



WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

NEWSLETTER

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East-Central Africa Division Report on the Response to COVID-19 Crisis

The East-Central Africa Division through the Women & Children's Ministries Departments is experiencing something leaders never thought would happen and impact our community the way we are testifying it today.

COVID-19 crisis has confirmed what we read in James 4:13,14. We were busy planning for 2020 but Covid-19 has surprised us and obliged us to adjust and adapt our activities.

Praise the Lord women and children's leaders are responding positively to COVID -19 Crisis. They are reaching out to thousands of people who are in need: people who are hungry in their homes (specially in slums) & in prisons and families touched by flood situations in our territory. These include: Food, water, clothes, kitchen items, and many more...

But they are also distributing masks and sanitizers in the community, children's homes. They have transformed their offices to stores where they keep their contributions ready for distribution. While reaching out to people, they are also promoting and observing social distancing and wearing masks.

Women are spending time in their gardens during this uncertain time growing more vegetables that they share with their neighbors. This is a way of showing Jesus' love even during this COVID-19 crisis.

Our prayer is that God will continue to use our women to give hope to people. The work is huge because people are hungry.

We greatly appreciate our Women and Children's Leaders for all their doing during this crucial period. Thank you to everyone who reads this brief report and prays for our sisters here in East-Central Africa Division. Our God is surely at work.

By Debbie Maloba
Director, Women & Children's
Ministries Departments
East-Central Africa Division
Private Bag-Mbagathi



7 Things Women Need to Thrive in a Relationship with God

When it comes to housekeeping, I'm a survivor not a thriver. In fact, I often use the phrase, "barely keeping my head above water" when it comes to laundry, dishes, and all other domestic endeavors.

However, there's one part of my life in which I want to thrive, and that's in my relationship with God. No matter how tired, overwhelmed, or busy I am, I want to do everything I can to nurture my relationship with the Lord and actually thrive instead of survive.

No matter where you are in your relationship with God—whether you're just starting out or have known Him for a long, long time, I encourage you to invest even more of your heart, mind, and soul in the most important relationship you'll ever have.

Here are 7 things women need to thrive in a relationship with God:

Faith

There are things in the Bible I don't understand, can't explain, and even find myself questioning. But at the end of the day, I know Whom I have believed. I know that He is able to guard what I've committed to Him (2 Timothy 1:12). In order to thrive in our relationship with God, we must let faith triumph over doubt. After all...Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (Hebrews 11:1 KJV)

God's wisdom is given to us when we ask in faith. (James 1:5-6)

The just live by faith. (Romans 1:17)
The longer I walk with God, the deeper I want my faith to be. Fortunately, the Lord reminds us that faith as small as a mustard seed can command mountains to move (Matthew 17:20). So if you want to deepen your faith in the Lord, and thrive in your relationship with Him, here are a few helpful resources to consider:

Time

It was Benjamin Franklin who said, "Lost time is never found again." The time we waste doing everything but spending time with God, is time we will never get back. Deep relationships are built by spending both quality and quantity time with loved ones.

While women are busier than ever, they simply can't afford to put their relationship with God on the back burner. He must be made a priority in order for other priorities to fall into place. For example, a car that runs on fumes might or might not get you to the gas station. But a car that is continuously fueled will get you as far as you need to go.

So it is in our relationship with the Lord. If we are only giving Him the last little bit of our strength, time, and energy, we aren't going to feel very equipped for our journey. But if we give Him our time and attention first, we will be much better fueled for wherever the road of life takes us.

If you're wondering how you can find more time with God, check out this resource. You'll never regret carving out more time with the Lord!

Love

In many ways, we've turned away from our First Love, as described in the book of Revelation. As John wrote to the church of Ephesus, he warned, "You have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary."

Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love" (Revelation 2:3-4 NKJV).

This passage indicates a life of hustle and bustle, but reveals a falling away from intimacy with our Savior. The encouraging thing is, we only need to confess the error of our ways and return wholeheartedly to Jesus.

Love is at the center of every healthy relationship—not the kind of love that the world has defined, but the pure and holy love of God. To thrive in your relationship with Him, return to those honeymoon days of falling in love with the Savior, and recommit your heart to Him. Perhaps, these resources will help:

Obedience

I've always been good at knowing what the rules are, but equally as good at not following them. Show me a sewing pattern, and I'll throw it away and make my own. Give me a recipe, and I'll "tweak" it to my own taste.

