



Ministering to Women in All Seasons of Life

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“Cleaning Up Our Acts”

Sheila Bailey

As I wind down from a Texas summer filled with some triple digit temperatures mixed with fun, food and festivities, I welcome the cooling temperatures of fall. I hope you had an enjoyable summer whether you had a vacation or “stay-cation.”

During the scorching heat, Texans will often see signs on the freeway known as ozone alerts warning us of air pollution. During peak (orange and red) ozone alerts, people with asthma, upper respiratory ailments and compromised immune systems are encouraged to stay indoors to protect themselves from the pollution.

Although we're moving into a beautiful fall season where the foliage is turning to warm shades of orange, brown, gold, and red, and the temperatures are cooling to pleasant days of 60-70 degrees, we must heed the warnings that there is still pollution in the air. Even in the beauty of the changing seasons we find pollution, which reminds us that there are many forms of pollution. The stress and strain of our personal lives, combined with the constant pull for our political,

New & Noteworthy

On October 8, ProvenWay Ministries hosted Reach for the Stars, an awards dinner and benefit recognizing a woman who is making a difference in our community. This year, Dr. Shelia Bailey received the Shining Star award for her lifetime investment in women. Founded in 2003, ProvenWay Ministries is a 501c3 non-profit organization that exists to empower women in ministry; helping to train, connect, and provide resources for leaders in churches and organizations.

Sheila Bailey is just completing a 6-week course at Concord Church on Living Abundantly with Life's Leftovers. Over 60 women have met for this life changing, six-week bible study sponsored by Concord Church and the Women's ministry under the leadership of the Women's Ministry Director, Mrs. Denise Foxx. Ladies from outside the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex have also been able to attend the class via emailed lessons. The published Bible Study guide and DVD will be available by the summer of 2010.

If you haven't had an opportunity to read the book “Farther in and Deeper Down”, here is your chance to purchase it at a discounted rate. This book will prove to be a word of encouragement to all cancer survivors. It is a tool for equipping, encouraging and empowering and will prove to be an inspiration to all readers. This book chronicles the life of the late Dr. E.K. Bailey who fought 3 bouts of cancer. Purchase it today at a discounted rate of \$10. To get your copy, contact Olivia by phone at (972) 849-2949 or email oliviad@sheilabaileyministries.org

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ethical and spiritual values can cause us to feel drained and depleted as if we have been in polluted air. A few hours ago I placed my bin of recyclables by my fence to be picked up. I do this in an effort to help save our global environment. But, as we do our part to protect the global environment, what are we as Christians doing to change the internal (spiritual) environment of those who are privileged to live in this global environment? I am still confronted with the issue, what am I doing to cleanse a society that has elements of pollution? My answer would be -- not enough!



People don't always post public signs of internal pollution, but, as Christians, we have a personal responsibility to be just as diligent about cleaning up the internal environment as we are about the external environment. We can keep our internal/spiritual environment cleansed by a study of the Word of God and prayer. Make a commitment today to not only work on protecting your external environment but also and most importantly your internal/spiritual environment.

Beloved of God, we thank you for your continued support of this newsletter. As I attempt to continue being faithful to that which has been entrusted to me, I am reminded that "Life happens". In the midst of computer problems, speaking engagements, allergy and flu season, and coast-to-coast traveling, God's timing is still perfect. This month's newsletter, however, reminds us of timing. You will read articles about taking the time to care for one another, taking time for your spouse, and most importantly, taking time for God in order to Be Free and walk in power and victory.

*Enjoy the Blessings of the Holidays—
Remember that Jesus is the Reason for Every Season.*



“Steve to Steve”

Stephen G. Brown



As I launch into this series of essays related to Steve Harvey's best selling work, ***“Act Like a Lady; Think Like a Man,”*** I must lay a framework for my motives and objectives. I have yet to write a book, so far be it for me to overly criticize one who has. These series of essays are being submitted merely to assist Believers in interpreting ***‘popular culture.’*** Often times, we read material that makes casual references to God or life or relationships, and we embrace it as ***‘Truth.’*** I simply want to help us to examine this work, in hopes of affirming the truths included, while also identifying the untruths. Additionally, I want to help us to develop our ***‘Christian Worldview.’*** If we profess and confess to be Believers, we simply cannot lay down our faith in order to remain *current* and/or *cool*. Our worldview is the lens that we filter all of life through, in order to gain God's perspective. It's both the burden and blessing of our high calling...

