

May 2020

THE SPICE

A taste of what's happening for women.

*Women's Ministry Mission Statement:
Encouraging women to connect in
deeper, genuine relationships
both with each other
and with Jesus Christ*

Internal Plantings by Doris Diener

Several years ago, Larry bought bean seeds to plant in our tiny garden. The little bean shoots reached up through the soil as healthy plants ready for a full life. As they continued to grow, he noticed that some were looking different than the regular beans we always planted. Intermingled with the regular bush beans were some plants which had no intention of being confined to bush bean status, but desired to climb much higher. If you were assessing this situation, your conclusion would be:



- ___ 1. Some plants were healthier than others.
- ___ 2. Some plants have bigger dreams than others.
- ___ 3. The seeds in the bag got into an argument and they decided to polarize and part ways.
- ___ 4. The seeds in the bag were mixed varieties.
- ___ 5. This unidentified phenomenon requires an investigation.
- ___ 6. Other: _____

Our agrarian experience leaves no doubt that what we plant is what we will harvest. There are seasons for planting, new birth, nurturing, fruit-bearing, and returning to the soil. We are confident of nature's way without worrying that our beet seeds will produce a crop of strawberries or our zucchini seeds will produce watermelon.

The point is this: We reap what we sow. Regardless of the packaging or disguises, this truth remains intact.

These same concepts sometimes slip through our fingers when it comes to the seeds we plant in our minds and hearts. We justify entertaining a bit of gossip, a bit of lust, a bit of indulgent imagination, a bit of bad language, a bit of criticism, a bit of selfishness, a few off-color movies, et cetera, with the assumption that a little bit really doesn't matter that much. While we wouldn't consider mixing the seeds before we plant them in straight rows this spring, we routinely justify planting a seed of less-than-honorable influence, another seed or two (or ten...) of yielding to temptation, gradually conforming to that which surrounds us.

Why hasn't the Life-giving, delightful news of Jesus been more contagious? Why aren't we drawing more people to Him and into His kingdom? Might it be that the outgrowth of my life and yours which we offer to our community is not all that attractive or offering anything different than the norm? While I would hope that there is no truth in that suggestion for you, I must own my guilt of seed-mixing in my testimony, impairing the harvest God desires from me.

May the seeds we plant this spring be sorted well as we choose carefully what we plant in our minds and hearts. May we choose to plant only seeds that are produced in the heart of Jesus. Imagine the beauty of the harvest! "I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting" (John 4:35 NRSV).

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Making Connections Meet **Savannah Stitt**:

My Discipleship Training School with YWAM was so surreal. I cannot believe how blessed I was to spend those sweet two months in my dream country, surrounded by people who became like family and experiencing the love of God in such a deep and intimate way.

I lived with 52 other students and staff in the "Wavey," previously a youth hostel, on the Sunshine Coast in Australia. We all became like one big family and the atmosphere that was cultivated was one of communion, celebration, and worship. My time there was short, but so evidently blessed by the hand of God. Every week, Monday through Thursday, we had morning lectures, and free time in the afternoons. On Fridays, we had fun organized activities as well as ministry. My ministry was called, "Eat, Pray, Love." We would make a meal for people living at a trailer park, and sit and talk with them while they ate. This opened up opportunities to pray for them and share the gospel. On the weekends we were usually catching up on our homework, as well as having movie nights, going to the farmers market, and trying new recipes, including kangaroo burgers. Some of my favorite memories were making tortillas for taco night from scratch, holding a koala, going to Fraser Island, and having worship under the stars.

For each week of lectures, someone would come to speak on a different topic from their personal experience and biblical perspective. Some of the topics included: Character and Nature of God, Hearing God's Voice, The Father Heart of God, and Prayer. The teachers were all so fun and engaging, and I learned so much from each of them.

Father Heart of God week was one of my favorites. I saw so clearly how God sees me and was given a new identity in Him. I came out of that week with a deeper more intimate understanding of the heart of God, and his unexplainable love towards me.

