



Sisters in the Spirit Ministries Newsletter

Empowerment for the Christian Woman

DON'T PUT God ON SUMMER Vacation

**By Rev. Dr. Katrina
White Brown**

Ah yes - it's those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer. The lyrics of a George Gershwin's song describe it as a time "when the living is easy." Summertime is often considered the best time of the year because of the long days of sunshine; summer ice cream parlors; school is out; going to the pool and the beach; summer festivals and outdoor concerts; vacations; grilling; summer sports; the liveliness of nature; and the list goes on. But while we are extolling it's virtues, remember that the Lord does not take a break; don't put God on summer vacation.

Unfortunately, God has a lot to compete with during the summer. Many Christians take a break from attending worship services, giving tithes and offerings, from maintaining an active prayer life, and from reading and studying their Bibles. When we put God on summer vacation, we risk giving Satan an open invitation to visit, not only for the summer, but also to stay for every other season of the year. The enemy doesn't take a break from his relentless attack on your spirit. Don't put God on summer vacation!

Of course making summer vacation plans is exciting, but keep God in the forefront. By using the acronym PRAY, you can be sure to include God in every aspect of your vacation

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20 SECONDS OF PRAISE



Health officials recommend washing your hands frequently for a minimum of 20 seconds as a primary defense against germs. You can time this by singing a chorus of:

Nobody Greater Than You by Vashawn Mitchell

Searched all over couldn't find
nobody
I looked high and low still couldn't
find nobody
Nobody greater, nobody greater no,
no nobody greater than you
Searched all over couldn't find
nobody
I looked high and low still couldn't
find nobody
Nobody greater, nobody greater no,
no nobody greater than you

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Sisters in the Spirit is an outreach ministry created to empower Christian women in better serving the Lord. We are here to help "equip God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ..."

Ephesians 4:12



Sisters, every one of us has scars, whether or not you realize it. And particularly as Christian women, none of us has ever been able to live the life of a believer without being wounded. We all wear scars. Some are more visible than others, but every scar is important because it tells a story. The physical scars could be the reminder of your first serious childhood boo-boo, or the mark of recovery from a disease or illness. Embedded within every scar is a life story. The scars on the arms of an addict tell a different story than the scars on a breast cancer survivor. The scars on the wrist of a cutter tell a different story than the c-section scar on a mother holding her newborn.

All scars tell a story of pain, joy, heartache, or hope, just like the scars that Jesus wore. His scars healed, but they were always evident. Our scars also heal, but we should never be ashamed of them. Scars are proof that we have gone through battles and have overcome. They are reminders that life can be hard sometimes, and we can get kicked around, knocked down, and beaten up in the process. But those wounds that we experience will eventually close up. Some become barely visible; others remain screaming reminders of a very difficult time in our lives. But your scars mean that you are still living and have persevered. Your body has healed and you are in, or about to enter, a new chapter of your life.

Think about your scars in a different way, especially the emotional ones. Even though they don't heal as easily or as quickly as the physical scars, so much can be learned by those wounds if you allow yourself to acknowledge them, learn to forgive who caused them, and work through that pain that was caused with God's help.

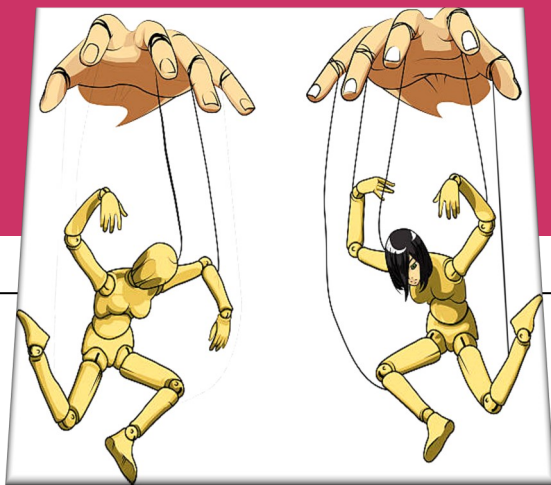
Then, think about Jesus' scars. Here is a man who suffered a horrific death to give us life. His scars were the result of the sins of the world. He had nails driven into his hands, and feet, and a sword pierced side. On the third day after His crucifixion He rose again and appeared to the disciples. They were afraid and initially doubted that who they were seeing was truly Jesus, so to prove His identity He showed them His scars.