In the first section ***‘The Mind-Set of a Man,’*** Mr. Harvey opens with a chapter on ***‘What Drives Men.’*** Ladies, I'm sure as you read this first chapter, you were shocked to discover the simplicity of the male psyche. The chapter opens with the statement, ***“Men are simple.”*** The language shifts to man's priority in establishing his self-worth and life-purpose. Even as I read, I examined my own life and how I relate to the women/woman in my life to discern if I fit this profile. I didn't! Manhood, for Mr. Harvey, includes the understanding of one's purpose, establishing of his title, and the acquisition of money. These issues must be processed before a man can even entertain a healthy relationship with a woman. I couldn't agree more with his assessment that men must discover their purpose; however, additional observations must be made.

Now ladies, this may be a generational issue, or simply a difference in philosophy about men, but most men do not have the luxury to put life on hold until life is figured out! In an effort to prove that men are simple, Mr. Harvey comes close to suggesting that we're slow! The standard for manhood must be raised to eliminate this stigma that a real man's worth/value is somehow connected to his wallet. This is what men are taught. Those who live by this faulty philosophy find that their lives are filled with frustration and emptiness.

Men must work. A man's work often complements the totality of who he is to his family and community. The challenge lies in men defining themselves outside of themselves. A real man understands that his purpose, being, and direction come

first from God. As a man seeks a meaningful relationship with His Creator through Jesus Christ, then he is able to embrace his vocation/profession. The focus must be internally before it can ever be professionally. In other words, what I do is not necessarily who I am. A real man understands the difference. A famous scripture states, *“What does it profit a man to gain the whole world, but lose his soul?”*

***Pray for a man who has placed his soul in God's hands, first,
as he discovers his purpose in life!***

Servant, Teacher, and Friend are words that best describe the lifestyle, ministry, and passion of Stephen G. Brown. Reverend Brown has served in full time ministry for over 13 years and currently serves as Senior Associate Pastor of Special Initiatives, Singles, and Young Adults at the Concord Church, where he serves under Pastor Bryan L. Carter. He is joyfully married to Nicole T. Brown and they are the proud parents of one son, Stephen Nicolas.

Save the Date: S.T.A.N.D. 2010

Sheila B. Ministries in partnership with Concord Church will host the annual S.T.A.N.D. Women's Conference on **July 5 – 8, 2010**. This year's theme is **“WOMEN HELPING WOMEN TO S.T.A.N.D.”** with scriptural reference taken from Philippians 4:3. The S.T.A.N.D. Women's Conference seeks to empower **S**isters to **T**ouch, **A**ssist, and **N**etwork with **D**ignity. It is a life changing and high impact conference that will address the comprehensive needs of ALL women.

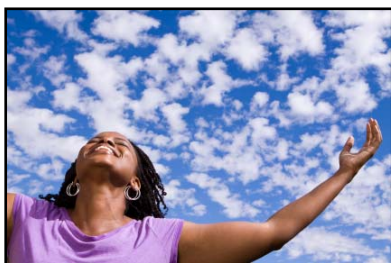
Prayer Ministry

“More than Conquerors”

Carlyn Houston

“Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”

Romans 8:37



Do you have times when your life seems out of control?

Do you experience feelings of worry, doubt, fear, insecurity, hopelessness or frustration?

Are you tired of living as a powerless Christian?

God loves you and He created you for His glory. We can experience victory in every season of our lives when we place our faith and trust in the one true God. By faith, we can walk in God's purpose and plan for our lives.

Ultimately, the way we see God will determine the shape of our faith. How *big* is your God?