Prayer week was utterly flooded by the goodness of God and His presence, and I cannot say enough about how incredible it was. Two things that impacted me the most from that week were realizing I was created for worship and to sit at the feet of Jesus and choose what is better, and learning how much power there is in the name of Jesus and the authority we carry through the Holy Spirit. That week was filled with prayer sessions and so many holy moments. I have never before seen the Spirit move so powerfully or felt the presence of God so intimately.

There are two things I was really impacted by during my DTS. The first is that Jesus didn't just die on the cross to conquer sin and death. He died to conquer loneliness, addiction, false identity, fear and so much more! These are not things we just have to deal with because "it's life." Jesus came to give us life and have it abundantly! The second is what repentance truly is. It is not striving to get your life back together. It is a joyful response of adoration for our Savior, saying we don't want this sin in our lives separating us anymore. And we are not left to fix ourselves by our own power. Jesus meets us where we are and patiently walks with us through it.

Thank you Jesus for your overwhelming faithfulness poured out over these two months. Thank you Jesus for all the laughter, hugs, and memories shared that will forever hold a special place in my heart. And because my trip ended much sooner than I expected, thank you Jesus for being bigger than my expectations.



Making Connections, continued

For several years I knew that I wanted to take a gap year. My name is **Laura Bergey**, the youngest daughter of Dale and Tricia Bergey, and I graduated from Dock Mennonite Academy last June. These first five months of 2020 were months that I had looked forward to intentionally dedicating to the Lord to build a firm foundation in Him and see His hand at work. Those five months turned into just two, and it's been strange mourning the loss of more memories, relationships, and growth that I missed out on. But in the eight weeks that I was blessed to live in Toowoomba, Australia with YWAM (Youth With A Mission), I learned so much and I will cherish the memories that I made with the family created there.

In YWAM I was in a Discipleship Training School (DTS) that was focused on Music & Worship. I enjoyed learning more about how to effectively lead worship. Every week we also had incredible speakers come to talk on different topics. Some of my favorites were Character and Nature of God, Identity, and Evangelism. Evangelism week was the most stretching, but so rewarding. That week we spent our mornings visiting refugee families from Iraq. Our purpose was just to show God's love through visiting since they rarely experience kindness from people around them. Verbal communication was very limited, but my group got to pray over the people we visited and share some scripture in Arabic. That week we also went to the mall one night and evangelized. This was one of the most exciting and joy filled nights as I challenged myself to start conversations with strangers and pray over them. We have been called to share the gospel, and I want to continue stretching myself to do this wherever I go.

A meaningful verse for me throughout my time in YWAM was 2 Corinthians 3:17. "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." Before leaving for Australia this verse was heavy on my heart as I prayed for the chains of fears and anxieties to be broken off of me. While in YWAM I continued to pray for this and I am still waiting for that complete healing, but I know that there is power in Jesus' name and He offers so much freedom. There were moments of worship when I felt fears wash off me as I tangibly experienced freedom in His presence. This verse took on more meaning as I was reminded of the true freedom that we have from sins. It can be hard to believe that we are forgiven when we have done nothing to earn it, but that is what



makes God's grace so meaningful! I also realized that our relationship with God is not one that is meant to be full of striving. Instead of working hard to do everything right and "impress" God with what we do, He just wants us to love Him and feel the freedom that comes with a relationship with Him. Let us step into freedom in the Spirit and share with others the good news of what is available for them too!

May

A Taste of What's Happening for Women

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	
					1	2	
<div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black;"> Due to COVID-19 restrictions, all Women's Ministry events and activities have been canceled for the month of May. </div>							
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
10	<div style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid black;"> We encourage you to stay connected to our church family and use this time to continue to grow in your faith. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in ZOOM meetings Join the Bible Memory group (contact Carol at franconiawomen@gmail.com) Check out personal Bible study options on RightNow Media Spend extra time in prayer Reach out with notes and phone calls to those who are isolated, especially those at retirement homes Be generous with your resources as you are able Stay safe and have a good month with your families! </div>					16	
<i>Mother's Day</i>						17	23
24						25	26
31	 Memorial Day						

Contact for more information

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