Jesus was proud of His scars. They were not only reminders of His pain and suffering, but more importantly, proof of His victory over death. They were an important part of His story, and my Sisters, the scars we wear are an important of our story.

Acknowledging the pain that caused your scars is an important part of your healing process. The scars we wear have a purpose and a deeper meaning in our lives besides identifying us being wounded. My prayer for you my Sisters is that you look at your scars, and see them the way that the Lord does. Then you'll see yourself, not as a flawed human being, but as a beautiful and loved overcomer.

Love, Peace, and Blessings Always,

Katrina W. Brown



DO YOU ALWAYS NEED TO BE IN CONTROL???

TAKE THE QUIZ

In your Christian heart you know that GOD IS IN CONTROL. But the dialogue in your head says something completely different. In that head conversation, you tell ourselves that being diligent and persistent is paramount for getting things done. And, you convince yourself that open-mindedness and willingness to consider all points of view can lead to becoming indecisive and wishy-washy. But when you become super-organized; demanding in your decisiveness; and you adopt an "it's my way or the highway" attitude, you've taken it too far. It's quite possible that you could be a control freak?

Christian control freaks refuse to "let go and let God." They have a tendency to depend on their own ideas and understanding as Plan A. When it doesn't work out however, they turn to God as Plan B.

Understand that there is no Godly way to be a control freak. Although we should always strive to be more like Jesus, we should never strive to be God. Control issues often manifests as a result of fears, insecurity, anger, unresolved hurt or disappointment, and lack of trust. For some, being in control elevates their comfort level. However, they can never truly be comfortable, because they can never really trust anything or anyone. That's why trust in God is critical to having a relationship with Him

Psychologists describe the "strength-weakness paradox," meaning that any trait that's one of your best strengths can turn into a liability or a weakness if over-used. Psychologists note that generally there are two basic types of control freaks: *one type has a pervading, unconscious fear of loss of control—they get anxious and reactive in situations that are confusing or unpredictable. They have a low tolerance for ambiguity. The other type is motivated by unconscious power needs—they've become almost addicted to the feelings of proving themselves, being in charge, and getting their way. In other words, some control freaks are driven to control their environments, some are driven to control the people around them, and some crave both.*

If you are a control freak, it requires immediate change. Some of the signs are clear:

1. You are bothered by other controlling people.

You become easily annoyed by that bossy woman who always tries to take over the committee meeting. You get frustrated when someone interrupts you, which is a classic control-seeking move. The women who are most bothered by controlling people are often quite controlling, themselves, and so they tend to butt heads with others who are looking for control as well.

2. You struggle with anger. You are likely to respond with anger when someone doesn't meet your expectations or interrupts your plans. Anger is common in control freaks. The anger flares when they lose the thing they want, which is control.

3. You struggle with anxiety or fear. Control freaks worry about everything - safety precautions, germs, or illnesses, and what others are saying or thinking about them. Fear and anxiety are constants for control freaks because they constantly have to face things that they can't control, such as the future, unknowns, risks, and the opinions of others.

4. God seems distant and uncaring to you. God may seem indifferent, apathetic, or disinterested with things that matter to you, or you may be suspicious of God's motives in asking you to surrender everything to Him.

If you do have a need to control everything, you didn't arrive at that destination overnight. Being able to let God lead your life will also take some time, but the journey starts with prayer. Talk to the Lord. Say, *"God I confess I like being in control. It makes me feel safe and secure. It makes me feel like I have a purpose. But I know that being a control freak isn't going to get me anywhere. Help me surrender control to you each and every day. Help me trust in you deeply, so that I will not fear surrendering that control. Help me remember that you hold it all."*

Trusting in God is a lifelong process as well as a choice that we have to make every day. We have to learn to let go of trying to figure out the "whys" of life and trust that God understands more than we ever could. Proverbs 3: 5-6 tells us to "trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight." God knows that a life spent battling for control will only cause us to become fretful, frantic, explosive, nagging, exasperating, and angry. This makes everyone, including ourselves, miserable.

