

### Chapter 3 - The Blessing of Mentoring

*“Again I tell you, if two of you on earth agree*

*(harmonize together, make a symphony together) about whatever [anything and everything] they may ask, it will come to pass and be done for them by My Father in heaven. For wherever two or three are gathered (drawn together as My followers) in (into) My name,*

*there I AM in the midst of them.” Matthew 18: 19,20*

*“Hold fast and follow the pattern*

*of wholesome and sound teaching which you have heard from me,*

*in [all] the faith and love which are [for us] in Christ Jesus.”*

*2 Timothy 1:13*

*“Rings and jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts.*

*The only gift is a portion of thyself.”*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Joy mentored me through friendship. Who are your mentoring friends? Mentoring accompanied our relationship as naturally as flowers follow spring rain. We needed each other, filled a void for each other, and wanted our relationship. There is cohesiveness, a joining and feeling of mutual blessing and contribution that fuels our camaraderie, keeping it dynamic and alive.

In Greek mythology, Mentor was the loyal friend and advisor of Odysseus. Mentor went on to teach Telemachus, the son of Odysseus. He was a trusted friend before he taught. Mentoring is a principle when it is the cause of learning. It becomes a process when in the friendship it grows into the way of learning.

Joy and I enjoy a friendship that is so fulfilling that learning and receiving wisdom is just a natural consequence of the commitment we have to each other. Each one of us has an innate need to give and receive love and help that can only be filled by this process.

We are kindred spirits, cut from the same cloth. We intuitively know we can be safe with each other and share a candid and spontaneous bond that happened as simply and naturally as a blooming plant responding to the beckoning of spring.

This is nothing new. From the beginning of the Bible, God passed the blessing when He breathed His breath of Life into man. It is His nature to give life and He made our nature likewise. (Genesis 1:26, 31)

When Mary Poppins said ‘Just a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down’ she could have been referring to mentoring. I’ve learned so many basic life lessons in such a fun way, I wasn’t even consciously aware of it.

Although life has its ups and downs, there is a clear path of peace and well-being you can stay on regardless of your circumstances. Joy passed this place of peace on to me through her life by opening the door to the innermost chambers of her heart and letting me in within the snug setting of our deep-seated friendship.

“Let all men know and perceive and recognize your unselfishness (your considerateness, your forbearing spirit). The Lord is near [He is coming soon]. Do not fret or have any anxiety about anything, but in every circumstance and in everything, by prayer and petition (definite requests) with thanksgiving, continue to make your wants known to God. And God’s peace [shall be yours, that tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and being content with its earthly lot of whatever sort that is, that peace] which transcends all understanding shall garrison and mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. For the rest, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of reverence and is honorable and seemly, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely and lovable, whatever is kind and winsome and gracious, if there is any virtue and excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think on and weigh and take account of these things [fix your minds on them]. Practice what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and model your way of living on it, and the God of peace (of untroubled, undisturbed well-being) will be with you.” Philippians 4:5-9 As I practice what Joy does, my peace strengthens.

Mentoring is neither training nor parenting. After giving birth 4 times it is my personal experience and belief that God put a natural innate instinctive love in moms the minute that baby is born. This may not hold true given severe dysfunction or trauma. My mom would do anything for me and instilled in me a deep sense of love and belonging. She was Mom and she cared. She was loving and nurturing, wise and caring. Mom trained me up in the way I should go, and as I grew older, I came back to the path for which she trained me.

She instructed me in such a way to bring a desired condition or behavior. She was a wonderful stay at home mom and taught me well.

She taught me some of the most delicious Italian dishes passed down from her mom. So authentic you’d never find them in a restaurant here in the United States. My children love when they walk into the house after a busy day of school and other activities and smell garlic simmering in olive oil because they know something good is cooking.

Mom passed on all in her life to me as God gave it to her. So I do now with my all my children. Parenting in its nature is subjective and offers the best setting to raise children. Mentoring in its nature is objective and offers the best setting to mature adults. The crossover appeal to me is that often times whatever lessons I didn’t or refused to learn when little, mentoring offers me another chance to learn my lesson and do it right. Often as adults, there are areas in our lives where we still act as children in adult bodies and simply need a safe setting to mature and often heal as well.

When Hilary Griffith was raped, her pain became her mom’s pain and it was an unbearable load for Hilary to carry. “My family’s always been very close. Every summer we go and take trips together and

we do little family get togethers all year. So my aunt Jen and I have always had a pretty good relationship. And then after the rape happened my entire family was just devastated, including me.

“It was really difficult to talk to my mom about it- both my parents actually- just because it was really hard for me to see how much it hurt them to find out how I was doing and if I was doing bad, then they would be upset, so I didn’t want that. So I’d tell them I was doing fine even if I wasn’t just to save them the pain.

“Jen pretty much right away was there for me from the beginning. That night she was there in the hospital with my family and she was calling to check on me and offered to take me out to coffee and just talk and be there for me. So we started meeting and she’d just ask how I was and just kind of be there.”

Both Hilary and her aunt Jennifer understand God put them together to fulfill His purposes in their lives and have a deep sense of spiritual fulfillment and understanding that has matured them both and brought great healing for Hilary.

Mentoring is counseling for the calling. In our loyal friendship, God used Joy to guide me to prepare me for the road He had ahead for me. I needed the wisdom and experience from her holy and passionate perspective in order to be spiritually equipped to effectively serve in the capacity God had designed for me.

Mentoring is not coaching. Coaching is training for a specific outcome. Mentoring is rooted in friendship. Coaching and training transfer knowledge and expertise although they may evolve into a mentored relationship. Only mentoring is rooted in trusted friendship within a spiritual setting. Elijah’s calling was embodied in Elisha.

Mentoring implies choice and change. Both of my two younger children have had the same wonderful first grade teacher. Christine is a pretty, young energetic woman with an incredibly positive and loving kind way with the children, yet exudes an authority beyond her years.

One day on a field trip she casually mentioned something about her mother being a first grade teacher. “No wonder you’re so good with the children.” I remarked thoughtfully.

Her mother was her mentor, a trusted and loyal advisor. Although Christine was probably born with certain pre-disposed qualities that would naturally enable her to teach, she chose to act on these pre-determined characteristics, learn from her mother, and make the most of them.

