

"Living in the clash between two kingdoms..."



the
Warrior Class

VOLUME 2
4TH QUARTER
2012

The Warrior Class for Graham Cooke

Training Journal

For the Equipping & Development of Kingdom Warriors

Worshipping Warriors

*The joyful reality
of who God is for us in the
Clash between Two Kingdoms*

A Championship Season

I remember Graham recently jumping in our car after a meeting, turning around with a huge grin, and saying, "That was a good fight, eh?"

It had been. What some might have called a challenging atmosphere had led to a master class in watching the Holy Spirit become a sniper, picking off every obstacle with powerful truth. It was tough, but it was also fun. And Graham wasn't tired, he was energized.

None of us here signed on for an ordinary life and God has kindly answered that heart's desire. Storms on our lakes may surprise us momentarily, until we realize it's our turn to shift the atmosphere. Many of us stand on the threshold of huge territories, so God allows the thinking that will limit us to rise to the surface and we can give Him back His "stuff". A giant shouts "You'll fail", while Someone whispers, "I never do."

This journal is meant to encourage and equip you in the very real war we signed on for. It will disarm lies with Truth you can fight with. It grants permission for an authentic journey amongst friends who will celebrate your strengths and love you in your weaknesses.

These are the very proving grounds and battlefields on which champions are made. And this, I firmly believe, is TWC's championship season. - Allison

Question: You've said that "We are defined by the quality of the opposition against us." What does that mean?

"Obstacles and opposition have to be big for our sake. It is essential to go up against something that is significantly bigger than we are.

The size of the opposition against us is in direct proportion to the size of greatness that God is thrusting upon us.

The kingdom of darkness is full of negativity, so it will always challenge you with what you are not. That's why we need to eradicate negativity and partner with the Holy Spirit to find the positive that is always present, even on our weakest days.

Spiritual Warfare is not taking authority over the enemy. That is the consequence of warfare. Spiritual warfare is about discovering the supremacy and majesty of Jesus for you in your current circumstances.

The bigger the revelation of the sovereignty of God that you have, the bigger you can grow against the enemy.

After our prophecies, comes the training. Our giants are our brilliant shortcut and acceleration to our next level. That's why it's so important not to avoid our situations, but to ask God what they are there for. ~ Graham

It's official. God loves a failure! He did not want the beauty of His nature and the glory of His Kingdom solely to be represented by the great, the good and the clever. He did not want a Who's Who of humanity to portray His own magnificence...

He chose people who had a history of failure. He picked people who had a history of not learning and who repeated their mistakes continuously. God chose people who are despised as being stupid by people who should know better. He accepted people who would require lots of training just to be normal, let alone successful.

**He chose them because He wanted to love them in such a way that they would always be safe and whole, whether they were successful or not.
He chose them so that His love for them could heal them of their foolishness.**

He has a wonderful capacity to enjoy us in our weaknesses. He has a plan to make us successful through using failure for us and not against us. Failure does not demean the Father. His character and identity are so wonderfully secure that He is not afraid to know us, bless us and stand up for us. Whether doing we are doing well or badly, our identity is always in Jesus.

We are in Christ and He is in us. The Father has a plan for our personality as much as He has a design for changing our character; to make us more like Himself. A big part of that plan therefore is to love us exactly the same way that He loves Jesus. We are not loved only because we succeed in Christ. We are loved fully because we are in Him. God loved us powerfully when we were lost in sin.

Our love for God is seriously upgraded when we realize that our mistakes are already covered. No matter how well or badly our life is going, we learn to live under the smile of God... We overcome failure when we discover that God wants us to love the learning that exists in *every* situation...

God knows that when we do things for the first time, we learn how not to do it. Loving the learning in every situation enables us to become wise and also beloved. Wise, because we learn from our mistakes and grow. Beloved, because our sense of acceptance comes from being in Christ and not from our ability or performance.

Therefore, if we fail at something we can still grow in the love of God.

The joy of repentance and the beauty of God's unchanging nature guarantees forgiveness and acceptance. We overcome failure when we realize that God is not even remotely embarrassed by our weaknesses. He defends us to all our detractors...