However, when it comes to my relationship with Christ, I want to follow His commands with a heart of surrender. I don't want my human nature to override obedience to my Savior. The thing is, obedience to the Lord isn't about legalism. The Bible clearly says that "no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin." (Romans 3:20)

Instead, obedience to God is an act of love and respect. He has our best in mind. He is a good Father who works everything out for His glory and our good. Our response is to love Him and obey His commands. This deepens our relationship with Him while strengthening our faith simultaneously.

If you're still unsure what obedience to God looks like, check out this article, Why is obedience to God important?

Repentance

One of the most comforting verses in the Bible is 1 John 1:9 that says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." What grace the Father has for us, that He is willing to forgive us again and again!

Our relationship with Him will not thrive if we continually have sins and grievances that cloud our communication. I'm reminded of a season in my twenties when I was addicted to cigarettes. Every morning, before the children were awake, I'd take my cup of coffee, my Bible, and my pack of cigarettes to the front porch. It was a time I looked forward to.

But one morning, as I lit up a cigarette and looked up to the cloud-filled sky, I saw my sin through new eyes. It was as if the swirling smoke of my addiction had formed a cloud of separation between me and my Savior. I even found it difficult to pray, which scared me and caused me to throw the cigarettes away for good.

The Bible reminds us in Isaiah 30:15 that "In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength."

This is one of those beautiful verses tucked in a chapter of the Bible that is full of warnings for God's people. Amidst the hard-to-hear admonishments, we are encouraged to return to the Lord day after day, rest in quietness and trust, and rely on Him to be our strength. I can't think of a better way to thrive in our relationship with God!

Truth

One of the enemy's greatest distractions is taking the truth of God's Word and changing it ever so slightly. His goal is for us to doubt, question, and ultimately discard the Bible's absolute authority. And nothing will hinder our relationship with God more than the lies of the enemy.

Sisters, let's be diligent to test everything in the light of the Scriptures. As we seek to go deeper in our relationship with God, let's open our Bibles daily and learn to discern truth from lies. In contrast, if we are in the habit of seeking social media, news headlines, and people's opinions more than the truth of God's Word, it won't be long before a chasm of mistruths begin to create a gap in our sweet fellowship with the Lord.

Here are a couple of resources to help you discern truth from lies:

Learn to Discern: How to Recognize and Respond to Error in the Culture
The Lies of Satan vs. The Truth of God: God Healed My Mind

Surrender

One of my favorite renditions of the beloved song, I Surrender All, was recorded by Crystal Lewis. In her rendition, she combines it with the equally beloved hymn, Just As I Am. The combination of these beautiful choruses is a precious reminder of how important it is to surrender our lives "just as we are" to the Lord.

Not only is surrender an initial step in giving our lives to Christ unto salvation, it's an ongoing process of surrendering our will to the will of God. The truth is, our flesh will always be at war with the Holy Spirit within us. If we want our relationship with God to thrive, we must continually surrender our thoughts, feelings, and actions to Him. Sweet surrender, day after day, keeps us humble and moldable in the Father's hands. It deepens our relationship by consistently keeping our flesh in check with His Spirit. If you struggle to surrender everything to the Lord, please know you aren't alone. Perhaps these articles will point you in the right direction:

There will always be areas in life in which we will merely survive and not thrive. But no matter how much laundry we let pile up, or how many cobwebs we acquire, let's be intentional about cultivating our relationship with God—the most important relationship we'll ever have.

Jennifer Waddle



Hands of God

Did you know that there are 122 references to the hands of God? When I think of hands, I think of touch, caress, protect and give. And probably a lot more superlatives. When following the ministry of Jesus on earth we see so many times how he touched someone. Untouchable people who were unclean. But his compassion was far more than any rules and regulations which people needed to follow.

One of the most touching parables Jesus told was of the prodigal son. When the father saw his son returning after having squandered his inheritance, Luke 15:10 tells us: "When he was still afar off, his father caught sight of him and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced (threw his arms around) him and kissed him". I have been knitting fingerless gloves. And it really made me start thinking about hands. What can we as Christians do with our hands to show the love of God?