Mentoring is a key ingredient to working an effective recovery program. In 12 Step recovery we call it sponsorship. Close fruitful relationships of accountability are developed and nurtured in order to replace old dysfunctional habits with healthy new ones. Within the context of a trusted friendship a sponsor passes their experience, strength and hope on to the newcomer.

Mentoring, like sponsorship, provides constructive solutions to complex life problems. Sometimes I feel caught in the quagmire of a situation that I don’t know what to do about, often because I can’t see the forest through the trees since I am too close to it. My sponsor offers real solutions that worked for her and some of them may work for me.

Finding a sponsor who shares my same value system works best for me. There are so many people from all walks of life: some single, married, divorced, working and all with different ethics and personalities. For years, Rachel sought the help of a counselor who did not share her value system. She developed a non Christian view of healing flavored with new age perspective. “True healing can only come from

Jesus.”

Rachel continued, “If we seek non Christian mentors, they will lean towards the world’s view on healing which is self help, self talk, self control... all of which fails in the end of self!”

Beverly believes part of the problem for professional Christian women is the church’s traditional stand of women in ministry having no value. “Here’s what I know from being in the ministry for so many years. In ministry they get together and they do all this stuff, but they don’t ever invite the women in the Christian community that are in business that are leaders in the community- that are Christian leaders in the community.

“And I thought, ‘Oh my goodness, they could teach us so much, because a lot of time we get so stinking hokey’ and in the church we get into so much unhealthiness. These women who are out in the world, they have learned a professionalism that we better learn.

“Maybe it’s just that I think Christian women in business learn to integrate their spirituality in the world around them while in ministry we tend to stay in this little bubble. We really need to learn from them.

“And we need to encourage them. When I was on staff at Word of Grace I was over the women and I used to think, ‘The person who is least reached in the church are the professional women.’ and why are we not reaching them? Professional women find things outside the church, your know, for an outlet, and those professional women I think many times would be of more value on a board than some of the men they put on the board. You can tell I’m an advocate for women.”

As a result of Beverly’s worldwide ministry, countless professional Christian women have mentored friendships and enjoy deeper spiritual fulfillment with a greater understanding of God’s purpose in their lives.

Finding quality counseling takes time and God provides what we need when we need it. It is important that whoever you find is working their own program or staying accountable themselves. God doesn’t want us to hide behind the Bible or use our Christianity like alcohol.

I chose someone who is married with children, because sharing the same value system will be the most productive way for me to learn and for my sponsor to impart wisdom. As a sponsor I have found this works as well.

The rooms of my 12 Step recovery groups are filled with people coming from so many diverse backgrounds and morals, but when we walk into the room, we are working together for the same principles of living. This is the premise upon which we find our common ground and encourage each other.

It is the same as church, but I think I have made the mistake in church of assuming we all have the same value system. We all come from different walks of life, ways of living and doing, but share the same desire: to know and love Jesus and each other in a deeper and more meaningful way.

Joy is my friend. We needed each other and wanted our relationship. I would not be where I am today if it weren’t for our friendship. She taught me how to own my own space in my personal life and life issues that determine who I am, grow up, live each day with literal joy, listen, be at peace and be me.

She was a safe place to run when I needed wisdom and advice. I instinctively knew I could trust her.

Finding someone with whom you feel safe is paramount. If you don't feel safe, you won't confide or confess. No one understands this better than Jennifer Cecil and her niece Hilary Griffith. Jennifer is a spirit filled counselor who loves Jesus and integrates her holy spirituality and faith in her counseling practice. Her niece Hilary is 19 years old and on a full academic scholarship to Arizona State University.

Hilary had a job at a radio station, was active in church and had a very loving family and steady boyfriend. Life was grand, according to Jennifer. One of her hobbies is beauty pageant competition. She was a baton twirler for her high school and she's competed all her life. She's competed in the Miss Arizona pageant twice.

On November 9, 2004 her life changed forever. Hilary was in the workout room at her apartment complex, working out and tanning to get ready for the Miss Scottsdale Pageant. She finished about 9 pm, walked home to her apartment, entered and locked the door. She went in to take a shower and get ready for bed. As she stepped out, a man who had broken in through a screen with a knife and jimmied the window open, took a towel and put it over her head.

For the next 45 minutes he proceeded to rape her and while she was being raped, she heard God's voice tell her she was to forgive this man who was doing this thing to her. Then she thought, 'If I survive this attack, then maybe I'll change my platform.' Her platform is the community service part of the beauty pageant. Her platform used to be dealing with eating disorders and she thought, 'Maybe I'll change it to dealing with rape.' Hilary knew Jesus as her Savior and Lord and had a peace that if she died, she'd be in Heaven. As horrific as it was, she cannot imagine the terror of such trauma coupled with not knowing where you would go if you died. She knew in that moment that she was on her way to heaven. She was able to surrender the outcome of what happened. The attacker fled when her roommates returned.

That night in the hospital after the police and doctors left, Jennifer stayed. Hilary slept the next couple of days and just tried to get oriented again. Jennifer remembered, "Hilary's sister saw her pageant items in the corner of her room and suggested keeping them all together in case she decided to compete. What is outstanding about all this is that the rape occurred on Tuesday and the Miss Scottsdale Pageant was to be Saturday.

"So we all thought there was no way this girl was going to compete – it was a pretty bad assault. After a few days of being in a daze, she tried to decide whether to even attempt to compete. She went to her coach and tried her routine a couple of times and her mom called the Pageant coordinator to say that Hilary would miss the first evening. I remember Hilary calling Thursday night and talking about whether she should compete in the pageant or not.

"Her mother had told her to call me. I remember encouraging her that either way would be fine. If she wanted to try and if she couldn't, it would be fine because no one expected her to do it. And I thought that the significant part of that conversation was that we prayed. And we prayed God's will, not what Hilary wanted, not the rest of us wanted, but what God wanted for Hilary.

