

June/July 2013

THE SPICE

A taste of what's happening for women.

Open Windows

These are the days of summer sunshine, when windows are opened wide to the fresh air and light streams into homes from early morning to long after dinner at night. Somehow, it seems easier in the summer months to get up early...and stay up late. In the days before electricity powered our homes (and we started staying up way too late), our bodies more naturally rose and slept to the rhythm of natural light. And before air-conditioning, we used the four-sixty method to stay cool—open 4 car windows and drive 60 miles an hour!

After months trapped inside, closing out the cold of winter (or the heat of summer), it's so refreshing to open a window and let the outside in. We feel the air, breeze, and sun, hear the sounds of birds and laughter, smell the freshly cut grass and blooming flowers, and see the beauty—the beauty of *life in the light*.

When we open the windows of our heart to God's light, there's more beauty and life to be discovered, too. Life is dark when the blinds are pulled over our faith, when we squint to see joy or goodness, only look for the wrongs and not the rights, or think of the what's-in-it-for-me instead of the what-can-I-do-for-you.

God desires for our eyes to be open windows to our hearts. Open windows so his life and light can fill us each day. The light of faith, hope, and love pushes back the darkness and transforms the winds of storms into cool summer breezes.

Let's wonder at his words and his love in the sunshine of our faith today. Let's throw open the windows of our hearts, breathe the air of grace, and be filled with the beauty of his Son-light that never sets.



HILL COUNTRY CHURCH

IGNITING A PASSION IN PEOPLE FOR GENUINE LIFE IN CHRIST



THE WORD

"Your eyes are windows into your body. If you open your eyes wide in wonder and belief, your body fills up with light. If you live squinty-eyed in greed and distrust, your body is a dank cellar. If you pull the blinds on your windows, what a dark life you will have!"

—Matthew 6:22-23 (The Message)

Think About It

What three things would help you open the windows of your eyes to see God's grace and love?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Window Coverings in a Snap

Tired of your kitchen curtains? Make new ones in just a few minutes—no sewing required! Pick up a few tea towels and curtain clip rings. Clip the rings along the top edges of the tea towels, and hang them on your existing curtain rod. It's that easy!



Wondering About Wonder

What is *wonder*? The dictionary defines it as “a cause of astonishment at something mysterious or new.” Pope Francis, in one of his first public appearances, defined wonder a different way:

*Wonder is a great grace, the grace that God gives us in our encounter with Jesus Christ. It is something that draws us outside of ourselves with joy...it is not a mere enthusiasm 'like that of sports fans' when their favorite team wins, but 'it's something deeper.' It is having an inner experience of meeting the Living Christ and thinking that it is not possible: But the Lord helps us understand that is the reality. It is wonderful!**

Yes, wonder is...simply wonderful.

*<http://www.news.va/en/news/pope-the-joyful-wonder-of-being-christian>

Praying for the 10/40 Window

“Ten-forty” refers to an area that stretches from 10 degrees south of the equator to 40 degrees north of the equator, where four billion people live in 69 nations across Central Asia, the Middle East, and northern Africa. Praying for the 10/40 Window has become a global movement due to these and other urgent needs:

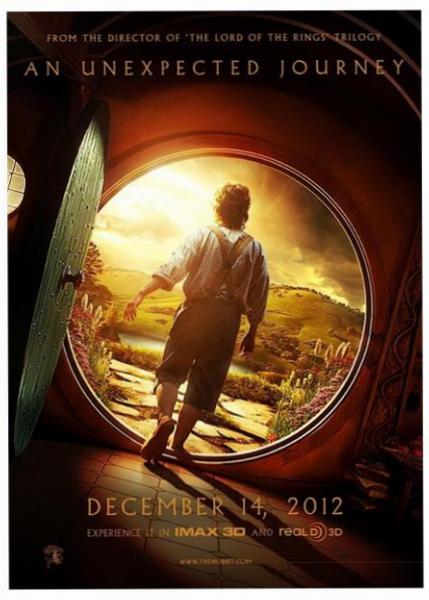
- With two-thirds of the world's population, the 10/40 Window is where 90 percent of the world's poorest live.
- Child prostitution and slavery, as well as the abuse of women and children, is widespread and unrestrained in many of these 69 countries.
- Sharing the Christian message is illegal in many of these nations, and some of the worst persecutions of Christians occur within 45 countries in the 10/40 Window.



Find out more about praying for the 10/40 Window at win1040.com.

Media Morsels

Movie Review



The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey

Release Date: December 2012

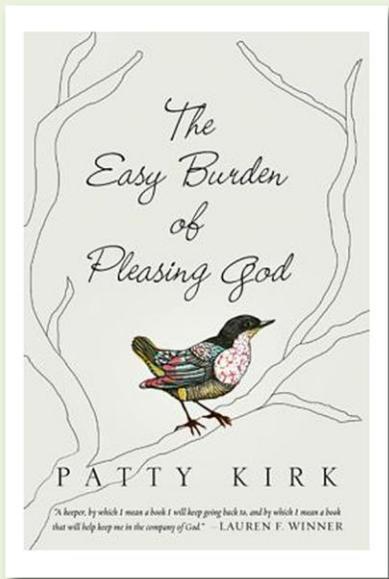
Genre: Adventure, Fantasy

Rating: PG-13 for extended sequences of intense fantasy action violence and frightening images

If you're a fan of Tolkien's classic and definitive work, you'll want to see this first installment in a planned three-film series. This film covers the first part of Tolkien's tale, with Bilbo Baggins and his dwarf companions well underway on their quest to redeem the dwarves' ancestral home and riches from the clutch of the terrible dragon Smaug.

Director Peter Jackson takes some liberties with the original tale, adding action-packed segments to make the story work as a trilogy. But the story's original elements are recognizable, and the characters (particularly Bilbo Baggins) are well-played and endearing. Clear ties to the *Lord of the Rings* films add an extra layer of both fun and depth.

The film features fantasy violence and some monstrous characters but is appropriate for teenagers and some preteens. Look for themes of home, belonging, mercy, and unexpected courage.



Book Review

The Easy Burden of Pleasing God

Author: Patty Kirk

Publisher: InterVarsity Press

A Christian college professor, Patty Kirk has seen her share of people working hard to please God. She has also seen her share of spiritual crisis, and the two often go hand-in-hand. Many people who have accepted God's grace through Jesus still seem to believe they are capable of being good enough to deserve that grace. And their effort to pursue this goodness makes them miserable.

In this book, Kirk seeks to set us free from the notion that our job is to work very hard to make God happy. She gently reminds us what the Bible actually tells us about following Jesus. As you read, you might find yourself setting aside your pursuit of perfection and finding a new kind of joy.

July

A Taste of What's Happening for Women

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
			*No Growth Groups this month. Family Time			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
			Family Time			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Women's Ministry Luncheon & Bible Study			Family Time			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
			Family Time			
28	29	30	31			
			Business Meeting & Lord's Supper			

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