

Lemonade Party

Invitations: Give out invitations that say something like, "Lemonade is refreshing on a hot summer's day. Allow God to refresh your spirit and join us for a Lemonade Party!"

Purpose: A refreshing program to encourage ladies on their spiritual journey! Great for a summer program! Or in the Winter to help beat the winter blues.

Set-Up/ Decorations: Create a bright and uplifting atmosphere. Use the colors yellow and lime to decorate the room. Purchase lime colored table clothes and yellow napkins. Use bowls of lemons as centerpieces. As ladies enter serve lemonade in glasses with a lemon slice trimming the glass. Use clear water coolers with spout (can be purchased at Wal-Mart) or clear water jugs to hold lemonade.

Hawaiian Lemonade

1/2 of a 12 ounce can frozen lemonade concentrate, thawed

12 ounce can apricot nectar, chilled

12 ounce can unsweetened pineapple juice, chilled

1 1/4 cups of ginger ale (chilled)

In a large punch bowl, combine all juices with 3/4 cup of cold water. Slowly add the ginger ale down the side of the bowl. Stir gently to mix. Add ice cubes. Decorate with slices of lime, oranges, cherries or grapes. Makes 6 servings.

(Recipe from Pure Purpose: This Week's 7-Sip on Summer by Susan Lawrence)

(Make copies of recipe for ladies to take home.)

Games: Have volunteers see who can squeeze the most lemonade from a lemon with their hands or a hand juicer (not an electric one). Give a prize to the winner. Have bold volunteers eat a piece of lemon. Give prizes to the one who squints the most and to the one who doesn't squint at all.

Guests: Have ladies from your group or invite a guest to share how God has blessed them and refreshed their spirit through a difficult time (How God took lemons that life threw at them and turned them into lemonade.) This could be done in place of a devotional. Inspirational stories will be refreshing to the soul. This could also be done interview style. Also invite a vocalist or one of your ladies to sing. It is wonderful to be able to use the talents of your ladies. This will be refreshing to them!

Devotional: Heavenly Lemonade

Taken from: 10-MINUTE TIME OUTS FOR MOMS

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God makes awesome lemonade from life's sour circumstances. I've witnessed the process personally several times. One instance began with a building contractor's words: "Sure, no problem. Your House will be

complete before school begins in September. Don't worry— you'll move in by the end of August."

Whew! That timing was crucial to me. We'd recently sold our home and had to move out by the end of June. We could live with Gene's folks until the new house was complete. But there was one hitch— they lived nearly an hour's drive from our children's new school. If the house wasn't finished by early September, the kids and I would have to fight freeway rush-hour traffic twice a day. I was up to my eyeballs in stress already. I didn't want more.

Construction began. The house grew from foundation to framework. In early August, however, progress ground to a halt. After two weeks with no builders on-site, I knew the completion date wouldn't be met. My attitude nosedived. Frustrated, I phoned the contractor.

"What's happening?" I asked.

"The drywallers have been tied up on another job," he explained.

"Will the house be ready at the end of the month like you said?"

He laughed. I cried.

Gene and I prayed for a solution to our dilemma. A few days later, a close family friend asked about the building project. We explained our situation. "Would you consider house-sitting for me for two weeks?" he asked. "If your house isn't finished by the time I return, you're welcome to stay longer." His home sat only ten minutes from school. Our prayers were answered!

The first day of school dawned. As the kids and I waited at the bus stop, another family joined us. "Hi, I'm Wendy," said the mom. "Welcome to the neighborhood. We're your closest neighbors." We chatted briefly, and then she extended an invitation. "A Moms in Touch group prays for our school. Would you like to join us?"

Moms in Touch? I'd never heard of it, but Wendy's explanation of praying Scripture for our children whet my appetite. I participated and eventually led the group for the next several years until we moved to Canada.

My involvement with Moms in Touch changed my life. Although filling my mind with Scripture didn't make me a perfect mom, it placed my focus on the living God rather than circumstances, convicted me of sin, supplied wisdom for parenting, and taught me to pray according to God's will.

Ten years ago, life tasted sour when our house wasn't finished according to my schedule. But God squeezed the lemons and added a heaping helping of sweet loving-kindness, resulting in major spiritual growth in my life.

Scripture says that God is able to make all things work together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. Tragic or trying circumstances don't stump God. He weaves them together and forms a tapestry of exquisite beauty.

He made lemonade from Paul and Silas' prison experience way back in New Testament days, too. Prison chains held the Gospel-preaching duo, but God used their sentence as an opportunity to show His power to the warden, who committed his life to following Jesus Christ.

When bitter circumstances surround us, God can and will use them for our good and His glory. We wonder how that's possible when we're weary from caring for a special-needs child or rebellious teenager, when we're exhausted from trying to help our family adjust to new location, or when we're discouraged from chronic fatigue or illness.

God's recipe always works. When we give Him the lemons and trust Him to add a hefty dose of His loving-kindness, He always turns our experience into something good for us and glorious for Himself.

Refreshments: Serve lemon frozen yogurt or any type of lemon sweets, pies or cakes.