"So she woke up the next morning and decided to compete, and she went for it and won Miss Scottsdale. And we couldn't believe it. The pageant was probably won before it ever began and God knew it. The judges interviewed Hilary behind the scene, she introduced herself and said, 'I'm really glad to be here. I wasn't sure I was going to make it- Tuesday night I was raped at knifepoint in my apartment and I wasn't even sure I would live much less be here. But I'm here and if I didn't compete, I would let this person destroy my life and I'm not will t do that. So I'm here to take on the responsibilities of Miss Scottsdale and answer any questions you have for me.'

“Hilary was able to speak to those judges with sure authority- it wasn’t a poor me, feel sorry for me. And she did beautifully throughout the entire evening. We were just in tears and beside ourselves when she won.

“What she told me later made everything clear. ‘Hilary, why did you decide to compete?’

“ ‘Well, Jen, I wasn’t sure until I talked to you on the phone.’

“ ‘What was it about that conversation that was meaningful?’

“ ‘You said, Hilary, I wasn’t planning on going to watch you compete, but if you’re going to compete I wouldn’t miss it for the world.’

“Hilary said that comment turned her around and she had enough support to do it. That amazed me because I thought the significant part was the wonderful prayer that I prayed. But it wasn’t – it was support that strengthened her to go and to compete and to win. She was relying on my belief in her.

“It’s just so funny that God would use something so seemingly benign. It seemed like pretty normal family support to me, but I suppose that to her God spoke to her in some way that was audible only to her. Going from the depths of despair Tuesday night to the total disbelief and elation that this young lady decided to take her life back and that even though she was victimized, she was not going to take a victim stance.

“She was the victor and not the victim. At 19 years old, to have that fortitude and that strength is so inspiring- she’s our heroine.

Hilary intuitively knew she was safe with her aunt Jennifer and could implicitly trust her. It gave her the encouragement she needed to overcome so much in such a short time and be who God meant her to be. Hilary needed Jennifer and Jennifer needed Hilary to fulfill God’s call on her life. Hilary’s win was a victory for them both.

Love, wisdom and communication need to flow freely both ways. Joy knew I needed her and Joy needed to be needed. Develop this a bit. What’s it mean? We both intuitively felt safe with each other, respected each other’s value systems and knew we would fill each other’s love and belonging needs. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs is a basic psychological profile of how our human needs empirically need to be met. Our basic needs must be met before our aesthetic needs can be reached. Jesus knew this and it is why He healed and fed first. Then our souls could be saved.

Although I disagree with Maslow’s premise that humans are basically trustworthy since we’re born with sin, I do agree with his premise that humans tend toward growth and love because God created us to love and have fellowship with Him and each other. The five levels starting at the bottom are: physiological, safety, love, esteem and self actualization. God used Joy to meet my basic needs so I could self actualize or become who He meant me to be.

Hilary needed the comfortable couch of her trusted relationship with Jen more than she ever thought she would now. All of Hilary’s family encouraged her to seek counseling, including Jennifer having her own practice. “I gave her the name of 2 people and strongly encouraged her to go and begin talking.

“She did not want to go to counseling since she didn’t know the women and she felt like this was such a touchy subject to talk to a total stranger that she felt that she would ‘perform’ by giving them the answers they wanted to hear. It’s neat that she knows herself well enough to understand she’d do that since she’s

used to performing. She's very poised, verbal and articulate.

“So she went twice to 2 different counselors and her response was, ‘Jen, they just sit there. They don't say anything and there are these long, pregnant pauses and they can't tell me anything I don't already know. I want to talk to you.’

“I explained to her, ‘Hilary, there's this thing called a dual relationship and therapists are not allowed to have more than one relationship with a client. I am not allowed ethically to counsel a family member- I can't do that. I'm too close to you and it will not work.

“Hilary was insistent that she did not want to see anybody else. So I said, ‘Okay Hilary, I will not counsel you but I will meet with you and we will talk.’

Jennifer had already given Hilary the lifeline she needed to hold on to when they spoke days between the rape and pageant. This is what Hilary said. “My aunt Jen offered to take me out to coffee and just talk and be there for me. So we started meeting and she'd just ask how I was doing and just kind of be there. She was actually instrumental in me deciding to continue to compete in the Miss Scottsdale Pageant.

“It was 4 days later and I wasn't sure if I was up for it or anything, and I called Jen and asked for her advice and she told me obviously that nobody would care either way- that they'd love me even if I didn't compete and they would all be there to support me if I could. So I decided to do that and we continued meeting and she approached me pretty early on about doing a book together and I said absolutely, it would be awesome.

So Jennifer lent a listening ear and encouraged Hilary to journal her experiences and feelings. As her aunt has mentored her so Hilary shares her experience, strength and hope to others who have been through similar life traumas. “I did a lot of journaling about what I was going through and we met once a week for about three hours each time and talked about how I was doing and what I was feeling.

“Sometimes we would zone in on specific issues whether it was fear, isolation, sadness, anger- you know, just depending on what I was going through, what was in the forefront that week. And I know without a doubt that process and my meetings with Jen has helped so much in my recovery just because talking about what I went through is so important because so many people just keep it bottled up inside.

“Just being able to communicate what I was going through instead of feeling so isolated and feeling that nobody understood, helped so much. Being able to talk about it made me feel stronger and like I was doing something about it. I wasn't just taking it lying down. I was standing up and turning it into something positive.

“And my relationship with Jen has been such a blessing because you know, it was difficult at first to talk about it with my parents. That's not to say anything bad about my parents and my family it's just difficult because they are so close to it and it affects them in a different way than it affected Jen. My parents were always there for me and ready and willing to talk, but it was just difficult for me. So Jen has been awesome, in the fact that I felt close enough to her to be able to open up to her, but not too close where I worried about upsetting her and seeing tears like I would in my mom.

Hilary found safe waters with Jen so she could be all who God called her to be. Through their mentored friendship they both wake up daily and live life with deeper meaning than before November 9. They both see how God meant them to be together for His purposes.

Joy and I have both reaped rich rewards. We talk about anything and everything for endless amounts of time. Time stands still when we are together. We send each other little thoughtful notes and gifts, sometimes big and beautiful, sometimes little and meaningful, and everything always appreciated.

What you feed grows, and we both fed and nurtured this outstanding and wonderful friendship. We both put good boundaries around our relationship... boundaries of mutual respect, confidentiality, trust, and understanding of each other's personal needs. I think this was really helpful.

