

LAKWOOD PARK WOMEN'S MINISTRY

SPRING Newsletter ~ 2017

Down the Rabbit Hole

By Kathy Smith

Three shades of gray came across my day asking me come and follow. You see, in my mind's eye these little guys look a bit like rabbits, but truth be told they're really my sinful habits, asking me come and follow. They dash and dare upon and round my heart. They jump and run and skitter. Begging me, come hither. Calling now - come and hold us dear. Oh, just draw us close, draw us near. Your anger, your depression, your consuming fear....come follow us down the hole, come follow us to soothe your soul. For we will allow you - to hide down there. You won't even care. Or even be aware of all that is falling apart. So come along now and give us your heart.

So as I ran stumbling about to fall, I heard a whisper, I heard a call. Oh my dear one you must not run. For hurt it will only give you. You know you have a choice. Be still and hear my voice. You no longer need to hide in a hole. For it is I, who saved your soul. And I truly do care. And am always aware of all that is falling apart. So come along now and give me all your heart. For I will draw near. There is nothing to fear. For you are forever mine. I will soothe your wounded soul and will make you whole. I am asking you come and follow.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

March 29 ~ Women's Bible Study
9am and 6:30pm ~ testimonials

April 12 ~ Fill the Freezer
bring in ingredients April 9
cook and freeze 5- 8pm

April 17 & May 1 ~ MOPS
9am room 131



Alaska...it's like a little piece of home that's tucked far away on another coast. I left a piece of my heart there and I cannot wait to go back and visit! In bringing Alaska back to Indiana, I brought friendships with some of the native women that are unbearably precious. I communicate regularly with Bonnie Gregory, who has a horrific past but takes a palpable joy in God and in serving Him through sharing her story. I messenger with Anna Whalin, a beautiful women who has lost two of her four adult children to addiction and illness, but still manages to travel all over and praise God through the midst of it all. (She's also rather ornery, which is also why I like her.) The Holy Spirit was with us there and He is with us here, binding our hearts together through honesty and faith. I am trying to be more transparent with my walk and my faith, to acknowledge that God is my source of hope, joy, and strength, and to be honest when I struggle. These women have taught me that there is joy and honor when the struggle is for Christ. They never give up



because they *know* Christ is on their side... I hope to grow up to be just like them someday.



By CHERRIE WELLS

THE TRUTH ABOUT LIES by CJ EATON

If you have ever heard two eye witness accounts of the same event, you might have difficulty figuring out the facts in the situation. Everyone has a different viewpoint and ability to remember what they saw or heard, so putting together an accurate record can be complicated. It only gets more complicated when emotions are involved, particularly if those reporting have something to gain or lose from the outcome.

I can't even remember how many times I've heard statements like, "truth is relative" or "this is my version of reality". This implies that facts change based on what we choose to believe. Everyone does have their own perception of truth but that doesn't change what the facts are, only how we interpret them. We believe the way we do based on our emotions, attitudes, history, and current circumstances. And sometimes we may just feel the need to be right, regardless of the truth.

Perhaps we are so convinced that what we believe is truly accurate because we really can't stand the idea that we may have a faulty memory, or could be easily deceived. The truth is we are all being deceived everyday by the greatest liar there has ever been. I am astounded and mortified at the number of times, and the various ways, I have bought into the lies that Satan tells. Some of them can be so hard to recognize as lies because they tend to make me feel comfortable. And accepting the truth means I need to change, which is rarely a comfortable process.

The ability to discern truth from lies has not always been one of my strengths, unfortunately. And this is becoming more and more obvious as I delve into God's Word. There are countless lies and half-truths that we, as women who follow Christ, have been fed and have believed. It is lowering to realize that as much as I love following Christ and learning more about who He is, it's still too easy to get caught up in the deception that is so prevalent in our world. Deception that is completely rooted in Satan's agenda and designed to pull us away from the future God has planned for us. We have the responsibility to live as He teaches, to make choices that honor His sacrifice, to put our own agendas aside so we give Him room to work in our lives. This means owning up to our mistakes and allowing Him to cleanse us so we don't keep dragging our dirty pasts down the path of His truth.