... continued on Page 3

*"Uncommon
love
never
fails,
but it
must be
believed,
received,
and
acted
upon.*

*A
response
is
required.*

*Our
thinking
must
change.*

*Our
minds
must
receive
truth.*

*Our
mouths
must
speak it
out."*

Graham Cooke

We overcome failure when we allow ourselves to be comforted... When we are embarrassed at the truth of our current mindset or behavior, He comforts us so that we are not paranoid about screwing up. Then He helps us with the learning. Every test is repeatable. We cannot fail the tests of God because we get to take them again, and again, and again...

The biggest lesson I get to learn is that God loves me for me - not for what I can do. God's love helps us relax about ourselves. The grace of God is given to us to feel good about ourselves even when we mess up. God's grace enables us to feel good about God and therefore to have mercy on ourselves and others.

**We are a work in progress. No one condemns the artist of an unfinished picture!
Instead, we look at what is there and we picture what it could become.
We wonder, we imagine and we are excited about the possibilities.**

In my weakness, I am lovely to God. It's the sheer beauty of God that sets me free to be loved outrageously. He allows us to fail when He could have prevented it; maybe because he wants us to see how much we are loved when we can't do anything right. He gives us freedom to fail and His intention is to show us that we are still His beloved. His love for us is not based on how well we do. We desire to be excellent because He is excellent...

Does God cause us to fail? No. Does He allow us to fail? Obviously. Does He use our failure to improve our relationship with Him? *Everything* with God is relational. *Every* circumstance can be turned around so that we discover the height, depth, length and breadth of His love...

**Failure is not so much about falling down
as it is refusing to get up once we have fallen.**

When we hit the heights of achievement, God's love is present. When we are in the depths of despair, sin and ugliness, His love covers everything we hate about ourselves. In the pit of depression, God's loving-kindness builds a stairway to recovery...

My own failures are many. My capacity for weakness on days seems undiminished. I am an embarrassment to myself and yet I am loved so wonderfully. There is perhaps one difference that my experiences with God have given me. I no longer weep tears of shame; I cry tears of joy and wonder. I am amazed by God and His power to love me. He makes all things work together for good. I'm not much of a challenge to His genius and creativity - and neither are you.

**My failures do not haunt me because the Holy Spirit has exorcised the
ghost of shame and dishonor. I am comforted. I am learning.
My name is Graham and I am a man greatly beloved.**

I can't begin to pray without first praying in tongues! It instantly lifts me out of the physical situation into a much higher place in the Spirit. It wakes up my spirit and opens my eyes, ears, heart and mind to Holy Spirit! I never want to pray from what my natural eyes see, only from what I see through the Holy Spirit!

Praying in the Spirit shifts my focus from my perspective, to the Lord's. I so much prefer how He sees things! ~ Lorri Hernandez

Praying in the Spirit is the same thing to me for intercession that rest is to warfare. It is my safe place, my sacred place. The enemy does not reach there. I have no doubt about the "rightness" of what I am praying. He understands and/or it is in perfect accord with God's will.

Praying in the Spirit is like nestling down in Papa's heart and just enjoying "being" with Him, and in that place of *being*, the *doing* takes care of itself. Just as rest is a weapon, praying in the Spirit is the most effective prayer I have. ~ Kristy Lindvall

Recently I was struggling, seeming to get no answers about a life changing decision about our future. Worshiping and praying in the Spirit helped me to let go...relax...and trust God's faithfulness, that He will make known the provision and strategy. I now feel in tune with His heartbeat for this situation. - Lesley Balfour

In this current season of intense warfare & personal reinvention, I often find myself speechless. At least in the natural. One cannot sit back and say nothing, right? That's what the Spirit was saying. I felt Him encouraging me to step up the gift of praying in tongues. Frankly, stepping up tongues was quite easy to do - since I had not been faithfully activating the gift. So, in obedience and desperation, I began simply praying in the Spirit while walking, working out, driving and even doing laundry. What a radiant idea!

Little by little, the gift was growing and something was changing. By the time I entered a worship service in early September, I had been clocking some incredible hours praying in tongues; and the result, hunger for the Presence of God had become a raging inferno. I was becoming obsessive to the point of being possessed.

Ha! I can't exactly explain what happened in the rest of the room during that worship set, but I know what happened with me. Bam! Immediate entrance into God's Presence. Immeasurable assurance. Resurgence of faith. Renewed hope. Quickened tenderness, to name only a few.