Like good counseling, mentoring doesn't tell you what to do. Rather it offers the framework or principles which will bring about the best possible outcome or results. Mentoring's premise is wisdom which when preceding action means everything will turn out okay. It gives me the confidence to believe it will be alright.

If I give you a fish when you're hungry, you will be filled for the day. If I teach you how to fish, you will eat for life. Joy taught me how to fish, do you mean literally, how to fish? so I could eat for life. If she had always been telling me what to do, I'd only be able to eat for the day.

We've always had a lot of fun being together. Sometimes I wonder if she counts the number of times I've told the same story over again like she does.

I was an open and willing questioner and listener, and Joy was a willing and available counselor and confidant. None of this was in writing. I don't think either one of us was really that conscious about it. It was just a natural consequence of our friendship.

The way Joy listened then and still listens now is a gift passed down to her from her mother. Joy internalized and learned from her mother, that listening feels like love.

Her mother listened to Joy and Joy knew it. If something became a burden in her heart, she knew she could tell her mother without any fear of judgment or condemnation.

Sometimes what we don't say speaks volumes louder than what we do, and her mother had mastered the art of reading between the lines. Listening felt like love to Joy. Oftentimes perception is more important than reality. It has nothing to do with intelligence.

Sometimes our loudest communication is simply the motives of our heart. What happened was not as important as how Joy felt.

"If you tell me about it," her mother would say to her, "No matter what it is, I will not punish you for telling the truth." And little Joy would 'out' with it. She loved talking with her mom, knowing that she was always heard.

Listening is a gift that passed from Joy's mother Ollie to Joy to me. There's nothing like having children that brings out the real you. This came into sharp focus after my 2 daughters were born and would talk with me.

Before I ever knew what Joy's mother told her, I've always told my children they would not get in trouble for telling the truth and they've been good about being honest even when they didn't want to. However, there were times when, as they talked with me, I could sense the walls of my own agenda going up in my mind and their communication couldn't climb over it.

My walls were put there by fear, and taken down by Joy's love and my own 12 step recovery work. Our friendship was such a safe harbor, protected from the tempests of incivility and misunderstanding. "There is no fear in love [dread does not exist], but full-grown (complete, perfect) love turns fear out of doors and expels every trace of terror! For fear brings with it the thought of punishment, and [so] he who is afraid has not reached the full maturity of love [is not yet grown into love's complete perfection]... If anyone says, I love God, and hates (detests, abominates) his brother [in Christ], he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, Whom he has not seen."

1 John 4: 18,20

Growing pain and even healing pain may hurt, but that pain is usually your doorway to healing and it was for me. You just have to be willing. "... uphold me with a willing spirit." Psalm 51:12

I will never forget my friend Lisa who after recuperating from corrective shoulder surgery stopped taking narcotics to ease her intense discomfort. "I can handle the healing pain," she said.

She did and her shoulder works wonderfully. Lisa's words impacted my soul as she shared her strength with me. Just because pain hurts doesn't mean it's harmful. Just as Lewanna handled her pain with so much dignity so have I seen Joy do the same and in our friendship I am learning to do likewise.

When you have a mentor or someone in your path who is successfully well into their journey in life, their wisdom and experience has the potential to catapult you into your place of destiny simply because they have already learned the hard lessons of life and are willing to pass them on to you if you are willing to receive them. According to Joy's perspective, "Lots of people have gone through such crushing things that they don't understand at all. that we know that God has a purpose for it- I don't know what their purpose is, but I know what mine was. And I sometimes say 'God why do I have to walk alone in this? Why can't somebody help me?'

"And He explains to me deep in my spirit, 'This is you and I walking together. Listen to My voice. We are learning to understand and I'm giving you My compassion to touch them.' This sense is in me all the time and it never goes away. It's not like something that was there and is gone. It is alive in my spirit constantly and I thank God for it. There's a lesson learned and I am also learning."

You are probably in relationship with this person because you either consciously or unconsciously recognize and acknowledge you have a lot in common with each other. When you nurture this bond, your own personal growth and mutually met needs will be a natural result of your friendship.

You don't have to take notes on your lessons. What you feed grows. When you communicate, stay in touch, and act on little things your friend says that you know are true, maturing will be a natural process.

Holding on to good relationships is harder than ever given a 63% divorce rate in the Christian church and so many broken, long distance and mobile relationships. The good news is that we can maintain strong, healthy connections with those we hold close to our hearts by such simple nurturing. A little bit goes a long way. When Joy's granddaughter Danielle stopped by to change and refresh before her job, Joy put out her favorite fragrant bath gel next to a clean fluffy towel. It was a sweltering hot day in the Midwest, so Joy left a glass of cold water next to the bed waiting for her. "And whoever gives to one of these little one [in rank or influence] even a cup of cold water because he is My disciple, surely I declare to you, he shall not lose his reward." Matthew 10:42 Making a happy face with the cantaloupe on my children's plates for lunch would prompt a little smile on their face and in their heart. Leaving a loving message on their voicemail now that they're older keeps us connected. Little things mean so much. Even giving a

smile when I don't feel like it.

We all want to be loved and feel like we belong. The need to have these essentials met in good and functional ways will have positive and long lasting results. It is literally the difference between life and death. "... Because you have been faithful and trustworthy in a very little [thing], you shall have authority over ten cities." Luke 19:17

How we act toward people is a pretty good indication of how we feel about God.

When I am being led down a path I did not intend to go, then I know it is God. Proverbs 16:9 Joy wanted to be a psychiatrist. She reached the same end by a different means.

Sometimes we want to be or do something because it is the closest thing we can imagine as being or describing our heart's desire. If we are in God's Will, He will take us to our heart's desire and fulfill our calling so we make the mark and not miss it. If it is not quite what God has in mind for us, He will bring us to our rightful place so long as we keep our rightful place in Him.

Joy's age at this point affords her the luxury of hindsight, which is almost always 20/20. So when Joy speaks, I listen.

When asked recently if she feels a little "out of it" for not keeping up with computers and the exponential explosion of knowledge she replied, "I agree things are in a mode change greater than in any time of history and moving at a rate that is almost frightening. Changes in technology don't mean changes in human nature.

