

The LCF Connection

May 2011



Who is this Beth Moore Person?

By Andrew Sharp

During a typical week in London, Ohio, the stop lights change several thousand times, a possum or two gets run over by a truck, the London Baptist softball team crushes another hapless victim, and—odds are good—women from LCF participate in a Beth Moore Bible study. These courses have been favorites for the ladies at LCF over the last several years.

“In my opinion, Beth Moore has a unique gift to teach,” Dorothy Jones said. “She can hold your interest and provide motivation to learn...staying with the studies is a discipline I need.”

“I enjoy being with the other women each time and sharing our needs and blessings,” Brenda Freed said.

Two women’s groups are studying the book of Daniel right now using the Beth Moore study. These courses are 12 weeks long. The groups set their own schedule depending on need, getting together for a DVD session and discussion time, then doing personal study during the week with a workbook.

One group is currently meeting at Dorothy Jones’ house every other Wednesday, and besides Dorothy includes Molly Rosati, Goldie Rosati, Brenda Freed, and Mary Rosshirt, one of Dorothy’s neighbors. The other group is made up of Bettyjo Zachrich, Lois Reninger, and Doris Swartz, and meets at Doris’ house every Tuesday morning.



From left: Molly, Dorothy, Brenda, Goldie and Mary

Doris said her group begins the meeting by discussing any questions they have from the homework and things that

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London Christian Fellowship seeks to develop authentic and passionate followers of Jesus Christ.

Balancing Act

By Andrew Sharp

Balance is a kind of boring concept. It’s one of those things you don’t miss until you don’t have it. But if the high wire above you is disappearing in the distance while the pavement below is getting bigger fast, odds are that balance suddenly seems crucial. You probably miss it a lot, in fact.

Richard Troyer talked about balance at the last men’s meeting at Phat Daddy’s Pizza a few weeks ago. About how easy it is to let our lives get out of balance with work, sports, and other activities. Not long after listening to that discussion, I got the chance to see a lack of balance illustrated very clearly in my own experience.

The thing is, I love checking my e-mail and surfing the internet. Both are useful, and profitable, and easy to do when there’s laundry to wash, my oil needs changed, or a Connection article needs written. Then last weekend, my family got together at a remote cabin in West Virginia. While there are lots of trees and animals and scenery in the area, it’s short on other things that are usually a big part of our lives, like pavement, running water, and stores that sell deodorant (don’t ask). Also—no internet, and bad cell phone service.

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"My Whole Life for God"

A Message from the Pastor

By Rob Swartz

I'd like you to consider reserving a couple of days on your calendar this summer for a marathon. In fact, I believe this event is important enough to consider taking time off work to attend. It's the Xenos

Summer Institute (XSI), a marathon session of preaching and teaching beginning Wednesday evening, July 20th and ending Friday evening, July 22nd.

It may sound crazy to take several valuable summer days to listen to preaching and teaching from morning until night! Being crazy definitely helps—crazy about God and his word. I think of that passage in Deuteronomy where Moses reminded the people of all the words of God. Do you remember what he told them? "Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." (From Deuteronomy 11:18-19) Later on, Moses exhorted them, "Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day...they are not just idle words to you. They are your life."

That's why spending several summer days at XSI isn't crazy or foolish. It's an opportunity for life. There's nothing magical about these days of teaching, but they are a chance to feed on God's words, words of life, to fix them in our hearts and minds, to teach them to our children, to talk about them in the coffee shop and at work, to be thinking about them when we get up and when we go to sleep. God's word is powerful, and if you listen to it, it will change your life.

The theme of this year's summer institute is "My Whole Life For God." Several of us have made plans to attend and we would love to have you join us. A variety of workshops are offered on topics like evangelism, small group leadership, youth and children's ministries, sexual addiction, discipleship, etc. The cost is reasonable for a conference like this—\$50 per adult, and \$15 per student. LCF will help cover the cost, if that's a challenge for you. If you decide to go, please contact Doris by June 20 for the reduced rate. You can register later than this, but the price goes up. Of any conference I have attended, the Xenos Summer Institute has consistently impacted my life the most. I hope to see you there!



For details on the speakers, workshops, etc. visit www.xenos.org/xsi.

Balancing Act continued...

A whole weekend with no e-mail and no need to feel like I should be calling someone about something. It was great! Stepping outside the normal routine put life in perspective. Away from constant daily communication, I had time to read and play board games and swim and hike, and I could clearly see just how much of my normal day is spent hunched over a computer screen, tapping my fingers on little squares.

