



e-Java Moments

An e-newsletter of the North American Baptist Conference Women's Ministry

May/June 2018

Our journey through *Enjoying Jesus* stops this issue at reflecting and putting into practice the spiritual disciplines of Sabbath and Fasting. These two disciplines are "in conflict with the constant need to 'go' and the hunger for more that permeates our culture." *Enjoying Jesus* page 87

Amber Dowd, Oak Hills Church in Folsom California, creatively shares her thoughts about observing Sabbath.

Jean Ferriera who attends Pittsford Community Church in Pittsford, New York draws our attention to the blessings of Fasting.

May your heart be challenged as you consider how you can incorporate these disciplines into your life.



Setting a Vision for Sabbath

BY AMBER DOWD

An unfamiliar square piece of wood wedged in the wall of my son's closet caught his attention one day. We removed the board and discovered it was a crawl space to a pitch dark attic. A flashlight revealed piles of dusty flattened cardboard, exposed nails, and in my imagination a family of rats. Nothing could convince me to go inside. Meanwhile my son saw beyond the dank creepiness. He envisioned the space's potential as a perfect secret hideout and begged permission to go inside and explore. My husband caught his vision and in they went. Ideas developed, they cleaned out the junk, and from there proceeded to transform the space. Walls were insulated

and finished off. Electricity was brought in for lighting. Old carpet was placed on the floor and even a small foldable couch was squeezed in through the hole. The vision was topped off with a hobbit-style wooden door complete with iron hinges and handle, setting the stage that anyone who enters (and whose knees can handle crawling in) is expected to use their imagination. It created an entirely new kind of space unlike anything else in our house. When it was completed, the first thing my son did inside was lay down and take a nap. And then he played.

Sabbath could be described as a God-designed secret hideout. My son's hideout is technically still part of our house, but it's removed just enough from the tasks, messes and drama of our bustling family to allow for another kind of existence.

Similarly, Sabbath compels us to cease from the work that pulses through us day in and day out to dwell at a different pace with a different intended purpose. It is a soul space dedicated to resting and to playing.

The practice of Sabbath can seem elusive. Work easily becomes all-consuming. But God knows we need more to our life. Practicing Sabbath is the art of cultivating and exploring this more space. God intends through Sabbath that we will experience more joy, more renewal,

...continued on page 3

CONTENTS

- 2 The joy and benefits of fasting
- 2 Last chance for a free copy of *Enjoying Jesus*

- 3 Cameroon Baptist Convention Women Department Girls Hostel Project
- 4 Connecting in NorCal
- 4 Triennial 2018 Women's Luncheon

Shaped
FOR MISSION
Triennial 2018 Edmonton, AB
SAVE THE DATE
July 26-29, 2018



The Joy and Benefits of Fasting

BY JEAN FERRIERA

Fasting for me is asking God to change

something, to overrule a situation for His glory. Then that becomes the main point of my prayer during the fast. During this time, I put aside distractions as I pray, meditate, and memorize Scriptures. I fast for various reasons, such as discerning God's will, guidance, and direction; for breakthroughs and to break strongholds; deliverance from sin; and a closer walk with Him. The Holy Spirit guides and prompts when a fast is necessary. Living under His guidance is natural when spirit-filled.

The joy of fasting has allowed me to experience His presence, power, peace, and healing—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. I've been humbled; had hindrances removed; gained insight into the spiritual realm; and made way for the Holy Spirit and His constant guidance. Above all, my faith has increased.

The Bible provides many examples of fasting, including Daniel and, of course, Jesus. Approximately 30 years ago, due to a crisis, I started fasting, with my longest fast being a 21-day water-only fast. Starting the year with a 21-day Daniel Fast has become the norm for two siblings and me. Eventually, my fasting covered family, friends, and acquaintances. Over the years I've realized it's not about me; it's about God's glory and accomplishing His purposes.

My fast, like my prayer, has changed dramatically. It now reflects John 3:16: "God so loved the world." My fasting covers His global church, nations around the world—including international hot spots like North Korea, Iran, and Syria—blessing Israel, and the lost, locally and globally. Again, when interceding, I use John 3:16 to thank God for and remind Him of the redemptive work of His greatest love gift and sacrifice ever, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

While in the fasted state, I'm alert mentally, mindful of small and large favors, of grace and mercy. Fasting enables me to be keenly aware of Jesus' presence, to look forward to our time together where there is "fullness of joy" (Psalm 16:11).

I have recently completed a three-day water-only fast. It was difficult, but also a time of revelation. On the second day the Holy Spirit revealed the state of my heart toward my unsaved husband. Things surfaced that I was unaware of or ignored.

For the longest time, I struggled with the following Scriptures: "... but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious." (1 Peter 3:4 ESV) "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything ... and the wife must respect her husband." (Ephesians 5:22-24, 33b) God uses my husband to keep me accountable and humble. Regrettably, I often misrepresent



God to him, but the revelation didn't result in brokenness or contriteness immediately. Hunger, pride, and irritability kept getting in the way. I continued fasting and ensured what the Holy Spirit revealed was addressed to the best of my ability.

During this fast the Holy Spirit not only revealed my spiritual condition, but allowed a breakthrough. What I was powerless to deal with, He handled. What a comfort and relief knowing that my moment-by-moment sins are forgiven. John tells us, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9 ESV)

Because of the joy and benefits associated with fasting, it is my desire to be in a fasted state daily. I accomplish this using intermittent fasting. I eat during a window of six to eight hours, thus I'm in a fasted state for 16 to 18 hours daily. Not having to prepare and eat breakfast frees me to spend more time in His presence.