"With all the advantages, also comes more sorrows, problems, heartaches, loneliness, and disconnected families, fostering less and less bonding of human relationships, bringing confusion, crime and despair. This is where we Christians come in. We have the Answer through Jesus Christ – No, I do not feel out of it – I am excited about coming to the kingdom for such a time as this."

As Joy reflected on her years of counseling and the fruit of her ministry, she recalled, "How wonderful it is to sit together with another in counseling and feel the flow of the Holy Spirit opening, enlightening, recovering and setting the captive free.

To see the light shine throughout the saddened face and the whole countenance rejuvenated, and then – in the days, months or years that follow the true destiny of that life being fulfilled." This is what Joy lives for.

You may have a general idea of where you're headed, but none of us knows exactly where we'll be a year from now, let alone one month or even one week. If you could understand, the value of the process would be destroyed. What is important are the lessons you learn and the decisions you make today. "... Today, if you would hear His voice and when you hear it, do not harden your hearts." Hebrews 4:7 Jesus only gives us one day at a time. He said, "Do not worry or be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have worries and anxieties of its own. Sufficient for each day is its own trouble." Matthew 6:34

Joy made learning fun. With her, I always feel great. I never walk away feeling worse. She made it easy for me to learn.

Within the context of our companionship and through her life Joy demonstrated that success is the everyday gradual accomplishment of a worthwhile goal. Good news takes awhile to get around. Bad news travels fast.

We don't hear about the good people the way we hear about the famous, notorious or outstanding people. When we compare their outsides to our insides, we get into trouble.

Then we either get disgusted and give up and feel like a failure- or unless we can be famous, are made to feel that we have not achieved and will never be anything worthwhile. Going this far only addresses the psychological need to feel important, and simply scratches the surface.

No one clearly understands more than Hilary who took her trauma and turned it into a triumph. She let go of her feelings of worthlessness and gave the glory to God for her healing and deep sense of worthiness and well being.

"It's crazy... you know, this horrible thing happened and He provided me with what I needed to get through. I'm doing so much better. You know, there are good days and there are bad days and there are still hard things. But the difference is amazing from right after the rape. After it happened, I originally thought, "Okay, I need to change my platform but I can't do it yet. I need to wait a little bit further in the recovery process.' Well, after a couple of months and working with Jen and really thinking about it, I felt this passion that I needed to be out there making a difference right now to help other rape survivors and just the awareness aspect of it. And I was really praying a lot about it and trying to decide if I should change it or not.

"At church one week and they were doing a message about Queen Esther you know, and the pastor read, 'Who knows that you have come into a royal position for such a time as this?' (Scripture ???) And I just really felt God telling me that now was the time to change the platform. Queen Esther was put in this position of being the wife to the king and she didn't know why. Then she had the opportunity to save all those people. She had the choice to either take that opportunity and run with it or she could have ignored the calling.

"And so it was like God was speaking directly to me saying, 'Look, this happened to you and you were blessed with the Miss Scottsdale title four days after and you have this incredible story that you can reach people with and you should be out there doing it.' And so, it was just kind of like one of those things where I heard the message and I said, 'Okay God, You win, I'm going to do this.'

Hilary understands she isn't great because of what she's done. She is great because of her choices and the decisions she's made in the midst of incredible odds.

We need to go deeper to define our purpose. There is a difference between 'great' and 'famous'. Sometimes someone can be both.

Famous is external recognition for doing something outstanding. Many famous people are not great and often feel miserable inside. Famous may or may not be great, but great is always great.

Outside famous may or may not be inside great. But outside great is always inside great because it starts on the inside. Through our friendship, Joy elicited the best in me, the great in me.

However, there are also great people who never become famous... happy, well-adjusted people who know they are living the life God designed for them. They are the great people. They don't strive for some misplaced desire- to be like some idol of stardom.

The important thing is to embrace your moments of destiny, experience their unfolding that leads to a place

of clarity, deep desire and commitment to your personal fulfillment. Not a cheap imitation of someone else. You have all the God given qualities within you for true greatness.

There is something deep inside of you of greatness... a feeling of greatness. Joy used to think this was just in certain people, but her years of counseling taught her that each person has this- if you really search it out, and no matter what seems to cover it. It only needs to be uncovered, awakened. There is greatness inside of you.

Do you want to go through all your life merely existing? You would not be reading this if you did. We believe there is something deeply crying out within you. This is the feeling of greatness.

This feeling is God's blessing to you that you may become all who He meant you to be. It is the 'X' on the treasure map. Perhaps it may be weak at first, or hidden by circumstances and/or thoughts of discouragement.

Tommy Barnett, Joy's son has pastored one of the largest churches in the nation for 23 years, and recently celebrated his 50th year in ministry. Reflecting on the success of his ministry, "God doesn't call the qualified. He qualifies the called."

How does He do this? Jesus did not transform the men who were to become the spiritual fathers of the N.T. in one single dramatic episode. Jesus mentored His disciples through friendship. When the student is ready, the teacher appears, we learn in recovery. When I am ready and willing, God's Word becomes Rhema. Haven't you ever noticed you can read the same scripture a dozen times and one day it becomes Rhema? It just jumps out at you and becomes alive in your soul. Rhema means to become alive. "It is the Spirit Who gives life [He is the Life-giver]; the flesh conveys no benefit whatever [there is no profit in it]. The words (truths) that I have been speaking to you are spirit and life." John 6:63 The Holy Spirit reveals God's Word to us in our mind and through our senses. He enables others to comfort, counsel, help, intercede and strengthen us. I know when God has used someone to help me in answer to prayer.

"But the Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengthener, Standby), the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name [in My place, to represent Me and act on My behalf], He will teach you all things. And He will cause you to recall (will remind you of, bring to your remembrance) everything I have told you." John 14:26

God called George, God is qualifying him through Holy Spirit inspired revelation and insight. George was a well known pastor and loved and respected in his community. He felt he had friends who cared and even considered some as mentored friendships for different seasons in his life. Although he had what he thought was a strong support system, a growing depression was beginning to take its toll on his marriage, ministry and family. When he turned to some of these friends, he felt let down.