Praying in the Spirit has taken on an entirely different dynamic both in war, in worship and in rest. Daily, I wake up praying in tongues. I fall asleep praying in tongues. My prayer language is doing the mysterious work of awakening my soul and spirit. It is providing rest for my body & soul. I will no longer undervalue or underestimate this precious gift of praying in tongues. ~ Kathy Johnson

Praying in the Spirit is incredible, because I know I am praying what the Holy Spirit wants even when I don't understand it yet.

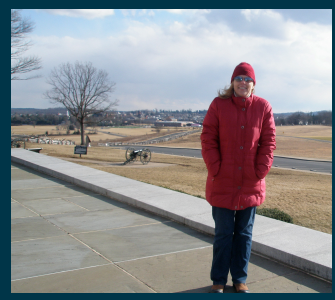
**It helps me pray for Graham because the Holy Spirit has way better prayers for him!
~ Andy West**

Praying in the Spirit are prayers that are for us alone to pray.

Just as we have fingerprints unlike anyone else's, we pray the words of the Holy Spirit that are matchless.

- Janis Morgan





Gettysburg in February 2010

LIFE in the Clash Between Two Kingdoms by Allison Bown **PAGE**

It sure sounded exciting when we first heard it: "Worshipping Warriors". Like the first scene in a war movie, our uniforms were shiny bright, our equipment new and we couldn't wait to leap into the fray. Most of us in The Warrior Class have a bit of experience with this life now, and the concept is shifting to reality.

The fight is no longer imaginary. It is quite real: for Graham's health; in our life circumstances; in the religious territories that stretch before us. We've found that "joyful intentionality" requires focus, brilliant thinking isn't automatic (at first) and that our adversary doesn't willingly hand over the territory of our truest identity.

**But something else has become even more real:
The majesty and supremacy of God.**

A majestic, elevated perspective is not trite lingo that we banter about in our TWC world; we can't afford it to be. It is the vital place we are learning to abide and the only atmosphere in which we can thrive. The promises over TWC and words like the one given in Longmont about *Life from the High Tower** have done what all prophetic words do: they have released a process of development individually and corporately, while providing wisdom, encouragement and a compass.

Every war has its ebb and flow. From time to time, we'll take our licks. We will need our friends for perspective and our prophecies as an anchor. There will be tears, hurts and situations that turn out differently than we anticipated. We'll be acutely aware of all we are not, which will open a door to seeing all that He is.

**Every adversity is an encounter with two promises from God: That we *will* have tribulations..
and that we're living in the One who has overcome the world.**

Years ago, I sat alone during a blowout Renewal meeting, in the midst of a thousand people, all worshipping and dancing, while my life was in ruins. I could no longer create a pretense that my world was okay. My friends were absent. It was too big of a mess to deal with.

But on that day, when everyone else left, Jesus walked in. His love was not tempered with "lessons I needed to learn", nor kept in reserve until He saw how I responded. It was overwhelming and without condition. The best I had to give Him was broken, chaotic and polluted... and in the kindest voice, I've ever known, He simply said, "I'll take it". He spoke to my true identity, as one who was a whole, beloved daughter and warrior; and that's how He's talked to me ever since.

**The greatest warriors fight for love; not for glory or fame or even to right a wrong.
They fight because they've never lost the passion for the One who fought for them.**

It is the passion that comes from being so exquisitely loved that provokes profound worship, no matter what surrounds us. The Worshipping Warrior does not reserve their praise for "no conflict zones", but kneels as the bullets fly and simply says, "I trust You... because I know who You have been to me and I know who You will be."

... continued on page 6

When our passion wanes, we can be prone to fighting for "good" reasons that make sense to our heads, but have not captured our hearts. Weariness sets in. Fears and performance thinking rise to the surface.

When that happens, it's time to stop trying harder and go back to the Strong Tower of First Love. To stand between the Father and the Son, held in place by the Spirit. To soak in their love for you and for each other; to see through their eyes who you are and who you are becoming.

**It's time to be still, and know that He is God;
that He has all power and all majesty
and He has given it to you,
His beloved one.**

I've watched you do this in The Warrior Class as the good fight has become a majestic reality. We have members of our community living on the battleground of cancer treatments, family members with mental illness, financial challenges, hurricanes and loss of loved ones.

There are those of you that are facing life-long giants because... it's time. Like the Israelites being pursued by the Egyptian army, it's a Red Sea moment to cross over and see that adversary no more - forever.

These are not territories that the enemy will relinquish easily, either personally or corporately. We will have to fight to both occupy and establish; but these are the very Promised Lands on which champions are made.