Recently, I was typing my sermon handout and I took the cursor and proceeded to shrink the large picture of the face of Jesus because I was afraid that it would not fit on the page with my text. The Holy Spirit prompted me to leave the face of Jesus large even if I had to shrink my text. I then took the cursor and began to expand the face of our Lord and with the help of a girlfriend, made a huge beautiful background picture of Jesus and placed my text over it. Many times we shrink God in our lives by trying to make Him fit like we want Him to fit in our situation, which leads us to defeat. We sometimes even press the delete key and take Him totally out of the picture, and then we realize that there is no victory until we press the insert key, bring Him back into the picture and expand the power of God in our lives!

We will walk in defeat when we press the delete Jesus key and leave the *cursor of fear* (false evidence appearing real) and place human limitations on God. He is a mighty big God... "He's got the whole world in His hands." We need to shrink ourselves and our agendas and expand God in our lives to the big, faithful, powerful, *I am* GOD that He is. John the Baptist said, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

It takes God-sized faith to walk in victory. We will walk in victory when we press the insert Jesus key and leave the *cursor of faith*; the essence of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen," expand God in our lives and walk in the assurance and expectation of God's eternal hope.

How big is your God? Are you shrinking God in your life by giving in to fear and frustrations or are you expanding God in your life by walking by faith and trusting God?

God wants to elevate you to a new level of victory and power as you run the race of faith. Determine today that you will shrink yourself, expand God in your life and give Him full access to work in your life. By faith, "in all these things we are more than conquerors."

An Opportunity to Help Talitha



Talitha & TJ

Talitha Smith has suffered the painful, debilitating effects of aggressive rheumatoid arthritis (RA) since her late teens. Faith and optimism have sustained her through past years of failed attempts to manage the disease.

With great joy, her mother, TJ, announced earlier this year that Talitha was accepted into a stem cell transplant clinical trial to strengthen her immune system and impede RA progression. TJ revealed two weeks ago, with much disappointment, that Blue Cross Blue Shield denied Talitha's claim. Immediately after the door closed, a window opened and movement was underway to bridge the financial gap.

T.J. and Talitha found themselves inundated with emails, calls, and text messages from family, friends, church members, and even strangers, each anxious to donate to Talitha's new life. The outpouring of love and support has been overwhelming. As Talitha put it, "I think I am dehydrated from all of the tears of joy and love." Just imagine the jubilation and uncontrollable tears when this beautiful spirit begins her new life free of the challenges she has endured her entire adult life. Your prayers, love, compassion, and generous donations will soon make this a reality.

The next few weeks will be intense for the Smith family and fundraiser volunteers. We urge you to reach out to Talitha and TJ to see how you might be able to ease their load. If you have no time to spare, please offer your encouragement.

The road to our \$175,000 destination for medical fees and related expenses is a long one, paved with dreams of a normal life for Talitha. Throughout the campaign, we encourage your suggestions to guaranteed victory.

For more information, to make a donation, and to follow the progress of Talitha, please click the following link: www.talithasnewlife.com/home.html. We thank you, in advance, for your prayers and any other acts of support you may give to the Smith family.

Keeping It Real

“All The ‘Married’ Ladies”

Shenikwa Cager

Saturday, June 13, 2004, San Juan, Puerto Rico is where my life changed forever! I married my high school sweetheart. We dated forever, but now we had officially become husband and wife. What a wonderful feeling! We left Puerto Rico headed to our 5 day honeymoon destination. We sat so close on that airplane we should have just purchased one ticket. We held hands, fed one other, kissed and could not get enough of each other and we hadn't even arrived at our destination yet. Those 5 days in Antigua flew by and now we were headed back to Dallas as Mr. & Mrs. Cager. I loved my new husband, my new name, my new ring, and my new life! Marriage is a beautiful thing; it has to be because God designed it and he loves it, right? Beyoncé has even written an award winning song about Marriage - Single Ladies (If you liked it then you shoulda put a ring on it). Sooooo my question is... Why does it seem like the single ladies are having more fun than the married ladies? It's as if the moment he put a ring on it things changed. OK, maybe I'm not talking about you but your friends. I know some of you are thinking, "Honey, I have been married for years and years and we are past that stage". Well, whether you've been married a short period of time like