"Men relate differently than women," reflected George. "I would not look at my life and see an individual that fit the role altogether as a mentor, but there have been 3 or 4 men over the years who have been key in pivotal points of course correction. I sought for a year and even tried to find a way of starting or initiating some sort of a group where it would include ministers, where it was safe to be totally and gut wrenchingly honest.

"Finding a group was important where I would be able to talk about fear or doubt or disbelief or anger at God, in a place that was safe enough but with men mature enough in faith and in character not to react. The problem with most men, but certainly anybody in the profession- and in marriage, it seems when a man is asked a question he feels obligated to give an answer. When often what is needed is the ability to

ask the question.

“Men learn the hard way that often when women ask a question they don’t want an answer to. They don’t want to get fixed- they want somebody who will just listen, and vent.

“I have come into a group of 4 people who have the level of spiritual maturity- they all have gone through their own wars and battles and walk with limps. and it’s safe enough to talk about things that are completely off-the-wall and/or straight theology, psychology and science. I believe that I will see this season of my life as one of the most effective mentoring positions because it’s just kind of an incredible experience.

“But I was in the ministry from the time I was in junior high school and there was never really a safe place. A personal mentor was needed then and this may be one of the greatest tragedies of anybody in the professional life. To find that kind of peer connectedness would have filled such a great void.

“I had several people at the end of my public ministry who were struggling just to survive. Many betrayed confidence which was extremely hurtful and contributed to the ministry ending as opposed to something moving onto another dimension. Because I couldn’t find the answers in myself, I couldn’t find it at that point in religious Christian counseling or any other of the standard mores. Since I was a senior pastor of a church it was virtually impossible to find a peer group that I could trust. I hope that it is still not true.”

George went through a terrible time losing his ministry, his marriage and a deep struggle with depression that became a deep dark hole. “Depression to me is related to a feeling of being trapped where I don’t have choices or feel the ability to make decisions.

He continued, “Now that I am keenly aware of this, I will not let myself get in those situations again, because that really is what drove me out of the ministry and direction I had been going in for 45 years, because I felt absolutely trapped without choices. It was unbearable. I have no idea naturally why I didn’t kill myself. The hospitalization was just such a miraculous thing for me, since I really did believe that I was mad at God and that God was mad at me.

God’s Word was revealing Himself Rhema to George. “And you will know the Truth and the Truth will set you free.” John 8:32

“When I woke up to the reality that I wasn’t angry at myself- without justification- and that I really had embraced a whole lot of lies, the fundamental truth remained that has stayed with me is that ‘the truth will set you free.’ And anytime I’m in bondage I realize it’s because I’m believing a lie somewhere, some way. If I’m free, it’s because I’m embracing Truth.

“What triggered me was listening to a minister talk about timing and the saying which I have heard in 12 step recovery, ‘When the student’s ready, the teacher will come.’ It is so true that when you’re ready, the answer seems to come. The Holy Spirit is the Teacher in this particular, well, in every case.”

God prepared George to be ready to receive the Truth, His Rhema Word for George. “These things you can’t handle right now” John Scripture The Living Word became real to George.

“When you hit somebody over the head with Bible informations, your’re not sharing the Gospel. Bible facts and figures and Bible verses is not sharing the Word. George reflected, “Maybe that sounds cynical but it’s got to be living that Word. It’s got to be Life at the time of a person’s need. We have been guilty often of providing Bible bullets when someone needed a hand, I think.

“And it’s our God-awful need to be right and to think that we’ve got the answers to everybody’s problems. It was not necessarily that many of the things Job’s friends said were not accurate. It was just that their words were right, but they were wrong.

George did not make this journey alone. “Sam has been a good friend for a very long time. But I think just the fact that he understood that he was a fellow traveler on this road both religiously and in recovery, gave us a bond. It really was more just him being there, he understood it, he had been there, this was not new territory, there was no judgment.”

Jesus qualified the called through mentoring. He mentored them through friendship.

For 3 \_ years He trudged with them down the dusty roads, over mountains, through valleys, in storm, in want, in every conceivable circumstance. They saw Him minister to all men- the lepers, the demon possessed, the harlots, the ecclesiastical dignitaries.

They saw that He separated Himself from no one- the rich, the poor, the respected, the scorned- whatever their need. By His touch and His teaching Jesus showed Himself to be the Answer. By His friendship and His love Jesus showed Himself to be a wise trusted loyal Advisor.

In all He did and through their connection, He was putting the chosen 12 through a conditioning process. They had the most meaningful relationship imaginable.

They were not just hobnobbing with nice people, the elite, but right out in the hard realistic ruggedness of life being lived daily with Him. They were rubbing shoulders with all of humanity’s woes. It was a real relationship, an authentic jewel.

They were not social climbers. Their climb upward was walking with God and grasping hold of as many possible and taking them with them. How many moments of destiny they must have experienced!

Mentoring happens in families as well as friendships. But just as not all friendships evolve into mentoring, nor do all family relationships evolve into mentoring.

Joy’s husband Herschel was a pastor and one of the best and most beloved. For 44 years he led, guided, nurtured and encouraged his congregation. He loved people.

He had his priorities ordered in integrity. Bringing out the best in people is a blessing both Joy and Herschel passed on to their children, Tommy and Vicki, and their children.

These inbred generational traits with which their offspring were born did NOT ensure the success of Tommy or his descendents. Choosing to act upon these skills in a positive, functional and beneficial way worked on their behalf. The blessing of bringing out the best in people was the result of mentoring because the baton was passed over to the other side by choice.

As Joy and Herschel passed the baton, Tommy took it and ran with it. When Tommy and Marja passed it on to their children, each one of them also took it and ran with it. I haven’t had the pleasure of knowing Vicki personally, but her reputation of a great spirit and wonderful attitude precedes her. Joy passed the baton of forgiveness and positive attitude and loving other people to Vickie.

When raising my 4 children, I’ll never forget asking Tommy before we moved from Phoenix, “How did all your kids not only come out okay, but be so outstanding?”

Tommy was thoughtful for a moment, furrowed his brows as he always does when he's about to say something significant, then honestly and humbly replied, "I am not perfect. In fact, I made a lot of mistakes. But I loved them. Luke, Matthew and Kristie all know that I love them!"