Life is full of potential extremes. Like balancing on a high wire, it's easy to plunge off into unhealthy focus on anything. Some people eat baby-sized portions of food, hoping their gnawing hunger will pay off in a thin physique. Others eat far more than they need. Some people have to be dragged out of bed by their ankles, and watch the clock all day at work until they can rush home and get in some quality couch lounging. Others give up family and hobbies to accomplish more and more work, never pausing for rest. Some are friends only with themselves, and others have so many friends they can't possibly get to know themselves.

Balance, then, seems like a good thing. But maybe balance is the wrong word. We tend to associate "balance" with stoicism, a sort of staid and sober lack of passion. Not too happy, not too sad, never caring enough about anything to get too wrapped up in it.

I hope I'm not the only one who thinks that's no way to live. I bet balance isn't about being passionless at all. I personally think it's about putting the proper emphasis on things (Rob talks about this concept in this month's "Message from the Pastor" on page 4). Food is great, but not so great that I should spend all day eating it. Sports are fun, but not so important that I should spend all day thinking and talking about them. Work is healthy and good, but not good enough to spend all of life doing it.

Real imbalance, unlike enthusiasm and passion, is sinister and hard to spot. There's nothing inherently wrong with spending time on the computer, or building up a business, or spending time on a hobby. But gradually, those things can take over and we don't even notice.

Sadly, even when we do notice, it's hard to change. After recognizing that my computer time is out of balance, it's up to me to spend less time on the computer—and not just for a week or so, but for good. Lots of people go on "Facebook fasts" or other kinds of fasts from time to time. That's all well and good, but completely useless if we pat ourselves on the back for our self-control and leap right back into overindulgence, now that we've gotten that pesky exercise in balance out of the way.

Without change, imbalance will cost us. But as Richard pointed out in his talk the other weekend, that good balance is hard to achieve. For him, running his own business can create a hectic schedule he can't always avoid. For me, writing and editing work can shackle me behind a computer monitor for hours, and there's not always much I can do about it. But what I can do is put the right emphasis on the things I do, putting all my activities in their proper places. Life will go on if I don't. But like a high-wire artist with poor balance, I'll be missing something.

Dealing with Job Loss

An interview with *Bob Zachrich*



Bob Zachrich worked for Grange Insurance for 10 years. Last November, he was in charge of a unit that dealt with home inspections, when he was told that he was one of 110 people company wide being let go. He was out of a job until late March of this year, when he started working for Hastings Insurance as a claims representative.

Was the layoff something you expected or was it sudden?

Part of my job was to automate the system and I automated it to the point where they didn't need me anymore. But I expected to be reassigned; I didn't expect to be let go.

What was that like?

The day I lost my job was probably the single worst day of my adult life. It was very much like a death of a very close relative. Shock—about three solid days of shock. What am I going to do? I still have bills, I still have a house and a wife and kids and still have commitments. How do I start the process? It's been a long time since I had to apply for a job.

What was that time of searching like for you and your family?

It was really a process of uncertainty. I didn't know if I was going to get a job, where I would get a job, if we were going to have to move. You just didn't know what was going to happen next. Like I said it had been a while since I had interviewed. I'm not old, but I'm also not young. So who knows what people are going to look for. Are they going to value experience? Are they going to want to pay you for experience? The uncertainty I had spread to everyone in the family, and I think there was a lot of concern for what was going to happen next. You can imagine so many horrible things happening, and they very well could have.

Were there any good things about the whole process?

At the time I lost my job, my grandfather, who had been terminally ill with cancer, began really going downhill. He was starting to lose the use of his legs so he needed a lot of help. I needed some time to decompress from the whole shock, so I took the next week and went and stayed with my grandparents, and for the whole week gave my mom and my aunt a break from having to care for him. And then after Christmas, it was either New Year's Eve or the day before New Year's Eve, they called in hospice for him. Mom and Dad of course called all of us and said, "This is probably it." So I packed all my stuff right away, and we all went up there for the weekend. I was able to be with him that whole week, and I was there with my mom and family when he died. I would not have had that opportunity before. I got to cook Grandpa's last meal, because he ate New Year's Day and then didn't eat again.

Was it a time of growth or struggle for your faith?

