



Mentoring Ministry for Women

March 2017

MENTOR TEACHING: Lenten Thoughts by Julie Courtney, Better Together Ministry Leader

Personally I rejoiced at the assignment to read thru the four Gospels and Acts this Lenten season with Plymouth Covenant Church. It invites me to grieve as the Holy Spirit teaches me what mankind did. My sin, our sin, the habitual sin of mankind rejected Christ as Lord. But God prevailed. *And by (God's) will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all.* Hebrew 10:10

How this has affected me as a mentor:

In October of 2016, my mentee and I chose a daily devotional, *Jesus Speaks*, that has a companion book, *The Greatest Words Ever Spoken*, both written by Steven K. Scott. It prepared my heart for this reflective season. Jesus was the greatest man who ever lived. If we are to understand His heart, we must read His words. *These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.* 1 Cor 2:10

An artist rarely draws from their memory. They may use live models or pictures, maybe a number of angles of the subject, that makes their drawings proportional and authentic. I use this example because we can't have a relationship with Christ on what we have learned from others. Jesus has made incredible promises and they are as personal to us as our uniqueness is to Him. With the counsel of the Holy Spirit we can mine the riches of God's word every day.

There is a relationship with God we feel we are promised but rarely experience. Why? Because we view God as something to know about and then check Him off our list of daily things to do: pray, devotionals, going to Bible study, or disciplining our mentee. Yet, an authentic relationship with Christ comes through acknowledging our sin, seeking forgiveness, sacrificing our time and trusting Him again and again. With that unique relationship, we have a teachable heart to share with our mentee.

Reading the Gospels this Lenten season will impact your life. Jesus promised, if we abide in Him and His words abide in us, we will bear much fruit.

What is to be learned:

My husband and I raised 4 girls, all very close in age and now adults. The early years were a blur and the challenges were many. Some I remember, some I choose to forget until the Holy Spirit recalls them to mind in helping someone through a time of burden.

We have all had missteps of denial of God's authority and power over our lives. The word exposes our hearts to the truth of Christ, as we accept it we are transformed and acceptable to God through Him. Over the years our trust and character grow from the wisdom the Holy Spirit breathes into us.

As I became a grandmother I entered a new phase of life. The dormant artist in me that was poured into my husband and 4 children has awakened to the possibly of creating art for God's glory. For me it will be through paint and other media. About a year ago, friends and I gathered to pray over a studio space. I confess the space is not much different this year than last. Yet my heart is. I will call the studio: *Now to Him, Eph 3:20.*

The studio is next to my husband's office. To submit the space and art coming out of that studio to God, I had to overcome the angst of others' opinions or comparisons - it's a battle unique to me. The Lordship of my work, time and skills all have to be free to hear and follow Christ. This journey, like yours, is onto something good, restoration and sanctification. Because we follow Him, we begin to produce the fruit that comes from allowing the Spirit to control us: *love, joy peace patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.* Gal 5: 22-23.

God is directing you uniquely to your purpose. So welcome this season of reading through the Gospels and Acts at PCC. Praying, repenting, sitting with the Passion of Christ, pondering that everything hinges on Christ's resurrection. Our sin cost Jesus his life. Something beautiful and unblemished by sin had to be given so we could have this life as Christians. Sin is costly. May we reflect on the length God was willing to go to redeem us. The cost was something precious; Jesus' death, it could not hold him. And if we accept that truth, God gives us eternal life. Alleluia, He has Risen!