To keep it simple we'll start with Joy and Hershel, but this blessing probably extends way back, and didn't necessarily originate with biological family. From Joy and Hershel, extending to Tommy and Marja and well beyond, I'm just one of the multitudes whose lives have been forever changed for the better as a result of their touch of love.

Like the ripple effect produced by the pebble in the pond, their love and the effects of their love expressed by their commitment to Jesus travels far and wide in distance and time. What a wonderful and priceless legacy!

Trust is one of the most significant ingredients in the friendship Joy and I share. I trust in you. Trust, believe in, put my confidence in is another way of saying, I have faith in you.

The definition of faith is translated from the Greek word meaning to leave it in the care of, lay it all on the line, even to death. Faith is not a struggle- it is a rest- resulting from leaving all in our Heavenly Father's care!

A trusting child leans in confident repose upon the father's shoulder. We lean upon our God, rest, trust in repose upon Him. Petra didn't always trust God. She was a self proclaimed atheist from the time she was 16 until she was 35. She had reason to be. The day she ran away from home, her father knocked her into a bathtub where she cracked the back of her head open. He then pulled her out and held her against a wall by her throat until she passed out. When she came to, she quietly packed a tiny suitcase her grandmother had given her only a week before- while her father stood over her bellowing and telling her she was a whore and a tramp. She quietly walked out the front door.

Petra never said a word- not that she was leaving for good, or she was running away. Nothing. He followed her about 2 miles in silence. That day she walked 18 miles. Her grandmother wouldn't take her in, nor would her boyfriend's parents help. So after spending a night next to a tree in a city park freezing, she walked all the way back home. Her father had locked all the doors which had never been locked before.

So Petra climbed through a window, got a tent, pillow and blanket... then walked all the way back to town again. She did have \$400 saved. She spent the next 6 weeks living with her meager belongings feeling like she belonged nowhere. Yet God knew Petra and kept His eyes on her and was with her even in the dark places. "He made darkness His secret hiding place..." Psalm 18:11

Her boyfriend's parents found out she was pregnant and let her live with them. Her alcoholic parents never tried to look for her even though she continued to attend high school every day. Later her mother told her they 'couldn't find her'. She knew they never tried.

Petra was too afraid of drugs to deal or use them, although she thought about it. As a single parent, there were times they had nothing to eat and no working car. So she walked to work 12 miles round trip. During their lowest moments, Petra noticed an unusual pattern emerging. Some money would come in the mail. She found money blowing down the street. She even found money in the lake. God's Rhema Word was working in Petra's life. "Jesus said to him [Peter], "... go down to the sea and throw in a hook. Take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find there a shekel..." Matthew 17:27 Petra knew she was being taken care of by a Higher Power.

Her defining moment happened one night when Petra was driving very drunk. A state trooper pulled her over, took her license, saw she was in bad shape and said he'd be right back. It was her breaking point and a pivotal point in time. Petra prayed the only way she knew how – "OK, God. You know I think you're bogus and the only way I'm EVER going to believe in You is if You get me out of this, I will believe in You. I can't say I'll go to church or go around blessing everyone all the time, because to me that's just weird. But I will pray, I will change my life around, and I will believe in You."

What happened next was nothing short of a miracle. The state trooper returned to her car and told her there was an emergency down the road and he had to leave. His last words to Petra were, "Take the side street home and slow down."

As the state trooper walked away, he turned around, looked at Petra, winked and said, "God bless you." She cried like a baby all the way home. She had chosen God's way through her own brokenness and willingness and saw God with her. "When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their distress and troubles. The Lord is close to those who are of a broken heart and saves such as are crushed in spirit." Psalm 34: 17,18

Petra now lives each day with greater purpose. She has forgiven her parents and lives to serve others in all she is and does. She lives God's greatness in her. She is learning to trust God.

When our trust is rooted in God, then we can trust others. "The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever leans on, trusts in, and puts his confidence in the Lord is safe and set on high." Proverbs 29:25 This is the kind of trust Joy and I share. It takes work and it's worth it.

In our relationship, Joy showed me that goal and purpose are not the same. A goal is the place at which a race or trip is ended. Purpose is resolution or something one intends to get.

Her goal was to become a psychiatrist. Her purpose was to help hurting people. Whatever the goal is, it will always be based on purpose because purpose is the underlying reason for the goal.

Joy's purpose was to help people. That was why psychiatry was her goal. Her goal ended up changing when she married Hershel and became a pastor's wife, but her purpose was the same. She still desired above all things to help people which she now did in the capacity as a pastor's wife, and probably ended up doing a lot more good.

Purpose and destiny are different, too. Destiny means a pre-determined course of events. While purpose implies intention, destiny implies fate. Joy and I were meant to meet and we intend to stay close always.

Meaning is what is meant or understood as an intended or expressed message. Her meaning for living was and is Jesus. Joy's commitment to follow Jesus meant her destiny was Heaven.

Before Joy and I met, God had already planned how closely our lives would parallel. He prepared us to be able to work together effectively to accomplish His purpose for and through our lives.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God..." Matthew 6:33 clearly states that Jesus must be first. Living for Him strengthens both goal and purpose. We must ask our Heavenly Father to give us the passion of intensity to hold on to this truth that gives meaning to all of life.

Our society is fast paced and goal oriented. While there is nothing inherently wrong with setting goals and

reaching them, letting goals become a priority and a fulfillment in themselves will set you up for disappointment.

Because goals are always changing they were never meant to fill the vacuum in your soul. God created your spirit as a place for Himself. As my trusted friend, Joy pushes me closer to Jesus and I do likewise. How?(Insert Joy tape.)We take great comfort in our relationship but we knew before we met that it's all about God and not us. Maybe that is why it's so meaningful. We knew before we met our lives had great purpose in God. We both love and enjoy Jesus.

Billy Graham's wife shares Joy's favorite thought on this. 'Just give me Jesus.' "I think that's pretty much the answer," declared Joy. "Give me Jesus, and when we have Him in our hearts like you and I do, we constantly point one another in the right direction. That direction is towards Jesus, always."