This quiz, developed by **Psychology Today**, is neither scientifically perfect nor psychologically complete, but it can give you a quick perspective on your own control-seeking tendencies.

Continues on page 5



Searching for Summer

Unscramble these things that make summertime so special!!!

Just for Fun

1. VCNIOATA _____
2. JULY _____
3. BABREEUQ _____
4. HECAB _____
5. SANSDAL _____
6. EIC RECMA _____
7. NBACRAIBE _____
8. RAOD RPTI _____
9. SESSALNUSG _____
10. RAI CONDRTEIION _____
11. NSUSCERNE _____
12. LOEWNETMRA _____
13. TFURI LASDA _____
14. AES SESLLH _____
15. FRKRESOWI _____
16. UFTROH OF LJYU _____
17. YAMILF ASTRIGGHNE _____
18. HSCOOL SI UOT _____
19. SUITSMIW _____
20. IPPSOSCLE _____
21. NAIVCOT EBLIB SCLHOO _____
22. ODUOTRO SNECTCRO _____

Word Bank

SEA SHELLS
FOURTH OF JULY
FRUIT SALAD
SUNGLASSES
POPSICLES
SCHOOL IS OUT

WATERMELON
JULY
SANDALS
AIR CONDITIONER
ICE CREAM
FIREWORKS

BARBEQUE
OUTDOOR CONCERTS
BEACH
SWIMSUIT
CARIBBEAN

FAMILY GATHERINGS
VACATION
ROAD TRIP
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
SUNSCREEN

DO YOU ALWAYS NEED TO BE IN CONTROL?

Continued from page 3

For each question, choose a number on a five-point scale, to show how accurately you think the statement describes you.

- 1 = Rarely or Never;**
- 2 = Seldom;**
- 3 = Sometimes;**
- 4 = Often;**
- 5 = Very Often**

Add up all 10 scores and consult the interpretation scale at the end. Note: the even-numbered questions indicate personal control and the odd-numbered ones indicate control over others.

Be as honest as you can. As you answer each question, imagine that someone who knows you well is looking over your shoulder - what would they say? Would they agree with your self-perception?

The Control Freak Quiz

- 1.** Do you "help" other people drive—tell them what route to take, when to turn, where to park, remind them that the traffic light has changed?
- 2.** Do you devote a lot of attention and energy to keeping your personal environment organized?
- 3.** Do you give people a lot of "you should do" and "you ought to do" - unsolicited advice, suggestions, and "constructive criticism?"
- 4.** Do you have lots of personal rules, routines, rituals, and ceremonies?
- 5.** Are you the one who takes over and orders other people around when the situation seems confused?
- 6.** Do you dislike depending on others, accepting help from them, or allowing them to do things for you?
- 7.** Do you insist on "being right," having things done your way, or having the final word?
- 8.** Do you "over-plan" simple activities?
- 9.** Do you find it difficult to admit making mistakes, being wrong or misinformed about something, or acknowledging that you've changed your mind?
- 10.** Do you become angry, irritable, or anxious when someone or something makes you late, when things don't start on time, or things don't go according to plan?

Interpret Your Score:

If you scored between 41 - 50: yes, you are a control freak.

If you scored between 31 - 40: you probably have some control issues.

If you scored between 21 - 30: you can live and let live.

If you scored between 10 - 20: are you truly being honest with yourself?