Sure, we'll get a bit bloodied on the way. But the truth is: nobody wants to fight next to the guy with the shiny new uniform anyway. What does *he* know about overcoming? I want to be next to the dude covered in enemy blood, with a few heads hanging from his belt, even if he's got a black eye.

Ground wars are never a good idea. They usually result in getting your butt kicked. (Guess how I learned that?) We *must* first gain an elevated perspective with the weapons we've been taught: with worship and with

more powerful "Insteads". When negatives start to dominate our thinking, we'll make a list and find God's opposite for each. Then we'll declare the opposite as truth, no matter how many lies try to silence us. Somewhere on the journey, it stopped being the Entry Level Process and became a powerful weapon against the lying giant standing between you and your next territory.

We may well spend some time walking around Jerichos: issues that seem to remain unchanged. But like the young Israeli army on the verge of inhabiting a new land, it is in walking around the impossible at close range that allows us an encounter with the Majestic One. We survey our obstacles and choose daily to believe that what we can't see is more real than what we can.

**With each trip around the improbable,
who we become in our relationship with God
will make the enemy regret his choice
to press the matter.**

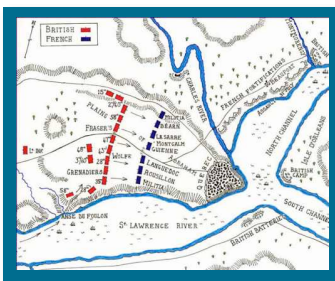
Initially or eventually, the shock waves of one heart; one mind; one voice; will bring down any walls under the weight of our promises. In the meantime, we will fight next to friends who are strong where we are weak. We'll embrace grace that is sufficient. We will find occasions to laugh.

And on the days we can't press forward, we will drive our swords in the ground as an anchor to hold our gains. And from that stance, we'll worship the One who has already won the war.

It's the fight we've waited for all our lives. It is here that God is rising to His full stature as Deliverer, Comforter, Provider and King. And as if that isn't enough, we look up; and all around, we'll see a community of friends who have also decided that being a Worshipping Warrior in the Clash between two Kingdoms is a pretty good place to live.

I'm deeply appreciative that *this* good fight is one we get to share together ~ Allison

** Life from the High Tower: July 2012 Worship Ebb Resource*



Battle Plans & Practical Weapons

PAGE 7

"Special Forces" don't wander into a war zone without a strategic approach. They may have to adapt their plan, but they **prepare for the fight**. From our collective wisdom, here are some choices we can embrace because we value the protection they give us in the Clash between Two Kingdoms:

Prepare with Powerful Questions

How are my current circumstances designed to experience a new aspect of God's nature?

What specific promises and prophecies are being contested?

Where does my current perspective originate?
Is it an elevated perspective or a ground war view?

Hint: What do you spend the most time thinking about?

*Circumstances & personal negatives
or thanksgiving & God's supremacy?*

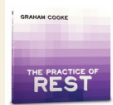
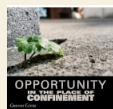
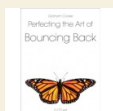
Look at the practical tools listed at the right to help with this.

What is the cost to go forward?
What is the cost of NOT going forward?

How many of my current relationships refresh and give life to me?

Ask God where you are to invest your relational time.

What is the level of worship needed for this battle?
Are we intentionally creating times to *receive* as well as adore? Is *relationship* with God our primary focus?



Resources for the fight

FREE MP3 download at
BrilliantPerspectives.com
under the "Members" tab

"Joyful Vulnerability to God's Goodness"

Graham talks about how he continues to approach his ongoing health challenges

CDs available at BBH:

The Art of Bouncing Back
Opportunity in the Place of Confinement
Overcoming Negativity through Rest
Encouraging Yourself in the Lord
The Practice of Rest

Practical Weapon #1

Pray in Tongues

By yourself or call a friend and pray together.

Use this powerful gift continually with joy.

Practical Weapon #2

Personal Intercessors

Let your friends know the stance you are taking in your circumstances. Give them your promises, Identity Statement & Inheritance Words to declare!

Practical Weapon #3

Rest, Rejoice & Ignore

In thanksgiving and rejoicing, we turn our attention to God. This brings rest. The enemy wants us focused on the issues *he* introduces. Ignore him. Never fight on his terms or timetable.

Practical Weapon #4

Listen to recordings as you sleep.