Mrs White says: "A Christian reveals true humility by showing the gentleness of Christ, by being always ready to help others, by speaking kind words and performing unselfish acts, which elevate and ennoble the most sacred message that has come to our world."

Each of us can be instruments in the hands of God. But you know what I love about God, he made each of us unique. So, although we can be instruments for God, we don't all have to be the same instrument. In an orchestra there are many different instruments which then produce a lovely sound and harmony.

We have differing talents and gifts, so just as a violin can't produce the sound of a harp, all of us make our own sound for God. This means we do what we can with who we are, what we are capable of and what God has gifted us with. As daughters of God we have been gifted. We need to find what our gifts and talents are and then use them to become effective instruments that can blend well with others and send the message of love to the world.

There are several things we need to think about:

1. We can't spread God's love if we don't know the source of that love. We need to have a close relationship with God ourselves to be able to show others who God is. This means that the gospel needs to change, inspire and connect us. It is very difficult to give what we don't have ourselves. When God comes into your life, transformation will take place. This is what others see in us. You will hear things like: "I don't know what it is about you but there is something different". You only need to read the gospels to see time and time again how lives were transformed by Jesus.
2. Then when this has happened, we need to stay strong in the word. I meet so many people who never seem to have time to study God's word. But say to me I have a close relationship with God. How is that possible? Would we call people we never speak to very close friends? You know it is easy to find time if something is important to you. Somehow you always find time. A question to ask our self is: "How important is God to me?"
3. One of the most effective ways of showing God's love is service. I do a lot of training for children's leaders and one thing I say is: you can talk all you want but unless you do what you say it will not make an impression on your children. There is a saying in English: Actions speak louder than words. When we show the love of God through caring, touching, listening and seeing the other person, we are showing them who God is.
4. And as it says in 1 Corinthians 13: The greatest of these is love. This is what people want to see, feel and experience when they meet us, especially in our societies where individualism is so prevalent. Love can be shown in so many ways. When I think of Bible figures who showed that I think of Dorcas. We don't hear her speak at all, but her story speaks loudly of the love she had for others. So, let each of us be an instrument for God. Playing our part in the orchestra so that others can see harmony, love and show God in all we do.

Clair Sanches
Women's Ministries Director - Trans-European Division



When we are
No longer able
To change a
situation, we are
Challenged to change
Ourselves

Viktor Frankl



4 WAYS TO REINVENT YOUR LIFE AFTER QUARANTINE

BY BETH JONES

What in the world has happened to our world in a few short months? An invisible enemy, the coronavirus, has shut down nations, vaporised industries, rearranged nearly every sector of society and we're not even sure we've hit bottom yet. It's a crossroads we never saw coming.

I wanted to encourage people with big dreams and a desire to make an eternal dent, but who were stuck in self-sabotaging patterns. I was in a personal season of reinvention and pumped to share some small bits of wisdom with others.

Who could have known that less than 12-months later we'd be in the midst of a global pandemic and on "stay home" orders in a season where everyone, everywhere would need to reinvent almost everything?

Only God. Let's travel the reinvention roadmap for a few miles...shall we?

The Reinvention Roadmap

A few hundred years ago, another person faced an unexpected crossroads that changed everything for her, the single mom of 2 Kings 4. We don't know her name, so I call her the Maven (because that's what she became!) When her husband suddenly passed away, she faced an unplanned crisis. No sooner had she left the funeral for her beloved than the creditors were knocking on her door and threatening to take her two boys to be slaves. In the midst of her sudden crossroads and the grief of what would never be, she had to reinvent her life. She needed a plan and fast.

Immediately, she ran to God by going to His representative, the prophet Elisha, to get help! It turns out, embedded in their conversation she was given the time-tested reinvention roadmap and it started by answering these four questions: What do you want? What do you have? What will you do? Why will you do it?

Our 2 Kings 4 mom answered every question like a champ and her reinvention journey began. It didn't take long to see God's touch on her life as she became a wildly successful entrepreneur, a Maven and she got to keep her boys! Her predicament was the catalyst for an even better and reinvented future.

Her reinvention roadmap is our reinvention roadmap. If we will trust God at our unexpected crossroads, what the enemy intended for evil, God can turn around for our good. The Lord always helps us to pivot and reinvent as we follow this reinvention roadmap.

Reinvent Roadmap Question #1: What Do You Want?

