

LE5. Mentoring: Who is speaking into my life to help me grow?

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Meeting with my mentor for the first time was like going to therapy. I was ill at ease, not knowing what to expect, but he told me relationships take time to develop, and he wasn't there to judge me, only to help me rise to my potential. It was not an easy session, but it was productive.

I shared my biggest sin pattern, which is submission. Submission to anyone. Talking about it was difficult, seeing that it has been a part of my life from childhood, but he reflected and shared his own experiences and times of struggles and encouraged me to talk and to release. He was an active listener, asking powerful, open-ended questions. He told me there is no need for us to live in denial or pretend to be super strong, show vulnerability. When he said show your vulnerability, I was reminded of the Power of Vulnerability Ted Talk video by Brene Brown. If I am to heal others, I first have to be healed. Spiritual transformation begins when I face my shortcomings to get to where I need to be healed spiritually.

Submission to my husband doesn't make me insignificant or that I give him control of my life. It is trusting him as the head of the household to protect, provide and lead his family. It is laying aside self and respecting his point of view, and sharing my point of view. Submitting to authority does not mean I am weak, inconsequential, or unimportant. It is reverence to Christ. Ephesians 5:21-24 is not saying to yield to another person. It is telling us that we yield to Jesus to be whole.

The second session with my mentor wasn't as challenging to get through. I was more comfortable. I had already come to terms with my false self (artificial persona, that's the term he used) from my readings and the silent retreat. It was just confirming the strongholds in my life that I had taken off to live each day with honesty and transparency. When God helps us take off the mask that we have been hiding behind for so long, we have freedom and live a wholesome,

meaningful life. The heavyweight of the false self that had gripped my life is gone, and I am free, and I am who I am by God's grace, and there is no need to hide behind a mask.

The conversation was rich, and I left challenged but feeling revitalized.

By the third meeting, we were like friends. This time I wasn't as skeptical about sharing. He met me where I was and allowed me to be myself. We shared our prayer ethic. As usual, when I get comfortable with an individual, and especially if we are talking about prayer, I dominate the conversation. My mentor was very quiet. He listened and let me speak. He did manage to get a word in when I told him about PalmHaven and what God was telling me during my 'Guyon' time of stillness. He shared some rewarding and life-changing experiences and quietly reminded me of when Saul didn't wait on God and lost the kingdom. Jennifer, choose to trust God and take Him at His Word. Those quietly spoken words are pivotal.

On the fourth and final meeting, we spoke on cultivating intimacy in my relationship with the Lord. He asked me about my relationship with God and asked me to show him my day. I told him my daily practices regarding my relationship with the Lord, which is waking up in the wee hours of the morning to spend quality time with God before the day awakes. Fasting and sharing the love of God. He encouraged me to continue along the path I was on and to take the time to know God. To share God, you first have to know Him. The more you think you know, the more you need to learn.

From the time I left his presence till today, I have reminisced on the communication skills we developed and the mutual respect we had for each other in such a short period. I know this will be a long-lasting relationship. He took time to diligently share his Christian journey with me and encouraged me to stay focused, and to keep learning. I am thankful for all that he poured into me,

and the wealth of theological knowledge gained made me want more—the challenges, the spiritual disciplines, the spiritual growth, and closure not only from him but from this class.

Thank you, Dr. Walborn!