myself or a long period of time, I've got some news for you. I'm about to touch on a subject we don't talk about that often as church folks. I would like to challenge all the "Married" Ladies to have more SEX! That's right I said it S.E.X.! I have been married 5 years now and have a soon to be 3 year old and what I've noticed is if I'm not careful and don't make it a priority, SEX will completely fall to the wayside. It has nothing to do with my feelings towards my husband, but it has everything to do with these 3 reasons: I'm TIRED, I'm out of shape, and I'm TIRED! No seriously, the reasons why I believe SEX falls to the wayside in our marriage is because of being TIRED and a lack of communication. Sure, there are other reasons but I'll tackle those next time.

I've spoken with ladies of all ages, colors and backgrounds and the one thing we all have in common is we are busy all the time! We wake up and immediately start our to-do lists. Here we go: leave the house, (come back because we forgot something, leave again) drop off the kids, drop off dry cleaning, head to work, organize the pot-luck at work, meet all the deadlines, eat anything that's not moving, check email, voice mail (but never the house mail until they leave a note

that it's going back to the post office), leave work, hit the store, pick up kids, talk with teacher because someone hasn't been turning in the homework you stay up all night helping with, give a 20 minute lecture in the car about responsibilities, get in the house, everyone changes clothes except for you, start dinner or heat up something in the fridge that doesn't smell bad, eat dinner, clean the kitchen or maybe just think about it, tell hubby about your day-- but not really, inform hubby of things that need repair around the house, bathe the little one, go through the nightly drama of putting your child/children to bed and now you drag yourself to your room, take your clothes off, take a shower, put on something and roll in the bed only to feel a warm hand rubbing up and down your leg and you think.... ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!!!! So you act like you fell asleep in 30 seconds. He begins breathing hard and says, "You never want to have sex any more." For the 75th trillion time you say, "I'm just so TIRED"!!! You go to sleep and it starts all over tomorrow.

I remember a time I played the "I'm just so TIRED" card with my husband and he said "It's funny how you're never tired doing all that other stuff." Of course, having to have the last word, I said "I HAVE to do all that other stuff" and you guessed it he said, "You have to do this (SEX) too. I probably said something smart at the time but I never forgot his words and I realized that what he said was right. One of my girlfriends calls it "BD" or in other words: Booty Duty. Like it or not married ladies we have to do it. I know if you're like me it's not that I don't enjoy sex, I just have to make it a priority and communicate more with my husband about sex.



Here is our challenge ladies: Do not play the "I'm just so TIRED" card any this week. Let's make sex and intimacy with our spouse a priority starting this week. Also, if there is an area that you need your husband's assistance TELL HIM! He cannot read your mind. Secondly, tell your husband one specific thing about SEX that you enjoy. Our husbands need to know that they please us sexually. Finally, initiate sex this

week! Husbands know that they want us sexually but they need to also know that we want and desire them sexually. Hint: If you struggle in communicating about when you want sex, tell him that whenever he sees the candles lit; it's on. Or whenever that red light bulb is in the lamp; you know what that means. If all else fails, go to a Babyface concert. Let's spice it up ladies! He liked it so he put a ring on it, didn't he?!

(Brothers, y'all owe me BIG for this one)!

