



## Showing Up With Christ

*“My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in who are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Col. 2:3*

### Embracing His Call

So, what do you do, Jill? As I stepped into this ministry a few years ago, I often found myself struggling with pride wanting to come up with a sweet sounding title that made me sound legitimate or at least somewhat impressive. Today, answering this question still can be a bit awkward but I usually end up answering this question by saying that I spend my time sitting and talking with women every day. I have found that describing my ministry this way usually prompts more questions that allow me to share what is happening as I “show up with Christ” in the lives of women. Many times I am able to share some of the incredible things the Lord is doing in the lives of the women I meet with that really speak of God’s love, power and faithfulness. The following was written by one of the women I’ve been meeting with.

*When I first started meeting with Jill, my second marriage was in complete breakdown. I had watched Jill go through a similar situation, and somehow, she was not only surviving, but thriving.*

*I called her and asked her “how did you do that?” She very humble and gently told me that she lived her life completely dependent on God, and that is how she had the strength I was looking for. Jill and I started meeting for lunch. I told her I wasn’t even sure if I believed in Jesus, and if we were going to meet, I had to know I was safe to share everything, even these doubts. Jill met me where I was, assured me I was safe, and allowed me to share everything that was in my heart. We took it very slow, and she just stayed with me at whatever level I was. During that time, God was getting a hold of my heart, and he was using Jill as a human expression of His love. Jill used to say “I got nothing”, and I would get irritated with her and tell her how great she was (which she is!!!). Now I see what she meant was, without God, I would never have the capacity to listen and love like this. God is now completely in charge of my life and my journey continues with Jill as she disciples me to deeper and deeper levels of love and connection with the God of the Universe.*

Stories like this one continue to help me embrace this work the God has called me to as I daily get to watch him at work. I am so grateful to those who pray for this ministry and for those who give financial support that affords me the time to meet with these women.



### God's Economy 101...

#### Embracing Dependency

The re-education of Jill is in full swing as I find myself immersed in a course I hadn’t realized I’d signed up for. One thing I’m learning in this life is that our Father’s economy is nothing like the world’s economy. In fact, God’s economy turns this world’s value system upside down and requires that trusting God must be the foundation for my life. He’s asked me to stop looking for my security in things I can provide or store up for my future and begin to spend the new currency called “trusting God”. Living in this economy is definitely challenging but its reward is a life lived without worry and fear as I rest in his promise to provide for my needs. I still occasionally forget and use the old currency as I listen to that “practical and oh so reasonable voice” that tells me to take stock of things just to make sure my life is secure. It sounds like a good

plan but it doesn't deliver the peace that it promises. Instead, I am quickly assaulted by fear and worry telling me that what I have will not be enough. The only hope of having the peace and rest I'm looking for comes from trusting God for all my needs. I am also learning the wonderful freedom that comes as I live in each day, leaving the future in His hands.



1 Chronicles 21 really sheds light on this struggle as it tells about Satan prompting David to take a census to count the number of men in his army. Satan knew that if David agreed to take the census, he would begin to trust in the size of his army instead of trusting in God to protect and defend him. I wrestle with the same temptation as I consider taking a census of my finances in an effort to determine my "security". God recently used this story of David to clearly warn me about the dangers of trusting in the wrong things for this life. His love for me continues to call me into a life that trusts Him alone, inviting me to accept his offer of peace and freedom. It's quite the challenging class but I'm pretty sure that God's willing to help me with the homework.

### *Embracing God's plan in Africa*

For the past few months I have been planning to return to Liberia with a team to work with a Liberian pastor and his wife. We had many plans for ministry there but as we struggled to fund the trip we found ourselves asking God if we were following His plan. As we prayed we were convicted that we were not truly being servants and allowing the Liberian pastor lead and direct us. We have come face to face with our American "can do" mentality and recognize the cycle of dependence it fosters in missions around the world. As we looked into this mirror we decided it was time to take a step back and asked the Liberian pastor to give us specific direction and share his vision for our involvement in his ministry. We've had to ask for his forgiveness for running ahead with our plans for ministry in Liberia and have re-

committed ourselves to serve how and where God leads us, whether that is from here in the States or over there.

While saddened that I won't be returning to Liberia this spring, I have a deep sense of gratitude that God had rescued us from ourselves and the smallness of our own plans. It's only as we surrender to His plan that we have the abundance our hearts are yearning for.

A few days following this re-direct in Liberia, I received an invitation from a missionary family serving in Uganda where they are caring for over 100 orphans. They have asked me to come, believing that my time there would encourage and support them in their ministry. This family is dear to me and I am so excited to be asked to come along side them as they care for these children. I was able to visit this same orphanage about 4 years ago so this trip will also allow me to re-connect with many of the kids living there. What a wonderful "invitation" to receive so quickly after hearing from God that we need to wait for an invitation in Liberia. I will be spending a month in Uganda and will return April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Please be praying that the Lord will allow me to be a blessing during my visit there.



If you would like to partner with me in this ministry to women and Africa, support can be sent to:

The Table  
PO Box 17355  
Portland, OR 97217-0355  
Note "Jill Van Gordon" on support

***Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."***