Thankfully, I'm a work in progress. With His new creating power, the Holy Spirit is constantly working to conform and transform me to be more like the servant part of Jesus. My birth verse reminds me of this: "being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1:6 NIV)

May my fasting story encourage and motivate many of you to utilize this precious discipline. I pray the Holy Spirit overwhelms you with His grace, power, and guidance as you start your fasting journey.

LAST CHANCE for 1 free copy of ENJOYING JESUS

You must be a woman involved in women's ministry in a North American Baptist Conference Church.



Email Heather Senges
hsenges@telus.net

Please include your address, phone number and church affiliation

Cameroon Baptist Convention Women Department Girls Hostel Project

Fabiola Campos, Janie Holley and Jean Ewing were introduced to this important project last July when they were a part of the CBC Women's Ministry Department 60th anniversary celebration. Construction has begun in Bamenda, Northwest Cameroon.

The CBCWD felt the need to provide convenient and safe accommodations for young women 18-35 years old who come to Bamenda from different CBC



Artist's drawing of the finished project



Hostel foundation



Women praying at the project

churches and communities. The safety and security of women is essential to ensuring their success in career and academic pursuits. A serious challenge faces many parents in finding a place that will ensure the security, moral and spiritual health when they daughters leave home.

The hostel will provide self-contained, single sleeping rooms

at affordable rates, a chaplaincy service for spiritual and psycho-social counseling, a provision shop for basic needs, an enclosed fence and security for the women. It is strategically located along the main entry route into Bamenda. The area is surrounded by a number of higher institutions of learning and is mainly a student's residential area.

Fabiola, Janie and Jean were and continue to be blessed by the commitment of the Cameroonian women to humanitarian activities, carrying out projects at church, association, field and national levels to meet needs of women, sponsoring Home Economic Centers, Girl's Hostels and preparing study materials for the women of Cameroon.

...from cover

and most importantly, more fellowship with Him in the midst of our creative and hard-working lives.

After the important step of setting a regular life rhythm for Sabbath has been done, spend time thinking about how you want the time to be shaped. Maybe ask yourself a question like, "Will this activity I'm considering be life-giving to my body, mind and soul?" If the answer is yes, then it is probably a great Sabbath activity. Sabbath gives permission to entertain the fun ideas. If you like more practical examples, maybe start with ideas such as long walks, long naps, leisurely drives, hobby time, quiet time, friend time... you get the picture. Then during your Sabbath time notice what

God does to your body, mind and soul as you do the activities you chose for that day. And even ask God to expand your vision for Sabbath - what more might He have for you? I wonder if it will become more than you had even imagined in the first place. He is our imaginative heavenly Father and Sabbath is a gift he has designed for us!

As Sabbath sets into life it becomes like the little hobbit door in my son's closet. It's a place of invitation and we always know it's there for us to enter in. The joy and renewal of practicing Sabbath will hopefully infuse back into the hustle and bustle, bringing life, imagination and perspective of God's presence into our work that wasn't otherwise present. So are you ready set a vision and get building?



CONNECTING IN NORCAL

We are made to live connected—to God and to each other. The NAB Women's Leadership Team is in the process of refreshing our focus, our look and our future. In order to be in touch with the women of the NAB family we felt it necessary to connect with you face to face to hear your stories, become aware of your needs and to help women in each region/association connect with each other.

On April 18 we sat down with 15 women representing 8 churches in the NorCal Association. Over a luncheon provided by our team, we heard these women share their heart for women,

their stories of how they are reaching the women in their churches, and their dreams for the future of their ministry.

What insights, thoughts, needs did the women of NorCal share?

- This group of women would like to see more leadership team connection where they would find support from other women in WM, and discover more resources for their ministry.
- They would love to compare notes by hearing stories of practical things to do.

- They agreed that women are hungry for the word of God and desire content filled experiences of connection.
- A speaker resource portal would be helpful where speakers have been vetted before being recommended (cost of their services should be included).
- Lastly these women are desiring a greater NorCal women's gathering—a family reunion of the women in the association.

We would love to see this happen in the other 11 NAB regions/associations. We want to connect with you to hear your stories and understand your needs.

Women's Luncheon

June 25 is the final day to register for the Women's Luncheon. You won't want to miss a time of connecting with other women of the NAB family, being inspired by Heather Hayashi and Debbie Mueller (potter) our team of speakers, and enjoying a delicious lunch.

Friday, July 27 at 12:15pm at the Westin Edmonton
Our theme is "Clay in the Potter's Hand"

"Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand."

— Isaiah 64:8

What a beautiful illustration—we are the clay in the hands of our master potter. God is constantly shaping and molding us. He knows what He wants His finished product to be and to look like. He created each of us with a purpose and just like the clay, we are to surrender to Him so that we can be shaped into vessels to be used by Him.

Register for the Triennial at nabconference.org Click on Triennial.



Heather Hayashi is a reader, writer, lover of coffee and curious about many things. She and her husband Randy live in Edmonton, AB and have two young adult sons. She is a graduate from Taylor Seminary with a Master of

Theological Studies Degree and received her training as a spiritual director from Urban Sanctuary. She is the author of 31 Days of Christmas, Pray Any Way and is currently working on a third book. Heather lives with chronic illness and pain and has come to love God deeply through this experience. It is from this ongoing need to surrender her will to God that she is honoured to write and speak about His goodness and grace!



Debbie Mueller has a passion for a deep relationship with God and for walking alongside others with a similar heart. She has been a mentor and friend to women in Africa, Guatemala, Fiji and here in North America. In

addition to being a wife and mother Debbie has been in leadership in Youth With A Mission and local churches in Canada and the United States. For the past 12 years she has worked as a ceramicist.

CONNECT WITH US

North American Baptist Conference

1219 Pleasant Grove Blvd. Roseville, CA 95678



wm.nabc@gmail.com
www.nabconference.org