"I'm really proud of you, Mother, for putting the cup back. Remember when we prayed this morning that the Lord would provide you with a coffee cup at just the right time?"

"Yes, I remember. The Lord has always shown us that He will provide for our needs."

As I saw Alex express his trust in the Lord's provision, suddenly the urgent need for a cup was forgotten.

I pulled into the carport, and, as usual, Alex was the first one out of the car. He dashed to the backdoor to wait for me. "Mom, look here; it's a present," he proclaimed, pointing to a pretty gold gift bag hanging on the doorknob.

"Just a second, I'll be right there," I called.

Alex ran up to the car, waving the gift bag with a small card attached.

"Mom, who do you think it's from?" he anxiously asked.

I opened the little envelope and read the card aloud. "Dear Lynn, I've been thinking of you and miss you. Love, Bets."

"Bets" is short for Betsy, a dear friend we had not seen for quite a while. Our busy schedules had not allowed us to stay in contact for some time.