

SPRING CLEANING

It was always this time of year when my grandmother would begin her spring cleaning. They slept on home-made feather beds and the feathers, through the course of sleeping on them, would become flat and lumpy, so as soon as warm weather and the sun shined down for a good length of time, she would have my grandad- warm also were put in the dy pull the heavy mattresses sun, hung on her clothesline



Peggy's Take

to soak in the fresh air and sunshine. I can remember just how good her bedlinens smelled after such an airing. Back in that day, there was no 'scent booster beads' to add to the wash water as we have today, so the only way to make them fresh was the sunshine. With the beginning of spring, I always seem to remember so many things about her and the great times that I had as a child growing up in that old clap board house straddling the county lines. I can't say that she was a spit polish and shine housekeeper. There was always a little dust on the mantel where her old wind-up striking clock set, and the old wood floors might need to be swept from all the dirt tracked in from the yard. She always stayed busy with the things she enjoyed like quilting, canning fresh from her garden, and cooking scrumptious meals. She was a gracious hostess and had lots of friends and family drop by, almost right at mealtime. She always wore a bibbed apron, made from flour sack material or some pretty piece of cloth that somebody had given her, and she would always go into her tiny kitchen and prepare a meal fit for royalty on that old Sears-Roebuck fire driven stove, and always with enjoyment. She loved company, especially those who brought her news as they never went anywhere



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except for church or a doctor visit, and then they were picked up by family as they never owned a car, and neither could drive.

Life was so easy and slow back then, no hurry and scurry or running off to do this or that but just to live a laidback life and enjoy the time you were allotted here on earth. I never saw her get flustered when unplanned company dropped by as she always had one of her chocolate cakes or a pie to offer the visitor.

OH, but to enjoy a such an unencumbered life now! No more running home at the last minute to prepare a "semi-homemade supper" or hurry-

ing to a ballgame, cleaning the kitchen before helping your child with homework. Our lives have become so harried and pressurized that no wonder so many of us suffer from stress related complaints.

Take a few minutes here and there and as they say, "smell the roses". Put a chore on pause and hold your babies, call your grown-up babies, read that book, or take a nap. It will all be waiting on you when you are ready!

Ms. Edna's Chocolate Cake and Frosting Recipe

½ cup of cocoa powder, ½ cup of boiling water, 2 cups s.r. flour, 1 cup of lard, (now I use shortening) 4 large eggs,

1 cup homemade buttermilk, (I buy mine at the store.), 1 T. vanilla extract, 2 cups sugar

Mix all really well, dry ingredients first, and pour into 2 greased and floured cake pans. Cook 350* for 30 – 40 minutes.

FROSTING - 6 T. flour, 1 ¼ cups granulated sugar, ½ cup cocoa powder, 1 cup milk, 1 cup butter, 1 t. vanilla Mix dry ingredients and add milk. Bring to a boil and cook for about 2 minutes. Once cooled beat by hand until fluffy.

Peggy Sims is a life-long resident of Attala County and columnist.



The Subtle Pride of Achievement

By Mike Pohlman

What do you have that you did not receive? - 1 Corinthians 4:7

Pride is crafty. It has a way of bleeding out of us in ways we don't even recognize. This is unfortunate for if we recognized it sooner we just might avoid the fall (cf. Proverbs 16:18).

Jerry Bridges is a great teacher. He uses Scripture like a surgeon uses a scalpel. And he just cut me again.

In his book, *Respectable Sins: Confronting the Sins We Tolerate*, Bridges takes up the subtle sin of pride by looking at the "sin of

achievement." He warns us against slipping into a mindset that sees our accomplishments as our own doing. And we do this in subtle ways. For example, it may be the simple telling of a story to a friend or family member that involves a promotion at work, or success on the hoop court, or an academic milestone--but with no mention of God. Subtly, we have projected ourselves as the ones who accomplished something when in fact all the credit should go to God.

