



GIOVANNI's photo courtesy of Courtney Barron

Let's Talk!

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF BREATH OF LIFE WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

To Conquer Sin | by Giovanni Ferdinand

Several months ago, Pastor **Roger Frazier** delivered a sermon during which he touched on the subject of cherished sins. He said, "The willingness to choose to participate in sin, knowing that God disapproves of it, is a cherished sin. It only takes one cherished sin to keep us out of the kingdom." I thought to myself..."I want to be in the **kingdom**, I want to be there, I want to finally have no separation from my loving **Creator**." Unfortunately, the floodgates of worry and shame poured into my mind as I thought of all the sinful things I've done, was doing, and perhaps was about to do. *God calls us to be **holy***, but we can easily get overwhelmed and feel a deep sense of failure as we go down that laundry list of sinful things we may do and recall the numerous times we've tried to overcome even one sin.

How do I conquer **sin**?

In my experience, the sin-stopping **solutions** I've cultivated have not made lasting results. In my case, if I were a burglar I'd always be able to stop stealing for a week, a month, or even years but the thought of stealing will stay right there in my thoughts or deep down in my medulla oblongata waiting to pop out at any weak moment. After relapsing back into the sinful habits, I've felt conquered and perplexed as to why I just can't be holy consistently.

Last month I was reading **Matthew 23** and began to realize that I was confused about sin altogether. *What is sin? Is it an action or a spirit? Does it dwell in our appearances or is it something that resides within us?* In **Matthew 23: 25-26** Jesus says, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also."

Sometimes we focus solely on sin being an action and lay aside the spiritual component. The trouble with that is an action is the outward result of what's happening on the inside. It's like spending money on whitening solutions for coffee-stained teeth and continuing to drink coffee. When **God calls us to be holy**, he's referring to our spirits being holy and then in result, our actions following suit. (continued on page 3)

BREATH *of* LIFE SDA CHURCH Women's Ministries

WM MISSION: "To encourage the women of **BOL** to grow and develop their faith in Christ, to develop and strengthen intimate friendships with each other, and to provide opportunities to serve and make a positive difference in our community."

"whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Phillipians 4:8

Menopause Mysteries... Revealed

Menopause marks the end of a woman's **reproductive years**. Menopause occurs when the ovaries stop producing estrogen which drives the menstrual cycles each month. Technically, a woman is considered menopausal once she has not had a cycle for at least **12 months**. The **average age** for menopause is **age 51**. The 5-8 years prior to the start of menopause are considered the **perimenopausal years**. The start of menopause is different for each woman and the symptoms can vary as well.

Common Symptoms of Perimenopause / Menopause

- **Menstrual irregularities** ~ some women will have fewer cycles...others will have more frequent cycles...
- **Hot flashes** ~ also known as "**private summers**" or "**power surges**" ~ can occur at any time and often cause sleep disturbances & fatigue when they occur at night. **Hot flashes** are most common in the first few years of menopause and thereafter tend to decline.
- **Hair growth on the face** ~ during these years, it is not uncommon to see new hairs **poopping** up on the face and or chin (**grimace!!**)

Symptoms Explained

All of these symptoms can be caused by the decline in levels of estrogen produced by the ovaries

Menstrual irregularities ~ if **estrogen** is the driving force behind the monthly release of eggs from the ovary, it is easy to see how a decline in estrogen can interfere with this process and cause irregularities in the cycle.

Hot flashes ~ it is thought that the **estrogen** levels can have an effect on certain temperature regulating areas in the brain and additionally can cause the blood vessels to expand causing the flushed feeling experienced during a hot flash.

New hair growth ~ is really related to the balance between **estrogen** and testosterone. The ovary produces both hormones so as the estrogen levels decline, it leaves testosterone levels unbalanced to cause new hair growth.

What can you do about the *symptoms*?

Perimenopausal years ~ early-late 40's

Consider **birth control pills** to help regulate cycles & the low estrogen levels in the pills can help relieve hot flashes. This will also serve as **contraception** as it is still possible to conceive during this time....

Menopausal years ~ 50+

Consider **herbal medications** – over the counter formulations of **black cohosh** and **soy estrogens** may help relieve hot flashes in some women.

Consider **hormones** if still no relief with herbal medications. Estrogen alone or with progesterone can be used. In general, the **lowest dose** that can address symptoms is recommended to minimize other side effects.

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Perimenopause and menopause are natural stages in a woman's life. Knowing what to expect and how to deal with these changes are important to make a smooth transition to this new and exciting time of life.... Dr. Joy
.....

- Speak to your **doctor** about which regimen is best for your *situation*.
- Always maintain a **healthy lifestyle** which should include **calcium supplementation** (1200-1500 mg/day) & daily exercise with weight bearing to help **maintain bone health**.

For more information, check out:

Acog.org - patient education
Nim.NIH.gov-menopause



STRAIGHT HEALTH TALK

... with Dr. Joy Williams-Cotton
Obstetrician/Gynecologist

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Dr. Joy Williams-Cotton has devoted the past 15 years to improving the health of women by working as an obstetrician /gynecologist. She is currently a partner physician at Kaiser Permanente in West Los Angeles, and her practice is based in Culver City.

Photo courtesy of Courtney Barron

Who Do We Really Need?

By Shelea Frazier-Kyle

As long as I remember, I've either heard songs or sentiments like, "*All I ever need is Jesus*" or "*I'm happy with Jesus alone...*". **God** has blessed me with a wonderful family and a few friends who I'm able to seek wisdom and comfort from. But there have been times, understandably, when it's too late to call, they're at work, or out of town, and at those very rare moments, I would find myself feeling guilty that I *needed* their presence. "*Why can't I be happy with Jesus alone?*"I thought.