Quiz prepared by Psychology Today magazine



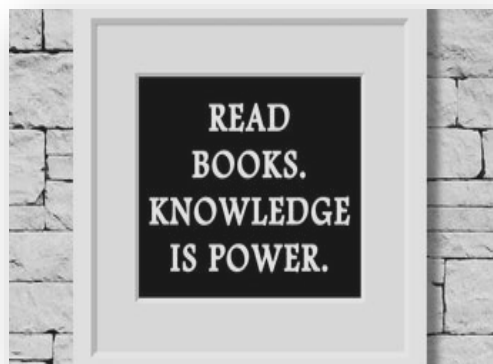
Once upon a time, a psychology professor walked around on a stage while teaching stress management principles to an auditorium filled with students. As she raised a glass of water, everyone expected they'd be asked the typical "glass half empty or glass half full" question. Instead, with a smile on her face, the professor asked, "How heavy is this glass of water I'm holding?"

Students shouted out answers ranging from eight ounces to a couple of pounds.

She replied, "From my perspective, the absolute weight of this glass doesn't matter. It all depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute or two, it's fairly light. If I hold it for an hour straight, its weight might make my arm ache a little. If I hold it for a day straight, my arm will likely cramp up and feel completely numb and paralyzed, forcing me to drop the glass to the floor. In each case, the weight of the glass doesn't change, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it feels to me."

As the class shook their heads in agreement, she continued, "Your stresses and worries in life are very much like this glass of water. Think about them for a while and nothing happens. Think about them a bit longer and you begin to ache a little. Think about them all day long, and you will feel completely numb and paralyzed – incapable of doing anything else until you drop them."

On days when you're stressed out and feeling overwhelmed, learn to embrace the inevitable and let go. Some things cannot be controlled and no amount of worrying could put all your burdens away. Instead of letting stress get to you, embrace it and conquer it. Let yesterday's worries inspire you to a productive day.



DON'T PUT GOD ON SUMMER VACATION

Continued from page 1

as well as your daily life.

PRAY stands for Pray, Rejoice, Ask, Yield. PRAY your way through every day of the summer and beyond - it's a sure way to keep God as a priority in your life, and especially in this season.

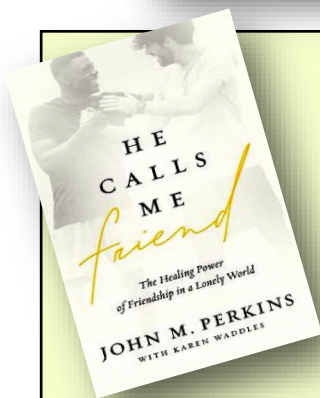
PRAY - Prayer is our way of communicating with God. It's a humble request; a lively praise; a cry in agony; a psalm of thanksgiving; or the opportunity to bless the Lord - prayer is all these things and more. Your prayer could be as simple as asking the Lord to bless your day, but whatever you do - pray!

REJOICE - Praise God in all circumstances, good and bad, and rejoice that He is working all things together for our good. Even when things are difficult, we can still give thanks to God for the many blessings he has poured out on us. He has saved us, forgiven our sins, united us to Christ, and is preparing a place for us. This is a constant reason to rejoice.

ASK - The Bible teaches us to "ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." (Matthew 7:7). Our requests are common in prayer as we ask for blessings for ourselves and others. But remember that asking is not the only reason for prayer. Our prayers are also for praising God.

YIELD - Yielding means being patient and waiting on the Lord. We must be willing to submit to God's Will for our lives. Our example should always be Jesus. Even though Jesus fervently asked God the Father to "take this cup from me," He yielded to God, acknowledging that "not my will but thine be done".

Summer overflows with God's presence. He never goes on vacation; never takes a break; never leaves us alone to manage on our own. Whether you are on vacation away from home, or a staycation at home, continue to seek God's wisdom and pursue knowledge of Him. Don't put God on vacation this summer.



HE CALLS ME FRIEND BY JOHN M. PERKINS

He Calls Me Friend is a retrospective of John Perkins' life, stories relating to aspects of friendship, and quotes from songs and books. The author follows the lives of Abraham, Moses, and David and uses their

examples to show how being a friend of God gives us insight to being friends with others.