Actually, because of the extra time it really was a time of growth. Unfortunately it's hard sometimes to have those daily devotional times. Because I had a lot of time, that actually improved significantly through those five months.

Rosedale Bible College was starting an online course this year, so I signed up to take that course. It was really interesting how that worked out. I was concerned with taking this online course and going to Hastings to train (after getting the new job) and not knowing if I was going to be able to keep up with the class work. But it just so happened that my week of training at Hastings was over break at RBC. It's amazing the paths that life takes, and you don't understand the things that happen, but looking back you can just see how things at times just seem to fall in line and work out. It's been a great class. The content is really good. The course work has been pretty challenging for a three credit hour class but I have enjoyed it.

How has this whole experience affected your outlook on life moving forward?

It's definitely a life changing experience, so good or bad, it's going to affect you forever. I can say that it gave me an opportunity to see if I could make it to the next step in the real stresses of life. It worked out and I could see looking back—it's always easier looking back than when you're in it—that God's hand was in a lot of things, spending time with my grandfather, getting involved with this class at RBC. I guess I'm still not at the point where I can say, "The pain in that awful time was all worth it." I'm not quite there yet, but I can see that those good things wouldn't have happened.

One other thing.....over the five months I was unemployed I learned to make an awesome loaf of whole wheat bread!

What advice would you give to people who find themselves in the situation you were in? Beyond learning to bake bread, that is.

After you have done all that is within your power to land a new position, know that God is aware of what is going on, and we just have to trust Him, whatever comes along.

Announcements

Phat Daddy's and Beyond

For the past several months, there has been a breakfast for the men of the church at Phat Daddy's Pizza in London. At the last breakfast, those in attendance tossed around a few ideas for men's activities in the future. The ideas included going on a bike trip, canoeing, paintball, golfing, and going to a Columbus Clippers game. If you have an idea of your own, feel free to share it! E-mail connection@lcfweb.org or talk to Rob Swartz.

Small Group Expanding

The small group led by Andrew Sharp has been made up of those in the post-high school and young adult age group, but is now extending an open invitation to people in the church of any age who would like to connect with a small group. Currently, the members of the group are Andrew and Stephanie Sharp, Jesse Diller, Eric and Brittany Parsons, and Tonya Brenneman. If you are interested in joining the group or attending a meeting or two, get in touch with Andrew Sharp or one of the other members. Andrew's e-mail address is andrewsharp1@gmail.com.

Where Have I Seen You Before?

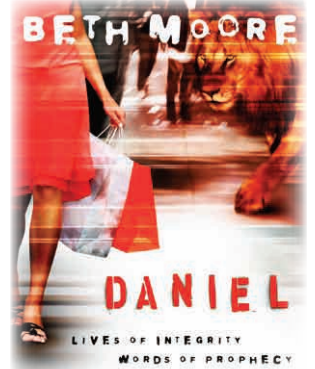
Here are a few LCFers who took part in the youth group mall hunt. Recognize them?



Beth Moore continued...

spoke to them. After watching the DVD, they end by sharing ways they can pray for each other in the coming week.

The Daniel course begins with six weeks of studying about living lives of integrity in a "Babylonian" culture, with the second half covering words of prophecy. "The book of Daniel contains some of my favorite Bible stories. I don't know how you can read about Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace and Daniel in the lion's den and not be amazed!" Doris said. "I have been so challenged by the life of Daniel – from his resolve not to be defiled by the culture around him and his faithfulness in prayer to the exceptional qualities he was known for and his boldness to stand up for what is right."



Mary said Beth Moore identifies with her audience, but it's not just the DVD that teaches in a study like this. "The workbook and digging into other scripture references brings the particular study to life," she said.

"If you would like a deeper relationship with God, consider inviting your neighbors and relatives and have a study of your own," Molly said. LCF has several Beth Moore studies in the church library. "Be bold! What could happen? A little embarrassment?" Molly asked. "Mary happened to be at her mailbox when Brenda said hi and invited her, and we're so glad she did."

Molly accidentally got the chance to invite another one of Dorothy's neighbors when she went into what she thought was Dorothy's house. "It looked so like Dorothy's until a little dog and mystified lady met me in the hall!" she said. "I apologized, gave her a hug and invited her to the study next door. She hasn't come yet. I recommend Brenda's approach."

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What did you think? If any of the stories in this Connection sparked an idea or opinion you'd like to share, email us at connection@lcfweb.org. Editor: Andrew Sharp; Layout: Doris Swartz