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Eldredge's "Captivating," Unveils Femininity and Beauty

Daily readings are essential in that they stir your brain cells and require you to think, even when you'd rather just push things aside until another day, another time, another place. A special person suggested a book that would change my life, and she was emphatic that I read it. I was hesitant and didn't begin right away. I had too many other, more important matters to attend. Only to appease her I glanced through it and in an instant was hooked. That book has unveiled some awe inspiring words, words which provide answers otherwise unbeknownst as to the rhyme or reason why. Through this written word, some mysteries have been revealed.

To make clear to you of what I am speaking I quote a passage. "Eve, the crowning touch of His creation, represents every woman. Every woman is feminine and every woman is beautiful. It is who she is, it is her essence. Eve is essential. She has an irreplaceable role to play and so you'll see that women are endowed with fierce devotion, an ability to suffer great hardships and a vision to make the world a better place."

These words of beauty first seemed foreign and frightful. Isn't it shameful to wish for a striking figure or beautiful face? Isn't beauty, according to religion, all about character and not the outward physicality? Society has generated such a buzz about the topic of beauty and femininity, and how it should be looked upon, that one might find it hard to read and even harder to believe that all women are beautiful and all women are feminine.

These words resonate through my brain like a freight train on its way to feed my soul, but are also locked away in my heart, my safe haven. One cannot speak these words aloud without consequence. It is shameful and boastful, and society will not stand for it. But He will. For it is His intention as is evidenced by the forming of Eve in His image. So I repeat, all women are beautiful and all women are feminine.

Beauty, even the mention of it is strong and powerful. I am reminded of a small child I knew sometime ago. She was very, very young with a high spirited pride and endowed with feminine beauty. As a young girl she loved to sing and perform on stage. She was unafraid to share her delight with people of all walks. The little girl provided much happiness to many lives. It was through their laughter, smiles, appreciation and gladness that I know this as truth. With age the little girl grew more and more cautious and eventually offered less of herself. I watched her shy away and realize now, how different she became. The little girl somehow lost her voice, her willingness to participate in her life and she

grew shameful. "The mystery of the feminine heart should be looked at as a positive thing, not shameful." But the girl was too young to understand. She was ashamed of her femininity and discounted her ability to make others happy. Through a disbelief in herself she felt unworthy and unloved. She had no idea just how "Captivating" she was.

In my quest to help the child, I revealed disturbances of alarming proportions. You see, the child was told she was unattractive, of minute worth, that she was not beautiful. It is interesting to note, however, that within the little girl's world she encountered many, many people who enamored her with friendship and rousing applause, enjoyed her spirit and her song and provided her an outpouring of love. It took but one significant person to snuff out the fiery energy of her heart. She stayed the course until she was old enough to realize the mission of one person to slay her spirit would not be enough to pin her wings forever. She became Eve-like. She was given an ability to suffer great hardships, a vision to make the world a better place and a fierce devotion. She was feminine and beautiful. So the little girl, now a woman, rekindled the fire once burning brightly through her soul. She became a gate-keeper of the world's beautification auxiliary. She refused to be downtrodden by those who did not understand her, who did not trust her, who did nothing to help her. Today she refuses oppression by those so passive they refuse to help themselves, therefore, unable to help anyone else. She ignores the afflicted souls who bear down on her to be more, do more, but who refuse to do the same in their own lives. This little girl has provided the answers to many questions about beauty, femininity, resilience, tenacity, and the survival of great hardships. This little girl seems to have written the book of which I speak, "Captivating." We as women must follow her footsteps and become the captivating creatures He intended.

For the things we find at the core of a woman's heart are the very things that bring us all together, back to our beginnings, back to the bud of life and back to the child I spoke of. And though each woman is different, it is all women, the small and the tall, the nurses and nanny's, the homemakers and hairdressers, the doctors and dentists, the technicians and teachers, all feminine and all beautiful and all captivating.

The book is a must-read unveiling of the feminine spirit with some of the most inspiring words ever written. Men, it's counterpart, "Wild at Heart," may captivate, inspire and unveil your spirit as well.

By Melanie Morse

Individual Household Well Loan Program Available

The Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project has announced that it has \$988,100 from the US Department of Agriculture, Rural Development for a loan program for homeowners needing to repair or construct water wells for their residences. The loan program is specifically designed to assist low to moderate income individuals needing loans to construct, refurbish and service their household well systems. Loans from the program cannot be used for other purposes.

The program serves residents in the seven states, North Carolina, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. The purpose of the program is to target loans to the significant numbers of homeowners in

the seven states whose geographically isolated households lack water service, and for whom it is not feasible to be connected to new or existing community water systems.

Loan applicants must own and occupy the home for which they are applying for a water well loan. The water well system being funded may not be associated with the construction of a new dwelling. Also the water well system being funded by the loan may not be used to substitute for water service available from collective water systems.

The home using the water well system being funded by the loan must be located in a rural area. The combined household income for an individual applying for this loan should not be more than 100% of the median non-metropolitan household income for the state. Priority will be given to applicants who are disabled, elderly or who have minor children.

These loans have a 1% interest rate and a twenty year repayment term. A maximum of \$8,000 per household may be borrowed under the program.

In the seven states involved, between one-eight and one-third of all homeowners rely on wells. In all, over 105,000 occupied households in the seven state region lack complete indoor plumbing. It is expected that many of these households would be eligible for loans to create water well systems for their homes.

Loan applications are available on the Southeast RCAP website, www.southeastrcap.org. You may also call Beth Pusha at 540-345-1184 or bpusha@sercap.org.

Southeast RCAP is a private, nonprofit corporation whose mission is to promote the development of affordable water and wastewater facilities, activities and resources to improve the quality of life for low income rural residents. It was created in the 1960's. To date they have brought safe water and wastewater facilities to more than 450,000 residents.

Board of Education Closed Session Meeting January 14

The Anson County Board of Education will be meeting in closed session on Monday, January 14, at 5:30 p.m. in the Charles Riddle Staff Development Center at the Anson County Schools Central Office.

Sherry Yarbrough Installed as NEF President

Sherry Yarbrough, the daughter of Mack and Margaret James McManus of Wadesboro, has been named president of the NAWIC Education Foundation. The installation took place during the organization's annual trustees meeting in Orlando, Florida in September.

Yarbrough is executive director of the San Diego Associated Builders and Contractors Apprenticeship Trust in Poway, California.

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