The 2nd part of the book concentrates on Jesus and what it means to have a friend, to be a friend, to invite people into our lives to be friends, to have friends who fill the place of brothers and sisters, and to be friends to the end. Jesus shows us what it means to be friends with prostitutes, thieves, and the outsider, to be friends with those who are not like us. John Perkins calls us to task. Instead of seeing a group of people and keeping away from them, we are to see individuals created in the image of God and befriend them. We need to make space to get to know those who are not like us.

The 3rd section of the book involves friendship with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the personal presence of God within us so that we can know God. "... the Holy Spirit uses circumstances in our lives to cause us to cry out to God and to seek His will and His purposes. He makes us desperate for God's will in our lives." He uses our senses and affects us in a way that cannot be forgotten. He reconciles disparate people and gives us boldness."

The final part of the book is Friendship with Others. Such friendship may be based on mutual need. It can cross cultural and ethnic lines as well as economic strata. But friendship can also be mentoring. A mentor friend can draw us into deeper friendship, nurture us, and speak when they see us heading in a wrong direction. They can teach us and encourage and love us. And we can be teachers, encouragers, and lovers, also.

We are challenged to make friends with others, to pursue them, to focus on being a friend rather than having friends. Forgive and don't give up. John Perkins says that any friend can be a better friend if we don't give up. Friendship means being with people, spending time just talking or attending events. Friendship means participating in activities together. Being a friend bears fruit.

This book is an encouraging word to anyone who wants friends or wants to take friendship deeper. It's short and easy to read. In other words, this is a book for everyone.

This preview is reprinted from amazon.com.

He Calls Me Friend is available at Christianbook.com, and amazon.com.

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Your financial donation helps provide support for

- Publishing the SIS newsletter
 - The Nursing Home Hour of Praise Power
 - The Senior Food Program
 - The HOPE Award recognition program
 - The Thanksgiving Basket giveaway
 - The Christmas Blessing program
- And much more ...

We appreciate any amount.

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Contributions of \$30 or more will receive a Sisters in the Spirit Ministries supporter tee shirt.

Thank you for your generosity!

***Sisters in the Spirit
Thanks Everyone
Who Supported the
Super Summer Bazaar
and Food Sale!!!***



Special thanks to our vendors:

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Debra Fowler - Mary Kay; Delores D. Dixon;
Ebony Brown; Foster's Fine Arts;
Lighter Moments; NAACP;
Signature Homestyles;
Taren Thomas - Scentsy, and Terri Scott



Join **Sisters in the Spirit Ministries** on the
2nd Monday of every month at the
Walter Reed Convalescent Center for the

Hour of Praise Power

11:00 am - 12:00 am

7602 Meredith Drive * Gloucester, VA 23061

It's Hallelujah Good Time!



Sisters in the Spirit Newsletter

This is a free monthly publication by **Sisters in the Spirit Ministries, Inc.**, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded to empower women in their knowledge and authority, to better operate in their God-given purpose.

Editor: Dr. Katrina W. Brown

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Please share whatever comments you have about the newsletter with our readers. Mail your

THOUGHTS AND BLESSINGS to

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Searching for Summer answers

1. VCNIOATA VACATION
2. JULY JULY
3. BABREEUQ BARBEQUE
4. HECAB BEACH
5. SANSDAL SANDALS
6. EIC RECMA ICE CREAM
7. NBACRAIBE CARIBBEAN
8. RAOD RPTI ROAD TRIP
9. SESSALNUSG SUNGLASSES
10. RAI CONDRETEION AIR CONDITIONER
11. NSUSCERNE SUNSCREEN
12. LOEWNETMRA WATERMELON
13. TFURI LASDA FRUIT SALAD
14. AES SESLLH SEA SHELLS
15. FRKRESOWI FIREWORKS
16. UFTROH OF LJYU EOURTH OF JULY
17. YAMILF ASTRIGGHNE FAMILY GATHERINGS
18. HSCOOOL SI UOT SCHOOL IS OUT
19. SUITSMIW SWIMSUIT
20. IPPSOSCLE POPSCICLES
21. NAIAVCOT EBLIB SCLHOO VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
22. ODUOTRO SNECTRO OUTDOOR CONCERTS