Why is this? Why should God get all the glory in our

achievements? Bridges, with a little help from the Apostle Paul, explains:

To the proud Corinthians, Paul wrote: "Who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?" (1 Cor. 4:7). So what do you have that you did not receive? Nothing. You have nothing that did not come to you as a gift from God. Our intellect, our natural skills and talents, our health, and our opportunities to succeed all come from God. We have nothing that will enable us to achieve success that we did not receive from God.

Bridges continues to cut:

So why do we boast, either in an overtly proud fashion or in a more subtle way in which we want to be proud but don't want to appear to be? In both instances, it is because we have failed to acknowledge that success came from God. Sure, there was diligent effort involved, but who gave you the ability and the desire to succeed? And who blessed your efforts? Ultimately, all is from God.

Now, I know there is a way to simply "paste" God-talk on our conversations while still inwardly swelling with pride (cf. Matthew 15:1-9). It is not enough to simply say, "Praise God." What Bridges is calling for, in any and all of our achievements, is a sincere recognition of God's grace toward us. We give God all the glory, all the recognition, all the credit "since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything" (Acts 17:25). If we are to boast it is only in the cross (cf. Galatians 6:14).

As the great Protestant Reformer wrote, "We are beggars; this is true." And beggars don't get glory.

Intersecting Faith & Life

In what ways has the pride of achievement shown itself in your life? How can we better deflect attention on us while focusing it on Christ?

Further Reading

The Perils of Pride, C.J. Mahaney

God Glorified in the Nobodies, John MacArthur
Philippians 2:1-11

Pay raises, yes; tax changes, no: Mississippi session ends

By Emily Wagster Pettus

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Mississippi legislators ended their 2021 session Thursday after agreeing on a teacher pay raise and voting to update parole rules in a state with crowded prisons. But they left some big issues unresolved, including a proposal to overhaul the state tax system.

Legislators voted to increase spending for classroom supplies and preschool programs in the new state budget that takes effect July 1. Republican Gov. Tate Reeves signed a bill last week that authorizes a pay raise of \$1,000 for most teachers and \$1,100 for teachers in the early years of their career.

Legislators voted to give pay raises to some state employees, with agency leaders determining who will get how much. And they decided that state government employees will not have to pay more out of their own pockets for health insurance coverage; the state budget will cover an increase in that expense. Those proposals are awaiting the governor's consideration.

Reeves must also decide whether to sign a bill that

would expand the possibility of parole to more inmates. He vetoed a similar measure last year, but legislators said the one this year is more narrowly focused to address concerns raised by prosecutors.

Reeves has already signed a bill that says Mississippi will recognize job licenses from other states. Free-market advocates say this will help people more easily earn a living after a move.

During three months at the Capitol, legislators argued over some big issues that ended up going nowhere. House Speaker Philip Gunn and his allies pushed to overhaul the state tax structure. They proposed phasing out the income tax and half of the 7% grocery tax, increasing the sales tax on most items from 7% to 9.5% and increasing several other taxes. The House passed the tax plan a day after it was introduced. But Senate leaders blocked it.

Gunn and Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann, both Republicans, said in separate interviews Thursday that legislators will spend time before the 2022 session examining Mississippi taxes.

"I don't know of any pol-

icy item we as a Legislature could ever do that would benefit the people more or result in greater economic prosperity in our state than the elimination of the income tax," Gunn said.

Hosemann said the House proposal this year was opposed by groups including the AARP. Mississippi does not tax retirement income, but retirees would have faced higher sales taxes.

"I think our goal should be to reduce taxes," Hosemann said.

Hosemann and his allies pushed a bill that would have allowed a faster purge of names from voter rolls. Under the measure, local election commissioners would send a postcard to registered voters who do not cast a ballot in any local, state or federal election during a two-year period that includes two federal elections — a presidential election and a mid-term congressional election. If voters fail to confirm their address within four years of receiving the postcard, or if they fail to vote during that time, the county would remove their name from the rolls. The bill never came up for a vote in the House, and it died.