Some of his lies have a lot more impact on me than others. Some I have believed without realizing they are lies and contradict God's Word. One of these that caused me to struggle most is that I'm "entitled" to have what I want because of how difficult my past was. When I think about this, the hard circumstances, the troubles, the trials and how all of those have affected me, it gives Satan the opportunity to whisper lies to me. Lies such as, "it's not your fault that you don't have a strong self-esteem – you've been damaged", or "it's perfectly justifiable to indulge in whatever makes you feel better", or my all-time favorite, "you deserve to be happy after all the pain and hardship you've endured". While I can't deny my past I can choose how I allow it to affect my future.

There is not one single thing that any of us have been through that Jesus can't resolve into a blessing for us or glory for Him. But we have the responsibility to live as He teaches, to make choices that honor His sacrifice, to put our own agendas aside so we give Him room to work in our lives. This means owning up to our mistakes and allowing Him to cleanse us so we don't keep dragging our dirty pasts down the path of His truth.

Satan tells us lies and the world reinforces them. Satan creeps into our thoughts providing us the opportunity to doubt what Scripture tells us is true. There is a seductive, or as a friend of mine called it, "beguiling" quality to how Satan approaches us with his lies. When he exerts his influence to tempt us into sin, he can make it seem so appealing and even justifiable. He sets us up to think that we deserve to have whatever the desired outcome of the sinful act is and that any possible negative consequences are minimal and not worth considering.

This is one of the biggest lies Satan tells us. The consequences of allowing ourselves to wallow in the deceitfulness of Satan can be enormous. It could be the difference between growing into a willing servant of the Lord or living a joyless, empty existence. It could be the difference between pointing a non-believer to Jesus or allowing them to live in ignorance and never know His saving grace.

The truth is that our actions and our choices are determined by what we believe. Do we live like we believe God's truth or as though we accept Satan's deception? Do we choose to hold fast to God's promises and trust in His truth, no matter what the world tells us to believe? There is beauty in submitting to the Lord and the blessings we gain have no comparison to the shallow and temporary benefit of Satan's "feel-good" lies. We all have the option of leaving a legacy that either accommodates the world and what Satan wants or glorifies the Almighty God by throwing off the lies and living boldly in the truth of His Word.

...a time to be born,
And a time to die;
A time to plant,
And a time to pluck what is planted;
A time to kill,
And a time to heal;
A time to break down,
And a time to build up;
A time to weep,
And a time to laugh;
A time to mourn,
And a time to dance;
A time to cast away stones,
And a time to gather stones;
A time to embrace,
And a time to refrain from embracing;
A time to gain,
And a time to lose;
A time to keep,
And a time to throw away;
A time to tear,
And a time to sew;
A time to keep silence,
And a time to speak;
A time to love,
And a time to hate;
A time of war,
And a time of peace.

Ecclesiastes 3:2-8

FALL WOMEN'S MINISTRY RETREAT

COMING OCTOBER 6-8

SAVE the DATE!

I challenge you to ponder on Ecclesiastes 3:2-8. They are familiar words, and so it is easy to skim over quickly without giving them much thought. (I know I have!) At our fall retreat, we will look at seasons that we as women experience, putting our focus on our Lord, our Creator, our God and see HIM right there with us. Begin now to prepare your hearts for this opportunity to be challenged as we will break away from our normal routine of life and look at God in a way you may never have seen Him before in your current season.

I am so excited to see all God has in store for us this year at the retreat and in the months leading up to it. Believe me, He's already doing AMAZING things and proving Himself forever FAITHFUL! More news will be coming to you with each passing month and season~ for now, SAVE THE DATE!

TARA ROY ~ Retreat Coordinator