THE LAST LAUGH



WHY I CAN'T SHOP AT COSTCO ANYMORE

I'm not allowed to shop at Costco anymore. Yesterday I was there buying a large bag of Purina dog chow for my loyal dog Nico, which weighs 191 lbs. I was in the check-out line when a woman behind me asked if I had a dog. What did she think I had, an elephant? So because I'm retired and have little to do, on impulse I told her that no, I didn't have a dog, I was starting the Purina Dog Food Diet again. I added that I probably shouldn't, because I ended up in the hospital last time I did it, but I had lost 50 pounds before I awakened in an intensive care ward with tubes coming out of most of my orifices and IVs in both arms. I told her that it was essentially a perfect diet and what you have to do is to always have Purina Dog Food Nuggets with you, and simply eat one or two every time you feel hungry. I said that the food is nutritionally complete so it works well and I was going to try it again. (I have to mention here that practically everyone in line was now enthralled with my story.) Horrified, she asked if I ended up in intensive care, because the dog food poisoned me. I told her no. I said that when I stopped to pee on a fire hydrant a car hit me. I thought the guy behind her was going to have a heart attack he was laughing so hard, and now Costco won't let me shop there anymore. Better watch what you ask retired people. We have all the time in the world to think of crazy things to say.

CROCODILE CHALLENGE

When a group of tourists visited a crocodile farm, the owner of the place launched a daring proposal, "whoever dares to jump in, swim to shore and survive, I will give 1 million dollars." Nobody dared to move, but suddenly a man jumped into the water and desperately swam towards the shore while he was chased by all the crocodiles.

He made it to shore, gaining the admiration of everyone in the place. The owner then announced "we have a brave winner." After collecting their reward, the couple returned to the hotel. Upon arrival, the manager told him that he had heard about what happened. "You were very brave to jump" the manager said. Right then the man angrily answered "I didn't jump, someone pushed me!" His wife just smiled ...

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

I'm not going to say who, but a friend of mine just called and asked if I would loan her \$1000 to help pay her rent. Those who know me, know that I'm always willing to help out friends & family. I told her to give me some time to think about it, and I would call her back. Before I called her back, her Mother called to let me know that she was lying, and not to give her the money! She went on to say that the real reason she wanted the \$1000 was to get her boyfriend out of jail so she could be under the same roof as him for his birthday.

I thought about it for a minute and decided to give her the money anyway because we all need help at times. A couple of hours later I get a call from the police station. It was her - crying, screaming and asking why I gave her counterfeit money. My response ... so you and your boyfriend could be under the same roof for his birthday!

MY WIFE IS MISSING

A husband went to the Sheriff's Department to report that his wife was missing. *Husband:* My wife is missing. She went shopping yesterday and has not come home. *Sergeant:* What is her height? *Husband:* Gee, I'm not sure. A little over five-feet tall.

Sergeant: What is her weight? *Husband:* I don't know. Not slim but not really fat. *Sergeant:* What's the color of eyes? *Husband:* Sort of brown I think. I never really noticed. *Sergeant:* Color of hair?

Husband: Changes a couple times a year. Maybe dark brown now. I can't remember. *Sergeant:* What was she wearing? *Husband:* Could have been pants, or maybe a skirt or shorts. I don't know exactly.

Sergeant: What kind of car did she go in? *Husband:* She went in my truck. *Sergeant:* What kind of truck was it? *Husband:* A 2015 Ford F150 King Ranch 4X4 with eco-boost 5.0L V8 engine special ordered with manual transmission and climate controlled air conditioning. It has a custom matching white cover for the bed, which has a matching aftermarket bed liner. Custom leather 6-way seats; a trailering package with gold hitch and special wiring hook-ups. DVD with full GPS navigation, satellite radio receiver, six cup holders, a USB port, and four power outlets. I added special alloy wheels and off-road Michelins. It has custom running boards and indirect wheel well lighting. At this point the husband started choking up.

Sergeant: Don't worry buddy. We'll find your truck.