Well, just when I thought this was an indication of *spiritual weakness*, I thought of Adam. He loved his home. He was in the best shape of his life. :) He loved his job. He couldn't have been in a better location--*not too hot, not too cold*. There was beauty everywhere his eyes met. And most of all, he and **God** were so close! Sin hadn't put a barrier between them and he was free to speak whatever was on his *heart*, and **God** would answer...in the flesh!! And yet, with ALL of that, Adam was still lonely. And **God** saw it and said, "Man is not meant to live alone."

Then I thought of the Second Adam, *Jesus Christ*. If there was anyone who *only* needed **God**, it was Him. But in His darkest hour at Gethsemane, Jesus literally begged Peter, James, and John for support and comfort through prayer. Even the Son of **God** needed His friends.

So where did I get this idea that I only needed **God**? Even **God** didn't make such a proclamation. Yes, He gives me every breath I take. There is no life apart from Him. Only His blood can wash away my sins. Only His Spirit can convict my *heart*, which frees and empowers me to live a victorious life. But, it hit me:

God created me to need people. It doesn't hurt His feelings when I really just need a hug. Does that mean He should only be the last resort when no one's available? *Absolutely not!* Jesus sought **God** early in the morning to commune with Him. *That should be our example*. Jesus talked to **God** throughout the day, and we should as well. Our relationships with people should *NEVER* replace the friendship **God** longs to have with us.

The relationships **God** created for us—*mother, father, sister, brother, husband, wife, and friend*—were His *gift* to us. Yet, the hustle and bustle of life, or even the effects of sin on families and friends through strained relationships, can sometimes leave us feeling lonely. I believe what truly breaks **God's** Heart is when we turn to destructive relationships, habits, or behaviors to try to fill that gaping hole of loneliness. When Peter, James, and John let Jesus down, He found strength in the only One who would never let Him down. When people let us down, **God** offers us that same unconditional love, comfort, and strength.

So, who do we really need? We need God...and we need a group of people who love us and truly want the best for us—and God is OK with that. Now . . . so am I.



To Conquer Sin (continued from page 1)

Sin has won past battles because I've spent plenty of time and effort bleach-scrubbing my outer actions and Windex-shinning my appearance, when it was cleansing from within that I desperately needed. In order for me to overcome my sinful struggles, I need to go to the core of my habits and focus on the spirit motivating my sin.

In the *Bible* we can find two popular lists of deadly sinful spirits in *Proverbs 6:16-19* and *Galatians 5:19-21*. In popular culture, we know them as the 7 Deadly Sins: *pride, greed, envy, wrath, lust, gluttony and sloth*. Whenever one of these impish behaviors rears its ugly head, I have a name for it which can be the first step in stamping out the flame of iniquity. However, on my own, it is still immensely difficult to reflect the nature of *Christ* when the embers of sin still burn with longevity within me. I need a guide to help me replace and counteract the sins that had conquered me in the past.

In *Galatians 5:22 and 23*, Paul illustrates the Fruit of the Spirit. Its attributes are: *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance*. After studying more, I made a little cheat sheet to help me along the way. A prideful spirit can be replaced with a meek and humble spirit, greed with charity and goodness, envy with love and kindness, wrath with peace and longsuffering, lust with chastity and self-control, gluttony with faith and temperance, and sloth with diligence and zeal. In the process of making my cheat sheet, it became clearer, how the attributes of the *Fruit of the Spirit* have actions that can be attached to them but before activating the actions, the Spirit must dwell in our minds and hearts first. *We have to be filled with a new spirit, which will yield new behaviors and actions or else the old habits will reemerge in the empty space they left behind*. And none of this is possible without complete dependence upon *Christ and His redeeming power!*

WM Calendar of Events

- Oct 2 Women's Prayer Tea | Cup of Blessings Tea House
2pm | Palos Verdes
- Oct 16 Sewing Class with *Pam Sankey* | 9am
- Nov 16 "Run For Her" 5k Run | Walk for Ovarian Cancer
Research | 9am-noon
- Dec 10 Christmas Odyssey (*details to come*)

BREATH of LIFE

Seventh-day Adventist Church

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Let's Talk! archived on BOL website
www.breathla.org

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BREATH of LIFE Women's Ministries Committee Judy Brown - WM Leader

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| Jackie Pascal | Cheryl Rudley |
| Dee Pendergrass | Gayle Robinson |
| Pat Summerfield | Monique Toolsie |

Next issue of *Let's Talk!*
December 2011



FEATURED RECIPE Created by Lisa Cham

- Broccoli-Cheese Casserole**
- ~ 1 (10.75 oz) can condensed cream of mushroom soup
 - ~ 1 cup mayonnaise
 - ~ 1 egg, beaten
 - ~ 1/4 cup finely chopped onion
 - ~ 2 (10 oz) packages frozen chopped broccoli, drained
 - ~ 1 (10 oz) package frozen spinach, drained
 - ~ 8 oz shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
 - ~ salt & ground black pepper to taste
 - ~ 2 pinches paprika

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Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter a 9x13-in. baking dish. In a medium bowl, whisk together mushroom soup, mayo, egg & onion. In a large bowl, break up frozen broccoli & spinach. Add soup-mayo mixture & mix well. Sprinkle on cheese & mix well. Spread mixture into prepared dish & smooth top of casserole. Season to taste with salt, pepper & paprika. Bake for 45 min. to 1 hour. Enjoy!