What did she want? She wanted her boys and she wasn't about to take no for an answer! What do you want? (What do you really, really want?) Unfortunately, there is so much misunderstanding when it comes to our wants.

Often believers have been told, "God will meet your needs but not your wants," so we suppress our heartfelt desires thinking they must be carnal. When we understand how to rightly divide God's Word and the desires He puts in our hearts, it's quite liberating and generates a great deal of joy! The Bible is loaded with truth about what God thinks about our "wants" and "desires" and rather than suppress the God-given desires he puts in our hearts, it more satisfying to identify those heartfelt wants.

When we want what God wants (even if at first, it's the last thing we wanted!), we find a great deal of fulfillment when our heart is aligned with God's purposes. No wonder Psalm 37 tells us, "Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart." (NKJV)

Reinvent Roadmap Question #2: What Do You Have?

What did she have? She didn't think she had anything of value, but then she remembered her small pot of anointing oil. What do you have? (Make a list!) You may not think you have much of value, but when you unpack all of the anointed things you have--things like possessions and quirks, passions and purpose, friends and cronies, family and kinfolk you realize you have more than you thought!

Have you ever thought about your quirks as something you have? How about what you loved in third grade? What about your bleacher friends? See? You have more than you realise and God wants to touch and multiply what you have!

Interestingly, God always and only uses what we have to reinvent our lives. He never asks us what we don't have, He asks us, "What do you have?" Remember Moses? "What's that in your hand?" (Exodus 4:2) What about the disciples, "How many loaves do you have?" (Mark 6:38) What about Gideon? "Go in the strength you have..." (Judges 6:14)

God asks us what we have! Even when we feel that what we have is insignificant and unworthy of any type of reinvention, if we'll allow God to use it, something supernatural can happen!

Reinvent Roadmap Question #3: What Will You Do?

What would the Maven do? Elisha told her to do four specific things, go, borrow, pour and sell and as she did, God touched and multiplied what she had.

In her case, she went from indebted widowed, single mom to independent, entrepreneurial Maven. God put her in the oil business the first essential oil saleslady!

So, what will you do? (What steps has the Lord put on your heart to follow?) The Bible says we are workers together with God -- that means, we have a part to play and God has a part to play in the reinvention of our lives. God won't just tap our lives with Tinkerbelle dust to make everything better, but He will touch what we have as we follow His guidance to "do" the same four things she did.

When we follow the Lord's guidance to "go borrow, pour and sell" God's touch is evidenced. Take the idea of borrowing for instance. Howard Schultz, the founder of Starbucks didn't invent coffee, he just "borrowed" the coffee bar idea from Italy and brought it to America. The result? He became a Maven!

What about the notion of sell? Maybe, you've got a great product or a garage full of inventory, now what? You need to do what the Maven did sell the oil! When you name your niche and get busy selling, God's favor will help you reinvent!

Reinvent Roadmap Question #4: Why Will You Do It?

Why did she do it? The single mom of two boys reinvented her life to pay her financial debt and enjoy life with her sons. Her why was stronger than any setback she faced!

Why will you reinvent your life? (What motivates you to push on?) When you have a strong why, it will give you the endurance you need to reinvent! Like the Maven, your why may be the motivation to pay a financial debt.

As believers we have an even greater why it's the motivation to pay our gospel debt and reach people for Christ! As the apostle Paul said, "I am a debtor ... So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel ... For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes." (Romans 1:14-16, NKJV)

I love how the Maven's story ended the last line of her story is simple. Elisha said, "...you and your sons live on the rest." At the end of her reinvention, God wanted her to take the proceeds from her oil earnings and enjoy life with her kids! She got a fresh start and she loved life! God wants that for you too!

None of us like the limitations of this pandemic, but like the 2 Kings 4 mom, what if our predicament is the catalyst for an even better, reinvented future? What if you follow the reinvention roadmap God has given us and you join the ranks of Maven? I hope these words from Reinvent encourage you, "Remember, no matter where you're at in life, God's specialty is reinventing the last, the least and the lost, and turning them into the first, the favored and the found! He's got you!"

Be encouraged Maven-in-the-making, you can reinvent, start fresh and love life!



enditnow®
Adventists Say No to Violence

VÅLD I NÄRA RELATIONER

Hur kan vi förebygga, upptäcka och agera?



4-6 september
Adventkyrkan i Göteborg
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