Ministry On the Move: H.I.S. BridgeBuilders

On June 5th, 2009, Laura Fechner with H.I.S. BridgeBuilders hosted a luncheon in North Dallas in which Sheila Bailey was the guest speaker. The lunch provided an environment to establish relationships within our rich diversity of culture, experience, age and status in life. We enjoyed great food and wonderful fellowship as we spent time getting to know new sisters in Christ. Twenty women were in attendance including Stephanie Carter, wife of Sr. Pastor Bryan Carter of Concord Church and Joanie Buster, wife of Executive Pastor Mike Buster of Prestonwood Baptist Church. Other attendees included staff and friends of H.I.S. BridgeBuilders. We enjoyed an inspiring word from Sister Bailey about giving everything we have for the Lord to use even when we don't think it is much. Our example was the woman who was instructed by the prophet, Elijah, to gather pitchers from neighbors. The Lord then multiplied oil and filled all the pitchers that this faithful woman gathered. When we bring our empty vessels to the Lord, He will fill them to overflowing for His Kingdom purposes. **Laura Fechner***

*Laura Fechner partners with her husband Rev. Michael Fechner. He is the founder and president of H.I.S. BridgeBuilders in Dallas, TX. Visit <http://www.hisbridgebuilders.org> for more information.



H. I. S. BridgeBuilders Luncheon

Cokiesha's Corner

“Be Free!”

Cokiesha Bailey Robinson

“No temptation has overtaken you that is unusual for human beings. But God is faithful, and he will not allow you to be tempted beyond your strength. Instead, along with the temptation he will also provide a way out...” (ISV) 1 Corinthians 10:13



My mother and I chatted the other day and we shared a good laugh. Apparently a little bird some how got into her home and refused to leave. Yes, it decided that it would rather be on the inside of the house for the day rather than in the trees or flying high in its own habitat. My mother was not sure how the bird came in the house, but she was puzzled because the bird became quite comfortable in her sun room perched upon a porcelain bird. She opened the windows and the doors hoping to encourage the bird to re-enter his natural environment. That was not successful. Then she offered the bird bread crumbs bit by bit and that didn't seem to work either. Surely, this bird was stubborn, confused or had become complacent living in an atmosphere that was not created for him. All he had to do was look up and look out. The doors and windows were open and yet he remained ignorantly imprisoned.

How many times have we acted or reacted just like this little lost bird? We have often found ourselves in life longing for a way out and yet we have not taken the appropriate or obvious way out. We have either ignored the “way of escape” or we have convinced ourselves that we are just fine in a lifestyle or situation that God did not create us for or to endure. Some times God has presented a way for us to escape and we have often overlooked it or ignored it.

My friends, today let us look up and look out! You may feel that something or someone has imprisoned you. Remember, God ALWAYS gives us a way of escape. The windows and doors are open in your life...now, it's up to you to take a step of faith. Freedom and faith are inextricably tied. Christ gives us the power to be free. John 8:36 says, *“Whom the son sets free is free indeed!”* Walk into your freedom today!



“What Does Caring Look Like? Life Lessons from a Breast Cancer Survivor”

Annie Mercer



Annie Mercer

The pain was almost unbearable. It seemed that every muscle and joint screamed in protest at what was happening inside my body. On this night, like many others, the discomfort that came as a result of the chemotherapy treatments sometimes felt more devastating than the impact of the disease itself. At one point in the night the pain was so unbearable I felt like giving up.

But by the grace of God, I made it through the night.

The next day brought the opportunity to start fresh. But it also brought words of immeasurable comfort. Rita made one of her routine phone calls to check on me.

“Annie, I woke up in the middle of the night praying for you. How are you doing?”

Those words brought a deep sense of comfort to my heart. Why? Because the night before had been one of the most difficult nights I had experienced during my previous twelve months of treatment for breast cancer. It was so comforting to know that someone was so connected with my pain and personal struggle.

It was clear the grace of God had carried me through the night. But it was equally clear God had heard and answered the prayers of one of His children on my behalf. Rita's prayers had not only gone before the throne of God but they had touched my heart. God had demonstrated His love in a powerful way, through a woman of faith like Rita, that He loved me. I sensed God's love because Rita took time to care.

CARING IS A CHOICE

This woman of faith not only prayed for me during a very challenging night in my life, but she also emailed a daily, personalized prayer from the Scripture to encourage me throughout the period of my chemotherapy and radiation treatments. Rita Smith has a special ministry that touches the lives of many people every week.

Who is this lady named Rita? A lady with such a powerful impact must be in full-time ministry. She must be paid to care. No. She is not in full-time vocational ministry. She is an ordinary lady with an incredible heart for God and sensitivity to the needs of people.

