

# Introduction

Welcome to Menu Planning Made Easy! Because Life Is More Important Than Food! We all know that meal planning is, a lot of times, the "last" item on our list of things to get done each week! It takes time to organize meals, make out grocery lists, and make sure dinner is on the table when our loving husbands return home. It is our heart's desire to provide healthy meals for our precious family, yet getting it all done can be overwhelming at times. We want to put good, healthy food on the table without having to spend hours planning and cooking. While food is an "essential" part of our lives, as wives and mothers we have so many more important things to do besides spending our time in the kitchen. We have husbands to care for, children to teach, disciple, and have fun with ☺, people to minister to, as well as our own times with the Lord! (I will say, though, that bringing your children along side of you in the kitchen can make for some of the most special memories and teaching times!)

As I was contemplating the title for this book, the Lord brought these verses to mind:

*"Therefore I tell you, stop being perpetually uneasy (anxious and worried) about your life, what you shall eat {or what you shall drink;} or about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life greater [in quality] than food, and the body [far above and more excellent] than clothing?"*  
*Matthew 6:26 (Amp)*

*But seek (aim at and strive after) first of all His kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and then all these things taken together will be given you besides.*  
*Matthew 6:33 (Amp)*

Many times meal planning and preparation can become such a stress - a worry - in our lives. However, these verses show us that we shouldn't worry about what we shall eat . . . because LIFE is greater than food! Isn't that refreshing? This book is a gift from my heart to yours. I pray that what I share here will help you shift your focus from "what you shall eat" to LIFE - to Jesus Himself! I pray this book will be a tool in His hands that will give you freedom to pursue LIFE with Him, with your family, with your friends!

I will share with you what I have done to make meal planning easier. Included is 4 weeks worth of meals, recipes, shopping lists, and tips to make your life easier! These are recipes that I use on a daily basis, so they will reflect what our "tastes" are in food ☺. Along with the 4 weeks of menus, recipes, and shopping lists, I have also included forms and instructions for you to make up your own menus that will reflect your own family's taste in food ☺! PLUS, I am including some ideas and recipes for breakfasts, lunches, and some desserts!

Now, a note on how these menus are set up. I am providing 4 weeks worth of menus, recipes, and shopping lists. I would recommend printing these out and keeping them organized in sheet protectors in a 3-ring binder for easy use!

**Menu Forms:** You will see that the menu forms have a place for you to include breakfast and lunch items as well. Simply fill in what your family likes to have for breakfasts and lunches, add those items to the weekly shopping lists, and you are ready to go! **Personal Note:** From the time my husband and I were married, Friday night has always been pizza night! So...I have maintained that in my menus here ☺.

**Recipes:** Many of these recipes I received from friends or relatives. I have adjusted them to fit our family's taste (we aren't very exotic eaters ☺). Feel free to "spice them up" if you wish!

**Shopping Lists:** You will see that the shopping lists have places for more than food items. Use the weekly shopping lists to add items needed for breakfasts and lunches, and also any non-food items you need! You will then have ALL your shopping needs on one page!

Happy cooking! ~ Sheri Graham

