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Do You Like To Sigh?



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A sigh escaped my lips as I stood over the dryer folding yet another load of laundry. While listening to the squabbling of my three and five-year-olds and being paged by the baby, I felt overwhelmed with the never-ending barrage of tasks demanding my attention. The sigh I released was not the type of sigh that expressed anything positive. It was the kind of sigh that says, "I'm tired, I've had enough, I'm annoyed." The Lord convicted me right then and there about the matter.

These sighs rob all the motivation and positivity from my life. They express my disappointment to everyone within earshot. They seem insignificant, yet their message is loud and clear. And my husband detests them!

They also signify a lack of contentment and motivation on my part. When I sigh like this, I am not expressing any form of thankfulness to God. Rather, I am filled with negative emotions, including plenty of self-pity. The example they give to my children is not one of a willing servant, but rather a grumpy slave.

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There is a reason that sighs are likened to groans in the Bible. They are two of the same thing! You cannot utter praise and thankfulness as you sigh in frustration. Now there is a difference between taking a deep breath and preparing for the moments challenge and allowing a defeated sigh to escape your lips!

There are also contented sighs that come once in a while too-like after a delicious meal, or as you soak in a hot bath or crawl into your warm bed. The Lord made it clear to me as I folded my laundry that all of my sighs should be contented sighs! All other types of sighs only tear down my mood and the atmosphere of my home. It was a real eye-opener for me! I had never really given it much thought before, nor thought that my sighs were anything but harmless. Even when my husband expressed his dislike over them, I minimized it when I really should have listened.

Now I have no excuse! If I catch myself in the act of sighing, I immediately bring to mind something for which to be thankful. For example, as the children create a sticky mess all over the kitchen and I wash down the counters with a sigh, I instead thank the Lord for having the children here to make the mess in the first place!

I haven't broken the sighing habit yet, but when one escapes my lips, it reminds me to praise God for something and to see the good in the situation. This is a start to a much more productive and up-building habit! Why sigh in frustration and aggravation, when I can praise God and be thankful? Why tear down when I can build up? Isaiah 35:10 says, "Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away." May my sighing flee away!

- Michelle Kauenhofen, Mother of 11

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