Play a soaking CD, "The Practice of Rest" or other key teachings on your Ipod. Set to repeat. When you awake during the night or first thing in the morning, you will be hearing words of life.

Practical Weapon #5

Read Your Promises Aloud

Create a notebook of your promises, your Identity Statement, your prophetic words & Inheritance Words. Enjoy reading them *aloud* to God.

Practical Weapon #6

Listen in Everyday Places

Listen for God's encouragements in a child saying "You're beautiful" or the compliment of a co-worker. Soak them in as His smile at you.

Practical Weapon #7

Laughter

The enemy wants you overwhelmed and serious. Find times to laugh: at God's sense of humor and at yourself. Don't become warfare intense. Enjoy the fight.

More Battle Plans & Practical Weapons...

Connecting Your Identity Statement to More Powerful "Insteads"

In times of conflict, look at your Identity Statement and ask the Holy Spirit:

#1 What aspect of my Kingdom Identity is under assault?

Example:

**I am a beholder of a majestic God
- An accurate image of His goodness**

This statement will grow best in situations where the enemy wants to say
"It's too much..." or "Yeah, but what if..." and "It's been too long..."

They are lies that question the extent of God's majesty and the power of
His goodness. If the enemy can't stop you from believing in God, then
he wants you only to believe God *up to a point*; then rely on your
own ability to figure things out or solve the problem.

You can use the lies to help you target your upgrade. Nothing makes the
enemy more furious than when we use what was meant to discourage or
destroy us to help facilitate our growth! It's great vengeance & opportunity!

#2 - More powerful "Insteads"

**What are the negatives I am facing?
What are their opposites?**

Example from the ID statement above:

Instead of seeing all that I am not
I see Christ is in me, the One with whom ALL things are possible

Instead of bearing the weight of responsibility for a good outcome
I trust the God who started the good work to finish it.

Instead of trying to solve circumstances
In worship & thanksgiving I will rise to see as He sees

Each of these strengthens the identity of one that is the
"Beholder of a majestic God..."

Battlefield Truth

*Under fire - Basic Truth is easily
accessible and powerful*

Process is great, but sometimes
we need a sharp, concise weapon
in the heat of battle.
Look at what part of your identity is
being contested, what your
"insteads" are and then
reduce that truth to one line.

For the example on this page,
the **Battlefield Truth** is:

**With a majestic God,
ALL things are possible**

**God is the starter and finisher
of all good works.**

You can see **Battlefield Truth** in
Graham's writing on the last page of
this Training Journal:

The nature of God is constant

Battlefield Truth can also be laser sharp
truths from Scripture.

Find the ones that fit your fight:

I am a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17)

God loves with an everlasting love
(Jer. 31:3)

I am an overcomer in Jesus (1 John 5:4)

And think of Graham's "one-liners":

Rest is a weapon

Every problem has provision

Warriors look for majesty, not rescue



Just as eating, drinking and brushing my teeth are deliberate acts in my daily life, so are my acts of praise and worship. They require a quality decision.

Praise is wonderful as an entryway to God's presence, but worship is the force that defeats the enemy of my soul.

I enter His courts with praise and thanksgiving (Ps. 100:4) and move from there into the Holy of Holies, to the place of worship, the place of intimacy. Worship is a face to face encounter with my Creator, My Beloved.

My praise comes naturally from a grateful heart for all of God's blessings, love, faithfulness and kindness that He has shown me. When I see His wonders throughout my day, I just naturally say "Thank You." He is my first thought in the morning and my last at night.

I used to be concerned that praise about what God had done for me was too self-focused. Wasn't I only to focus on Him and His majesty? I've discovered that it's both. I encourage myself in what the Lord has done for me and it brings me into alignment with His majesty. It gives me focus. Praise locks out all the things of this world that constantly want my attention.

I've found that praise often originates in my mind, but worship originates in my heart. Worship bypasses my mind and is pure spirit to Spirit and heart to Heart. Worship helps me to move forward in becoming more of a reflection in Him.

My worship comes forth in many forms, from outward enthusiastic proclamation, to silent reflection. No matter what form it takes, it always honors the majesty, sovereignty and greatness of my Creator God.

My worship always ends in listening for Him. I long to hear Him breathe or to be tucked under His wing. Whether in my intimate place with Him or during my normal routines of the day, worship is never far from my lips and is always in my heart, even when a word is not spoken I am standing up on the inside!

Sometimes worship comes in the form of standing.

