



A JOURNEY OF SURRENDER AND A QUEST FOR RADICAL INTIMACY WITH GOD

Acknowledgements: This presentation is given based on my continuing journey towards wholeness and Christian maturity. This journey continues to be on-going and includes my experiences and circumstances, life lessons, successes and failures. I share my story so others can see what God can do with an ordinary life.

All glory is given to God who never leaves or forsakes us.

A list of resources is included in the following pages.

PRESENTED BY MARCIA FLOM, RN, ELIM CARE FAITH COMMUNITY NURSE COORDINATOR ON APRIL 25, 2015

Spiritual maturity is the welcome fruit that comes as a result of living and lingering with the Father who loves me. *Spiritual maturity doesn't come in an instant. It is a process.* The first stages of following Jesus teach us not only what to obey but HOW to obey.

How do we get to spiritual maturity?

- Time alone with God
- Circumstances and life experiences
- Learning to trust God and surrendering to His will
- Knowing Jesus Christ. What do you believe about Him and why?
- Praying for a deeper relationship with Him
- Forgiveness of ourselves and others
- Journaling and seeing what he's done and continues to do in your life

Name a Life verse for this season of your life: A short scripture that serves as a rallying cry to guide and focus the current season in your life. It functions as a powerful tool for helping me filter decisions and opportunities that come my way.

- My Life Verse in 2001 when we attended the Mercy Ships 5 month Discipleship Training Program: James 4: 7-11
- My Life Verse now: Psalms 34: 3-4

Questions:

- What are the things that matter above all else in your life? Take a moment to write one clear sentence that describes a life that would leave you satisfied on your final day.
- What is something in your life that is robbing you of joy?
- Identify the balance or lack of in your life by evaluating these areas:
 - Physical
 - Emotional
 - Social
 - Spiritual
- What types of activities best nourish your spirit?
- What interferes with caring for yourself in these ways?

A call to action: *Using Jesus as our model as described in the article: Fit for Service: A Model of Self Care for Parish Nurses, Journal of Christian Nursing: April/June 2013, begin the process of assessing, defining, implementing, and evaluating a plan that will put you on a pathway to wholeness.*

1. Identify areas in my life that are out of balance

- Physically
- Emotionally
- Socially
- Spiritually

2. Make a plan

3. Carry out the plan

4. Evaluate the plan

NOTES

Excerpts from Suggested Reading

From the book, Simplify, by Bill Hybels

You simplify your life for reasons that matter for eternity. To give clarity, purpose, and power to the things that matter most in this world. You intentionally say no to things that clutter the soul –like jam-packed calendars, out of control finances, deep seated fears, and broken relationships.

You turn away from rabbit trails that would take you off the main road and distract you from what your life is really all about. And you say yes to things that matter, life family, friends, Christian community, satisfying work, and ministry roles that maximize the gifts God has given you to further His kingdom News Flash: You are the boss of your calendar

Your calendar is more than merely an organizer for what needs to get done; it's the primary tool for helping you become who you want to become.

How would you spend your time if God were in charge of your calendar?

The question isn't, "What do I want to get done in the next thirty days? But who do I want to become in this next season of my life"?

It's important to set priorities, define the season of your life, and find a life verse.

From the book, The Unhurried Life of Jesus, by Alan Fadling

- If churches and ministries were to redesign their efforts to be more intentional about helping Christians find their nourishment in Jesus for themselves, there might be complaints and a loss of "fruit" for a season. But what might happen to the quality of these men's and women's lives as a result? How might they come to be so well rooted that they would no longer be dependent on someone else for their growth and could, in fact, become a source of nourishment and refreshment for others?
- If you are a Christ follower who has invited God to lead your life, He has given you an assignment in this world for which He has uniquely gifted you. Your assignment is different from mine; it is unique to you. Your life verse will reflect God's particular guidance in your life.
- **Spiritual maturity** is the welcome fruit that comes as a result of living and lingering with the Father who loves me. ***Spiritual maturity doesn't come in an instant. It is a process.*** The first stages of following Jesus teach us not only what to obey but HOW to obey.

- Maturing in our faith is demonstrated when we speak to others in a way that is full of grace and under the Spirit's control. When we are mature in our faith, our words express love instead of control, kindness instead of harshness, and exuberant joy instead of despair or hopelessness.
- Christian maturity is not a matter of doing more for God; it is God doing more in and through us. Immaturity is noisy with anxiety-fueled self-importance. Maturity is quietly content to pursue a life of obedient humility.
- If someone asks, "how do I know if I'm maturing as a follower of Jesus?" What would your response be?
- Maturity is the fruit of a long and focused journey towards realizing that everything good can only be truly enjoyed in the only One who is truly good. The ability to more fully abide in Jesus and appreciate every good blessing is unhurried fruit of a believer's journey toward wholeness.

I believe that opportunities for unhurried time and uncluttered space with God are often an even greater gift than any words anyone can say. In that kind of silence, our inward driven pace can slow down a bit. We can sense in our heart the peace of God sinking in and the joy of the Lord rising up. In that space it is easier to distinguish God's voice, his direction and his counsel from all the other voices and directions that surround us.

What can you do with a few hours alone and quiet in God's presence?

