

Women's Life



June 2006

In April's edition, I presented key passages to consider when seeking a good friend or a mentor.

This month I want to highlight some personal adventures in mentoring. John Piper, in his book *Don't Waste Your Life*, says, "The people that make a difference in the world are not the people who have mastered many things, but who have mastered one great thing." Appropriately, Jesus had mastered all three women who mentored me, so that whatever skills I gained came immersed in Jesus Christ!

My mom mentored me before and after I married, most of the time in the kitchen. While I no longer freeze, can, or make her homemade bread and butter pickles, I gleaned wisdom about raising our boys, and principles for making Dave my priority: "The children grow up and move. You and your husband love 'til death parts you." Lois, my pastor's wife, opened the world of music, including various harmonies, hymns, and lyrics to anthems I still sing. She also challenged me to memorize 200 verses of Scripture in a year, and then listened to me recite them all! Vesta, SPEP's first S.S. superintendent, gave me her ear when I sought an older woman's godly advice about the corporate world, aging parents, Bible curriculum for children, specific answers to prayer, and suffering with cancer. She walked me through my Dad's, and then my mom's cancer before she herself died of the disease.

I was 32 when a woman approached me after SPEP's morning worship. "You know that passage about the older women teaching the younger?" she awkwardly began. [Note: In 1978, being 32 at SPEP qualified one as an "older woman."] Thus began a six-month study of Scripture, prayer, and the practical aspects of her dealing with some sticky situations at her job. I'll always remember her jubilation over completing a difficult conversation with a fellow employee. The

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Israelites leaving Egypt felt no greater freedom! From '81-'82, two of us spent a year working through InterVarsity's *The Attributes of God*, a rich workbook highlighting God's traits. Although I was to serve as mentor, I certainly gained as much as I gave. The application sections of that demanding study helped Vanessa and me to grow. Actually, I still use that book in my counseling, almost 25 years later. On other occasions, I spent one-on-one time with College and Career women. Mentoring centered around the books of James, Psalms, and Colossians. We also chose topical studies about prayer, womanhood, and the tongue

More than Bible study alone, mentoring involves a give-and-take relationship as each woman learns from the Lord and becomes transparent enough to teach life skills, to demonstrate honesty, and to risk accountability. When Jesus permeates the relationship, life changes and true fellowship occurs. This summer SPEP will welcome Sarah Hall, a rising senior at Covenant College, as a ministry intern. While she serves SPEP, a couple of us will mentor/disciple her. What about you? Mentoring or being mentored helps you grow!

Flo Wolfe



One way to get to know people ...

In a large church, how can you get to know more people, especially across the generations? I stumbled into a great way to do just that about three years ago. Michele Prince needed volunteers to create *Antioch* in the auditorium, so I worked in the Market Place's bead shop. That summer I had a week to get to know Dottie Taylor and Sharon Zepp better. The following summer my cross-shop conversations helped me get to know Lauren Penna. In 2005, when I wasn't teaching Market Place visitors how to stitch the embroidery for the High Priest's garments, I talked with new mom, Rebecca Vahlberg. I highly recommend this creative way to serve SPEP's children and make new adult friends, too.

Flo

“1. We admitted we were powerless over people, places and things and our lives had become unmanageable. 2. We came to believe that a power greater than our selves could restore us to sanity.”

The first two steps in AA go against every thing I was taught: “Control yourself” and “God helps those who help themselves.” These weren’t the only lessons, though. Because of alcohol abuse and denial, my wonderful parents taught some unintentional lessons.

Alcohol looked like the way to cope with feelings of awkwardness and loneliness. So, from age 15–35, I kept thinking that one day I’d find the perfect drink to morph me into the women I saw in the Smirnoff Gin ads. I drank my way through the last two years of high school and four years of college—never becoming the woman I thought others wanted (or I dreamed about). I picked dead-end relationships, and wondered why I hurt so bad.

But, gradually, some sanity invaded my life:

- My aunt, now sober, joined AA. She helped me understand the wild stuff that marked my parents’ relationships.
- I got counseling and began to understand why I liked friends who were more broken than I was.
- I changed my friends, landed a couple of really good jobs, and started dating a wonderful man, who became my husband.

But, over the next decade, I remained the power in my life. While I controlled my drinking, I ate, and spent money. I was unraveling—but in socially acceptable ways.

When my mom’s drinking and my dad’s reaction to it started affecting my own home and family, my aunt prevailed on me to go to Al-Anon.

The people I met there laughed, shared, and were totally transparent—some acted like God as not a statue or locked in stained glass. That day, I admitted I could not control my mother, or her drinking. But, it took me awhile to admit how crazy I was because of alcohol abuse—mom’s and mine.

In time, I took the third step, reconnecting to a local church. I see now, He was the one who helped me lose weight, and helped me into Bible Study Fellowship—where I learned that if I return to God, He will restore the years the locusts have eaten away. In a bit more time, He

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gave me the assurance of my salvation, proving that He is in control, helping those who are helpless.

