

Women in Focus June 2008 Devotional

Focusing In . . .

I read recently (it might have been in *The Shack* which is a great read) that we need more verbs in our lives and less nouns. The one example given was that of expectations. Whenever we have expectations – certain fixed objectives – whether it is in relationships, or work outcomes or vacation plans, too often we limit the outcome by those very expectations. When I place expectations on my children, they feel the weight of responsibility to not disappoint and more often than not, that weight impedes rather than motivates.

However, if I live with expectancy in my relationships I have no preconceived outcome but rather I enter into the anticipation of what may come. With that in mind, I am able to participate in the lives of my two girls with great expectancy at their potential to love and live an abundant life, with no expectation of what that might look like. Expectancy is so exciting and freeing, whereas expectations seem burdensome and binding. Similarly in my relationship with a living, vibrant God who always surprises; to live expectantly can only be a joy-filled journey of what will happen next with Love at the center. Placing expectations of what God could and should do simply close my eyes and heart to all that He is doing around me.

There are a few more nouns that should be rendered more often as verbs. Consider faith, hope and love. What if we refused to claim these three as possessions to grasp and instead viewed them as actions to be carried out. I really don't know what quantity of faith I might possess – smaller than any mustard seed, to be sure. But daily, I am faithing out my life, trying to be sure of what I'm hoping for and certain of things I can't see. Some days, I faith it better than others!

We hold to the hope found in Christ but I see that as Christ's possession that he is holding for me in good keeping rather than my personal hope for me. My calling is to join in the mission of bringing Christ's hope to fruition. By my hoping that God's will is done here on earth, I am participating in making that hope a reality.

The greatest of these three is love and beyond any doubt love is not a noun but an active verb of daily loving our neighbors as well as ourselves, our spouses as well as our friends, our enemies as well as our allies; and our God above all others. When I sign a letter, instead of saying "I love you", sometime I will write, "loving you" because it reminds me that the love I have isn't a fixed quantity but a growing, dynamic discovery of delight in my beloved. Love must always be active and never static.

So, as you come into the summer season, I pray it is full of all kinds of God's verbs and you have an absolute blast living them out!

By Grace Alone
Faye Reynolds
Director of Women's Ministries
Women in Focus, CBWC

Women in Focus
June 2008 Devotional