Through the many years in the clash between two kingdoms, when I have done all I know to do, I stand without words, without song and sometimes totally void of all emotions. This becomes my sacrifice of worship as I stand in the knowing of His good thoughts toward me. It is my "To whom else would I go?" stance. When I have no one else to go to and no where else to turn - I run into Him! I have not yet reached the place where I can totally ignore what rages around me. But I am determined to move forward toward that goal.

It is the place of "Though you slay me, yet I will trust You!" It is the worship of one who has seen the deepest pit and and yet declares He is worthy. I am with I AM. I know He is the One with all power and authority, the One who made heaven and earth. That becomes my worship proclamation.

**I can sense His delight and know He is saying,
"That is enough.
You are standing in Who I Am."**

My heart may feel torn and worn, but I know how much He treasures this worship.

I recall a vision I had a very long time ago when I was a young Christian. While in worship, I saw God and I lay on two tables in a laboratory. The Holy Spirit was transfusing me with God's blood and God was taking my blood. He was giving me life, I was giving Him death. It is His life's blood flowing in me that flows back to Him in the form of worship.

The reality of His Presence, He in me and I in Him, is the place from which my worship is birthed. No matter how strong or weak, He delights in *all* of my worship, but I believe it is in the sacrifice of worship that brings Him the greatest delight. It is my greatest desire to no longer do worship, but I want to become worship and fulfill my very first Identity Statement:

***"I am a worshipper of the Most High God.
Out of intimacy, to extol Him as my sound is
mixed with the sound of heaven, establishing
His atmosphere on earth."***



"What level of worship is needed for this battle?"

It is one of our key "Decisions that Define Us". How has worship impacted your ability to fight?

From Faith Donaldson - Discovery Team Leader

Location: Longmont, CO - July 20, 2012

Situation: Morning session of TWC following Aurora Shootings during the night.

Circumstance: I had a friend call me just before going into the meeting. She is an ER nurse who had worked on some of the victims through the night. She was undone, traumatized, and her heart shattered. I spent time hearing her, praying for her, setting her course for all that is TRUE in Christ Jesus. Then I entered the session which had already started. TWC members were in full worship; my heart was broken for my friend, our state of Colorado, and the impact the shootings had on my life.

Decision: I wasn't sure I should "allow" my tears to flow but decided my tears were honest. So, I stood there and wept in the midst of all my fellow warriors. Then, I made my second decision. "God, you are good. I WILL praise you. I WILL enter into praise, and you have set me in the middle of it." I lifted my hands with tears spilling down my face and I began to sing. I sang louder - I reached higher - I proclaimed all that was true. I WOULD worship my living God who was weaving ALL things together for good.

Outcome: Within ten minutes my heart was lighter, my mind clearer, and my feet were firmly planted on all that was true. The Father wove my grief and my worship into an intimate encounter with Him. His love, comfort, and understanding enveloped me. Jesus won . . . AGAIN!

From Wei Stephens:

I don't focus on warfare as such, I just tune in to enjoy what my heart's sing to the Lord. In worship, I know I am going to win whatever the matters are. I truly believe that God is enthroned in the praise of His people. With Holy Spirit I always have more new songs coming up.

Worship is God's love and faithfulness to me when my husband Ed cannot recognize me or becomes anxious. Sometimes he wants to go home to find me or call me to let me know where he is. Sometimes he needs to call his sister or brother to check if I really am his wife.

Before, I was more focus on these symptoms. Now, I am learning to focus on Jesus and worship more. What a change! Now, when I hold on to God's peace, love and His faithfulness, Ed calms down very fast. He may still not know who I am, but we both are in God's peace and in the Father's love.

From Lisa Hoover:

I have been in several very difficult situations where I withdrew to worship the Lord. I have improved on this with practice, but putting the worship first sets the journey through the circumstance. Because of this practice I am beginning to tell when the worship needs to change, not necessarily for the circumstance but for the reshaping of my attitude.

When my father, who was also my mothers caretaker, died of a heart attack, I was faced with taking responsibility for my mother and I was the executor of their wills. In addition to building a house and working full time, my mother was diagnosed with cancer and suffered from poorly performed radiation treatment.

I set up help for the first night while I went home to worship. I worshipped literally with all my strength.

Somehow that changed everything. Every day was an incredible challenge, but my siblings were cooperative throughout the entire time. Even after my mother passed over 19 days later and we were dividing up the estate, all my siblings completely trusted me and handled everything with grace.