But that is what makes Rita's ministry so powerful- she is *just like* so many people who attend church regularly. She is a devoted wife and a mother of two children. She is like you and me. She is someone who has her own personal challenges and responsibilities, yet she has found the time to care for others.



CARING VALIDATES LOVE FOR GOD

Jesus illustrated the importance of showing care and concern for others when He answered the question of the lawyer astonished by His teaching in the 22nd chapter of the gospel of Matthew. The lawyer wanted to get an inside scoop on what God really considered important. So he asked the question-

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law? And He said to him, YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ THIS IS THE GREAT AND FOREMOST COMMANDMENT. THE SECOND IS LIKE IT, YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF. ON THESE TWO COMMANDMENTS DEPEND THE WHOLE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.”

Jesus' statement made it crystal clear- caring for your neighbor validates the sincerity of your love for God.

CARING IS SHOWN THROUGH TANGIBLE ACTION

I am sure you have your own personal testimonies of God's love through people but let me share a few of my personal opportunities to see God work through Christians who took caring seriously. These experiences are not only illustrations of how others have cared for my family; they can be instructive to us as we seek to care for others.



Give the Ministry of Presence. I will never forget the words of one of our dearest friends Vornadette when she learned of the initial surgery I had scheduled related to my breast cancer. Vornadette made a statement, by her actions, which demonstrated incredible love and concern for our family. "I am going to give up my trip to Israel so I can be there if you need me." We were overwhelmed with a sense of love and support.

She was there. Instead of taking a once in a lifetime trip to Israel, she was standing by caring for our children, and running errands. Her words were simple but her actions were profound. I learned from Vornadette's life that the gift of presence says, "I love you enough to give you one of my most precious possessions- my time."

Vornadette didn't have to give up a trip of a lifetime to show her support. She had shown her support over many years in big and small ways. And I am not suggesting that you have to make those kinds of sacrifices to prove your love to anyone.

God may simply want you to give up an evening of free time. Or maybe just an hour of your time to make a phone call expressing love and concern.

Step Outside of Your Comfort Zones. Caring can sometimes cramp your personal lifestyle. So what does it look like when someone steps outside of his or her comfort zone? During the initial months after my breast cancer surgery my husband commuted between Chicago and Dallas on a weekly basis while he served as a Vice President at Moody Bible Institute. During that time God used some very special men to serve my family. Jerry Haynes and Bill Jones demonstrated a willingness to step outside of their comfort zone on a regular basis for my family. For months, Bill consistently made the sacrifice of getting up out of his bed weekly, every Monday, in the early hours of the morning to carry my husband to the airport so I wouldn't have to do that during my chemotherapy sessions. Jerry was often out late every Friday night waiting outside of Terminal B at the airport to carry Larry home. These men left their beds early in the morning or late at night to show concern in a tangible, personal way.

I had the opportunity to watch these men serve the Lord in church for a number of years. But those men made the words of Philippians 2 come off the pages of Scripture and into my life on a regular basis as they placed the needs of my family over their own personal comfort time and time again.

“...Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is an fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others...” Philippians 2:1-4

When I think of the consistent way these men stepped out of their comfort zone to serve my family, the word bondservants and the image of caring took on a whole new meaning.

Be Sensitive. Look for opportunities to turn ordinary moments into opportunities for ministry. It is easy to let life's challenges and concerns crowd out the time that it takes to make a phone call, write a card or pay a visit. So you have to ask God for eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart that feels the pain of others.



Since my cancer diagnosis, calls, conversations, cards and visits have taken on new levels of meaning. They are literal lifelines for giving and receiving faith, hope, and love. They are the instruments God allows all of us to use when we take time to care.

Annie Mercer ©

Annie Mercer is the wife of Dr. Larry Mercer who is president of Washington Bible College and Capitol Seminary in Lanham, MD. Adapted from an article originally written by Larry and Annie Mercer published in Moody Magazine: January/February 2002.