- Start with no agenda
- Take the first 20 minutes or so to do nothing more than listen
- Give thanks
- When distractions come, and they will, you might choose to just let them float by rather than wrestling with them. Or give thanks for them such as a bird singing, or workers building at a construction site, or a gardener using his leaf blower.

Have we asked whether where we are going is where he is going?

- God seems to prefer guiding us in a way that keeps us close to him and his way of guiding us is unhurried. He would prefer to guide me as my companion for the journey rather than hand me directions that I'd be tempted to run off with leaving him in the dust.

As you think about steps you can take to unhurry your life, what habits or practices are already helping you do so? What habits or practices tend to accelerate your life?

The other basic foundation stone is simply, trusting God. In Matthew a young man asked Jesus what good thing he needed to do to guarantee he would have eternal life. We know the answer. "If you want to be perfect, go sell our possessions and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven". Moving toward maturity in our spiritual journey may invite us into the willing loss of good things to which we have become attached. We walk along a path of such loving surrender to the Lord.

It's important to go deep with God as leaders and to depend on Him for everything. This type of leadership experiences a sense of deeply felt need for God's intervention in their shared work if their ministry together is to reflect his intentions and desires.

From the article, Journaling, by Chuck Swindoll, www.insight.org

- The importance of journaling:
 - Gives an opportunity for children and grandchildren to know about us
 - It's an intimate conversation with god
 - Reminders of key events and landmarks in our lives
 - It liberates us to enjoy life with the God who has given us the full spectrum of emotions
 - It's an exercise in which the process, not the product, is the most important result
 - It can increase your faith as you see God's hand in your life, anxieties, and worries.

From the book, Six secrets to a Powerful Quiet time by Catherine Martin

- 1. Secret One: Prepare Your Heart**
- 2. Secret Two: Read and Study God's Word**
- 3. Secret Three: Adore God in Prayer**
- 4. Secret Four: Yield Yourself to God, the journey of surrender**
- 5. Secret Five: Enjoy His Presence**
- 6. Secret Six: Rest in His Love**

SPIRITUAL CARE RESOURCES

Books:

Why? Trusting God When You Don't Understand by Anne Graham Lotz

The Cross and the Switchblade by David Wilkerson

The Bait of Satan by John Bevere

Sister Freaks by Rebecca St. James

Fresh Wind Fresh Fire by Jim Cymbala

You'll Get through This by Max Lucado

George Mueller by Faith Coxe Bailey

D. L. Moody by Kevin Belmonte

Bonhoeffer; Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, and Spy by Eric Metaxas

Undercover by John Bevere

When a Nation Forgets God by Edwin Lutzer

In His Steps by Charles Sheldon

Through Gates of Splendor by Elizabeth Elliott

The Jesus I Never Knew by Philip Yancey

George Mueller of Bristol by A. T. Pierson

What Happens When Women Pray by Evelyn Christianson

Safely Home by Randy Alcorn

Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God's Agenda by Henry and Richard Blackaby

Wounded by God's People by Anne Graham Lotz

Simplify by Bill Hybels

**Six Secrets to a Powerful Quiet Time: Discovering Radical Intimacy with God
by Catherine Martin**

**An Unhurried Life, Following Jesus' Rhythms of Work and Rest by Alan
Fadling**

Half Time by Bob Buford

Just Walk Across the Room by Bill Hybels

The Call by Os Guinness

The 17 Essential Qualities of a Team Player by John C. Maxwell

Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart by Kenneth C. Hauck

**The Pursuit of God by Tozer If You Want to Walk on Water you've got to get
out of the Boat by Bill Hybels**

I Saw the Lord by Anne Graham Lotz

Tortured for Christ by Richard Wurmbrand

In the Presence of My Enemies by Burnham

Trial by Trial by Don Stephens (Founder of Mercy Ships)

Through the Gates of Splendor by James Elliot

Why Not women by Loren Cunningham

The Applause of Heaven by Max Lucado

In the Grip of Grace by Max Lucado

Articles

What Journaling can do for you? By Chuck Swindoll

<http://www.insight.org/resources/articles/christian-living/what-journaling-can-do-for.html>

Fit for Service: A model of self-care for Parish Nurses
www.journalofchristiannursing.com

Nursing on Empty: Compassion Fatigue
www.journalofchristiannursing.com

Daily Devotionals

My Utmost for his Highest by Oswald Chambers

Jesus Calling by Sarah Young

The Devotional Bible by Max Lucado

Seasons of Life by Charles Swindoll

The Message Solo: An uncommon devotional by Eugene Peterson

Hidden in Christ by James Bryan Smith

Amish Peace by Suzanne Woods Fisher

Grace Notes by Philip Yancey

40 Days to Better Living by The Church Health Center

Devotions for a Healthier you by Katie Ferrell

Websites:

Elim Care: www.elimcare.org/fcn

Retreat in a Bag: <http://www.retreatinabag.net/recommended-reading/>

Faith Gateway: <http://www.faithgateway.com/topics/devotionals/>

Insight for Living: www.insight.org

Church Health Center: <http://www.churchhealthcenter.org/fcnhome>

Health Ministries: <http://www.healthministries.net/>

Nurse Christian Fellowship: <http://ncf-jcn.org/>

Church Health Reader: <http://chreader.org/type/articles/>