True miracles in every way.

I love worship because it takes me to a place beyond the natural into the supernatural. It takes me out of my circumstances and connects me to the Father's Heart and His Perspective. It refreshes, renews, restores and then energizes me. Through worship experiences, I can feel myself aligning with God and partnering with Heaven. I feel us both smiling together.

Worship is a choice and it requires discipline. It is not just a song I sing or a dance, but a lifestyle I choose. For me, there is no option, but to live a life of worship. When things get bad or don't turn out the way I'd like, I center myself in Him through worship. It puts me back on track. ~ Connie Jennings

I wake up and often worship. I make up little thank you songs for the Lord. Nothing really worth repeating, just little I love you songs. I think He really likes them and I love singing them to Him. When it comes to warfare - often the Lord leads me to a verse or Psalm and I worship my heart out. - Lynne Powell

*I have noticed when I walk into a situation that is challenging I start worshipping - focused worship. Within a short period of time the atmosphere has shifted, my perspective has changed to one of great confidence and joy and I know He has the outcome in hand. Yahoo for Him!
~ Charlotte Allen*

Worship can be a lot of things, fun, spiritually warfare, even just feeling good but the best worship occurs when you stop thinking about the problem and are totally into the worship.

This is spiritual warfare at its finest. The moment when you are oblivious to everything but the Holy Spirit is the moment when you change, the problem changes, the enemy loses and breakthrough occurs.

~ Jan Durham

Worship turns my focus away from challenging circumstances and problems. It sets my mind on who God is, what He's done in the past, how big He is; and I'm reminded of how He's led me and protected me. It allows me to see who He wants to be for me now and helps me know how to respond to Him.

For example, just this week we've experienced a grandson's serious illness, and a close friend's pain. In the past I felt I had to "do something". Now I'm able to rest and worship, trusting my Papa to give me something to share or just leaving the situation in His hands knowing He will take good care of the ones I care about.

God has challenged me to find that place of intimate worship in places that I never imagined could happen. I have learned to find Him in worship in settings that have no thought about God.

How would it be, to be in worship, just like I breathe? Naturally, involuntarily, without thinking or worrying about who or what is going on around you. I don't have to have flags or special worship music or my guitar or any props. Intense experiences with the Father in unexpected places like the one I had at a Catholic Funeral Mass.

Awesome. I love the journey.

~ Ted Mather

"If it matters to me, it matters to Him".

I love that quote from Graham. As I rest in His love and goodness He frequently gives me encouragement to share. My focus is on Him, not on what I should be doing to help "fix" the situation. This has been a huge and wonderful shift for me, giving me a sense of peace and freedom never experienced before!

- Esther Brohner

Thoughts from Graham are in italics

Several times at the first conferences I attended, I heard Graham tell the church to “*ramp up the worship*”. I knew he didn’t mean to increase the tempo and turn up the volume; but what did he mean? The idea of *increasing* worship was new to me and *how* to upgrade worship puzzled me.

Corporate worship today presents several obstacles for me personally. I still love the old hymns we sang in my youth; so many of which contain words of truth that touch my spirit. Physical limitations prevent me from dancing like the younger people. Two years in a row of severe coughing through bouts of pneumonia destroyed my singing voice and even clapping my hands is painful due to arthritis. I like to be face down on the floor, but I’d need help getting up! So there I stood; wondering if anyone was judging me for my lack of participation. I’ve never left a weekend with Graham focusing on the down side of things. I just knew I had something to overcome and answers to find. And, I was excited about it!

I combed through Graham’s books for further explanation and searched for a new and brilliant thought. I concluded that worship is of the heart and what we bring to worship corporately must first be an individual adoration. *We cannot have corporately what we don’t have individually.* I can engage my heart without physical motion and what other people think is none of my business. It just isn’t about me. It’s about Him.

**It was in the process of seeking to upgrade my personal worship that
I found new ways to express love, appreciation and devotion.**

Most important to me was to discover that *worship is a lifestyle; letting all my choices be in favor of God* and walking in His presence on purpose, with a song in my heart and learning to listen in the noise as Rita so beautifully described in the 1st Quarterly Training Manual. Then to realize that *spending time with God is a powerful act of worship* opened up big new spaces in the Spirit.