I tell my children the two things I can count on in life are change and God's love. We will handle change best when rooted in and abiding in God's love. Joy showed me how to abide within the confines of our trusted friendship. Let the change go on, as long as He is my Axle.

Having goals and enjoying reaching them will be most rewarding when premised upon a purpose and destiny and meaning for living that are grounded in God's love. In our friendship, Joy loved me and showed me that Jesus loves me.

What's in it for Joy? I brought her life. I became what she needed. Just as I believe God brought Joy into my life, so Joy believes God brought me into her life. She needed to see me become who God meant me to be. It fulfills God's purpose for her life. It makes her happy! "Behold God is my helper and ally; the Lord is my upholder and is with them who uphold my life." Psalm 54:4 After Hershel died, her sister died and Joy was only getting older. Her fear of becoming insignificant was becoming more real. She saw her life literally being passed on to me and it made her life worth living.

Joy gives God the glory for this. "I became what you needed because God designed it. It was God's grand design. He designed all of the details and knew that He would be glorified and His purposes would be filled in our relationship together. And we understand that."

When you clearly understand your purpose and destiny you will choose goals based on this premise and have the most meaningful fulfillment. Mentoring through a trusted loyal friend and advisor helps you get there.

This is really just a simple message that discourages depression, and encourages everything good you've got going on in your life. We want you to learn to live life like a rag, and squeeze every drop out of it.

There are wonderful incredible relationships all around you just waiting to happen. You only need to show up and be willing. How can we show up when we feel so overwhelmed with endless mundane daily activities and just life in general? Don, a spiritual and professional coach travels world wide for both the corporate world and in ministry. He teaches 5 competencies he has found effective if incorporated in the life you live right now. They will work right now for you if you can identify them in your life. If you feel deficient in one of them, ask the Holy Spirit to give you a willingness to change and to put it in your heart. Regardless of the problems in your life if you can identify the following, they will help you right where you are.

1. The Competency of Purpose: If you find purpose in everything you do, God can use you in that area. You have a unique ability to do things that other people can't do just because you are driven by a need.
2. The Competency of Connection: No matter what you're doing, no matter what's going on- if you have

connections in your life, you will handle crisis better. You will manage and handle life's problems better.

3. The Competency of Perspective: If you have the ability to measure and weigh things in the right assessment of order and responsibility in your life, you will maintain balance and your equilibrium. Let big things be big, and small be small.

4. The Competency of Learning: Learning is the ability to gain understanding or skill in your situation which will enable you to cope, grow and face one-on-one challenges.

5. The Competency of Change: If you have the ability to experience transitions and adapt to your different surroundings you will find more energy to just stay in the present, the here and now and enjoy the moment.

### *Personal Process Assessment*

*~ Joy mentored me through friendship. Friendships happen in many settings and evolve in diverse ways, but a precious few will grow into a mentoring relationship where you either become a wise trusted loyal friend and advisor or the beneficiary of such a friend. How do you see your friendships evolving? Which relationships in your life have you received or given such love and guidance? What are you doing to stay connected to close confidants currently in your life?*

*~ Mentoring is counsel for the calling. It is different than training, coaching, teaching or even parenting. Mentoring provides an essential spirituality necessary for overall growth and maturity. It involves spiritual impetus. Willingness is the contingency clause to defining your life's purpose and keeping it through mentoring. You define it when you're mentored. You hold on to it when you mentor. Mentoring is fun! Are you willing to do whatever it takes to see yourself succeed in your gifts and callings? As a mentor, do you make yourself available.... whenever the call comes? Do you accept the inconvenience of a phone call or interruption to stop what you are doing and accommodate the need?*

*~Destiny=Fate Once you accept Jesus as your Savior and Lord, Heaven is your Destiny.*

*~Purpose=Intent God wants you to wake up each morning with the quiet resolve and determination in your heart to live this day to the fullest no matter what happens.*

*~Meaning=Message God speaks to you through your circumstances throughout the day, every day. What is He saying to you?*

*~Goal=Target It is the place where a project is finished or trip is ended. Goals may change and have different meanings, but your purpose stays constant.*

*~There is a difference between great and famous. Famous is an outside public recognition for accomplishment. Great is an inside understanding and recognition for who we are and living it out. God made us all great- not all famous- but great. Through our trusted friendship Joy showed me how to live great. Do you just want to be famous and fulfill a psychological need or are you living out great- the life God designed for you?*

*~Don's 5 Competencies are a simple effective way to cope with feeling overwhelmed and helping us stay in the present and enjoy each moment. They will work for you right now.*

*1. The Competency of Purpose: Finding purpose in each place in my life so that God can use me in that area.*

*2. The Competency of Connection: When I stay connected to people, I can handle life problems better.*

*3. The Competency of Perspective: The ability to measure and weigh things in the right assessment of order and responsibility in your life.*

*4. The Competency of Learning: At any time in your life, regardless of what you're dealing with, you can learn.*

*5. The Competency of Change: The understanding that something better is waiting for you on the other side.*

*"Speak to broken hearts and you speak to a large audience."*

*Charles Spurgeon*

*"Man looks on the appearance, but God looks on the heart.*

*Man considers the deeds, but God weighs the motives.*

*To be always doing well and to think that you have done but little is the sign of the humble soul. To be unwilling to have any created being for our comfort is a sign of great purity and inward trust."*

*Thomas a Kempis*

*"Be somebody to someone."*

*Mother Theresa*

*"Iron sharpens iron;*

*so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend*

*[to show rage or worthy purpose].*

*Whoever tends the fig tree shall eat its fruit;*

*so he who patiently and faithfully guards and heeds his master*

*shall be honored.*

*As in water face answers to and reflects face,  
so the heart of man to man.”*

*Proverbs 27: 17-19*

*“... and the God [Who is the Source] of every comfort*

*(consolation and encouragement),*

*Who comforts (consoles and encourages) us*

*in every trouble (calamity and affliction), so that we may also*

*be able to comfort (console and encourage)*

*those who are in any kind of trouble or distress,*

*with the comfort (consolation and encouragement)*

*with which we ourselves are comforted*

*(consoled and encouraged) by God.”*

*2 Corinthians 1: 3,4*