I am still learning, but I can testify that a changed attitude on my part can and did bring about recovery—I got sober, God saved my mom, delivering her from alcoholism, and restored our relationship. He has proven Himself time after time, so that I can trust Him for today. And tomorrow.

Overcoming is “Opposite World Wisdom.” The 12 Steps take you and me in a direction the world doesn’t want to go. Surrender, serenity, and sobriety. But not until... 1. you and I admit we are powerless, our lives have become unmanageable—due to our hurts, hang-ups and habits. And 2. we believe a power greater than you could restore you to sanity.

Lord, I believe, Help thou my unbelief.

Barbara Smith



Single... at this time of year

“As we approach the time of year when we celebrate Mother’s Day and Father’s Day, many singles wonder where they fit into the whole scheme of life. These days rightly honor the men and women who have given of themselves to raise children and pass on a heritage to the next generation.

But these days of honor can also present certain emotional difficulties for those who have never had children, or for those who for various reasons are unable to raise the children they have...”

For the rest of the article go to: www.singleness.org/sonsdaught.shtml

Scrapbooking

The next scheduled
Scrapbooking session is
June 3rd 9AM-6PM
(auditorium).

June

It's National Fresh Fruit and
Vegetables Month
National Chocolate Eclair
Day—June 22
Kitchen Klutzes Of America
Day—June 16

This month in history

Debut of Linus' security blanket in the
Peanuts cartoon strip—June 1, 1954
First Drive-in Movie Theater opens in
New Jersey—June 6, 1933
Benjamin Franklin discovered
electricity while flying a kite—June
15, 1752

Pledge of Allegiance recognized by
Congress—June 22, 1942
Toothbrush invented—June 26,
1498

Thoughts and things

Avoiding the challenges of Family Get-Togethers (www.onlineorganizing.com/NewslettersArticle.asp?newsletter=go&article=379)

Wedding Planning Organization (www.onlineorganizing.com/NewslettersArticle.asp?newsletter=go&article=378)

Summer Food Tip

Taking a picnic lunch on your travels? Save those small glass jars with screw-top lids that come in gift pack jams and jellies. They make great containers for mayonnaise and other condiments.



Cream Cheese Pound Cake

(served at the Women's Ministry Appreciation night)

1½ cups (3 sticks) butter, at room temperature

8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature

2²/₃ cups sugar

6 eggs

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

1 tablespoon butter flavoring (I use almond extract instead)

3 cups cake flour

¼ teaspoon salt

Preheat the oven to 300°. Lightly butter and flour a bundt pan.

In a large bowl cream together the butter, cream cheese, and sugar. Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing well after each addition. Stir in the vanilla and almond extract.

Combine the flour and salt and gradually add to the batter, mixing well after each addition.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake until the cake tests done, 1 hour and 15 minutes. Cool the cake in the pan for 10 minutes, then invert it over a wire rack and unmold. Continue to cool for 1 hour.

I got this recipe from *Party Recipes from the Charleston Junior League* cook book.

Rhonda Acree

I love my office. Not because of the battleship gray walls or the nondescript modular furniture. Of course, I have the perfunctory plaques and certificates on the walls, the family photos and even a couple of silk flower arrangements. No, what I love most is the view. I have a coveted corner office with two large windows. One window looks out onto a parking lot but the other... wow! From my desk chair, I can watch squirrels scamper from tree to tree in a lush, lovely forest. I can watch the birds dive under dried leaves searching for seeds and bugs. I can watch the leaves bud in the spring, come to full leaf in the summer, burst into golds and reds in autumn, and finally fall into heaps that will be covered in snows in the winter. I just love the view from my chair.

This is my favorite time of year. In the spring, I get to see hundreds of trees come back to life after being dormant in the winter. It's truly amazing to watch them change a little every day. Except for this one tree. It looks totally out of place. There are no leaves, no vines, just a dry, dead-looking, spindly trunk with a few sickly branches. That is, until you walk closer to the window, almost pressing your face against the glass, and look up. About ten feet above my usual gaze, I can see the underside of delicate dogwood blossoms. White, fragile, tinged with pink. Lots and lots of glorious flowers, totally unseen until you change your perspective.

A few days ago, I was overwhelmed by bad news. Within a week's time, two of my coworkers lost their fathers, I attended a funeral for a former coworker, and one of my grown nieces lost her life in a tragic car crash. Other family members were struggling with difficult circumstances. All of that was apart from what assaulted me from the latest newscasts—rising gasoline prices, utility prices, suicide bombers, shootings, scams. The phrase *fallen world* just didn't seem adequate.

Then I looked up.

There, like Isaiah, I saw the Lord high and lifted up, sovereign and in control. I saw great and precious promises from His word. I heard the whispers of saints that have gone before recounting their experiences with His compassion and love. I remembered His faithfulness to me; prayers answered, promises kept. The dead branch of this world's reality was still there—dry, brittle, and admittedly frightening. But another reality was also there, above my normal gaze. All I had to do was look up.



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