If it’s important to me, it’s important to God. Sometimes in private worship, though I can’t sing them anymore, I get my old hymnbook and read the songs. Did you ever get a catchy tune stuck in your head? It is so like God to tailor to each individual the way He speaks to us. When one of my beloved old hymns begins to reverberate in my head, I know to look for the answer to a question I have asked Him. Especially, the questions; who He wants to be for me or what He’s doing in the process we are walking through. It looks like the list to the right. —————>

Another of the new ways I found is to frequently **write a paragraph TO Him ABOUT Him.** Imagine my delight recently when He interrupted my writing to say, “Of all the ways you worship Me, this is My favorite”.

Here’s one I wrote to Him: “You are fascinating. You are, as Tozer put it; “of all creatures most loveable.” You are engaging. You are interesting. You are captivating, adventurous, and enjoyable. You are accepting and embracing. There is no end to the reasons You hold my attention and no end to what can be discovered about You. You are so deep and You love to share, to give, to grant, to reveal, and to open my understanding. You are delightful. You are, indeed “altogether lovely”.

**What creative, new ways of worship do you want to explore?
Are there any current circumstances you’ve seen as obstacles that might
be doorways to upgrade?**

**I found answers in
hymns that came to
my mind...**

**Hymn:
"Victory in Jesus"**

**He was saying:
"I am your shield"**

**Hymn:
"Standing on the
Promises"**

**He was saying:
"Go read what I
already told you"**

**Hymn:
"Crown Him with
Many Crowns"**

**He was saying:
"See My majesty"**

**Hymn:
"I Know Who Holds
Tomorrow"**

**He was saying:
"Trust Me with
what you can't see"**

**See how
that works?**

A great deal of this journal was inspired by TWC Member Jan Durham's honest request on Facebook last month:

"This has been a week of transition and change in my world. I counted 17 major life events that have happened to me and the people I know...death of a family member, cancer treatment, surgery scheduling, bankruptcy, business closing, the kidnapping and murder of a local 9 year old girl: good changes too...marriage announcement, job change, moving ... would love to hear some snippets or quotes from Graham of things that sustain you when things change quickly and unexpectedly."

Her request struck a chord with many of you, including Graham. Here is his response. It is wisdom and compassion that needed to be recorded beyond FB for us to draw from now and in the future. ~ Allison

"I've been looking through my meditation journals from around ten years ago when my world as I knew it was ending. What saved my everything was what I was learning about who God wanted to be for me. I didn't know it then, but those crippling circumstances actually became the basis for my reinvention as a man and a ministry.

I found a few quotes that I wrote about the nature of God to me. All learning in the Kingdom is about what we actually experience in the Lord that changes who we are as people. In the world, learning is more academic. It's about facts and what we know mentally. That can bring only a measure of change to us. In the Kingdom, we learn from the heart and it brings reformation. The Holy Spirit helps us to realize who God is for us and then empowers us to become that in our own life situations.

In crushing circumstances I learned about the constancy of God. I learned that whatever He is, He is relentlessly. He is massively, enormously, incredibly unchanging. His love is ceaseless, endless and everlasting. His great heart is fixed, steadfast and immovable. He became my North Star.

In the worst of times we discover the best of God and it changes us. We discover that He is faithful, unfailing and trustworthy... and we fall in love with Him. We explore Him joyfully and we forget to be anxious, resentful and bitter. The "why" question eludes us because we are seeing something so wonderful that we are captivated.

My heart was in pieces. Twenty nine years of ministry broken on the floor. I could have filled an average church building with the friends who walked away from me. The constancy of God not only healed my heart but enlarged it. I learned about the power of the one with the One.

I hope these few quotes are helpful to your journey." ~ Graham

- * When life is unstable, Jesus is the only constant.
- * No circumstance can compete with the relentlessly unchanging constancy of God.
- * God's constant nature is the foundation of all trust.
- * I have won more battles depending on God's constancy, than I ever have by trying to generate faith.
- * Life changes, only God is fully constant.
- * Every situation must bend to God's unchanging nature.
- * We persevere best when we rest in God's constancy.
- * It's the unchanging constancy of God that fixes our faith.
- * Nothing fills me with more peace than the constancy of God.
- * The constant nature of God is relentless in its opposition to all of life's variables.
- * Astonishment in the Father is rooted in His constancy.

Follow Through Opportunity:

What quotes could you write about what you've discovered in times of "crushing circumstances"? They could be words of life for you and for someone else one day.