



The Renewal Series

Change Your Mind, Change Your Life



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Where the Battle Is Waged

Do you want to change your life? I know you do. Otherwise, you wouldn't be reading this right now. And you want to change because you have a set of problems that are bugging you. Problems you just haven't been able to solve. Maybe you are overweight or chronically sick. Maybe you have strained relationships. You've been through a divorce or your kids are making terrible choices.

I totally "get it."

Over the past 15 years, I've helped tens of thousands of women who want to change their life. Specifically, they want to regain their health. They want to lose weight and gain energy. So they enroll in one of my online classes, The 90-Day Renewal, which is based on my best-selling book, *Becoming the Woman I Want To Be: A 90-Day Journey to Renewing Spirit, Soul and Body*.

Although we have people from around the world and from different faiths, the vast majority are Christians. They are women who believe in God, believe in the Bible, and believe they are going to heaven when they die.

They are happy to know they have eternal life, but they are not quite as happy about the condition of their current life. They want to change. They *need* to change. And that's what I've committed my life to helping women do: to change. Specifically, to get healthy in spirit, soul and body.

In this teaching I want to focus on the area of the soul. Our soul encompasses our mind, our will, and our emotions. The battle for Christian women is waged in the soul. Because our spirit is settled. I believe we can feed our spirit and strengthen our spirit and make it stronger and stronger and stronger but the destiny of our eternal spirit is settled. Christ went to the Cross. He paid the price for our sin and so now, in a mysterious way that I don't understand but I'll have to talk about – we are right now seated with Christ in heavenly places.

Our spirit has been set free. It's a done deal. We are going to Heaven. I don't believe anybody or anything can take that from us. Some people might disagree with that but to me, I believe salvation is the gift of God so that no man can boast. And God has given us this free gift that cost Jesus His life.

Now our spirit is free and it's free to soar. I don't believe our spirit can be corrupted. I don't believe that Satan or his demons or any other thing can corrupt our spirit. It is free, it's free from sin, it's free from the Law of Death – that no longer works in the realm of our spirit. The battle is waged in our soul and in our body. That's where the fight is.

Work Out Your Salvation

I remember reading the verse that said, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling." And I didn't understand what it meant until God showed me. What that means is: take what God has already accomplished in your spirit and work it out and make it real in the area of your mind, your will, your emotions, and your body. What Jesus did on the Cross – transforming you from the inside out. Tap into the power that is now available to us through the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Himself told the disciples, *"Hey, listen. You guys think it's great because I'm here with you? But you ain't seen nothing yet. You are going to be so much better off when I return to Heaven."* [Obviously, that's my paraphrase!]

Because when Jesus went to Heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit. A lot of people think, *"Well, you know, if Jesus were literally, physically sitting right here with me and I was watching Him doing the miracles, I'd be a stronger Christian."* But Jesus said that is not the case. He said, "No, no, no." We are stronger now that He's in Heaven because – we're not just sitting next to Jesus, God has taken up residence *inside of us*.

We're NOT Christ-Followers

Peter, James, and John were Christ-followers, they were following Him around. We're more than that! We're Christ-carriers. Christ lives in me. Christ in me. The hope of glory. So now, I'm a Christ-carrier. I strongly dislike the term that's becoming popular in the church: Christ-follower. That is theologically inaccurate; this is much more than semantics.

You are not following Christ. You are *carrying him*.

That's what Jesus was talking about. He was saying, again if I may paraphrase here: *This is going to be so much better. It's going to be so much more powerful when I return and I'm seated at the right hand of the Father reigning and ruling. And I send the Holy Spirit to take up residence within you and it's going to transform you.*

That work? That's completed in your spirit. That's justification: we've been justified with Christ.

But now the sanctification comes. The sanctification, that process of working out our salvation with fear and trembling. One day will be our glorification. I call these the three-ifications. Your justification happened one moment in time. Your glorification will be a moment in time when you stand before God. You die and you stand before Him. Boom! In that moment, you will be transformed into his image — in a glorious body entering into the glory of Heaven for all eternity.

It's About Sanctification

But the sanctification, that's the thing. That's the journey. Sanctification is not a wave of a magic wand, a one-moment event. I do believe that there are events that happen spiritually that kind of bump us from glory to glory. And we move forward and enjoy those quantum leaps.

I see this every day with students in The 90-Day Renewal. They make quantum leaps forward, moving from glory to glory to glory in the area of the soul and it is eventually reflected in the body.

I want to talk with you about the area of the mind because that really is where the battle is waged. The battlefield is the mind.

They asked Jesus, "What is the most important commandment?" Matthew 22:37, "Jesus replied, 'Love the Lord your God.'" Okay, so this is a command. Jesus would not command us to do something we were incapable of doing. So here comes a command – "love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind.'" With all your mind. That's a command. We need to be intentional about loving God with our mind.

Make Up Your Mind

Luke 21:14. "Make up your mind" – Jesus says – "make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourself." Oh my! Someone is just going to make that their theme verse now. Luke 21:14 says *make up your mind*. I think we've become very passive in the United States with our mind:

- ❖ We turn on the television and whatever floats out of the tube, that's what fills our mind.
- ❖ Or we turn on the country music station and whatever floats through the airwaves, that fills our mind.
- ❖ Or we just wake up in the morning, whatever comes floating across the invisible airwaves of our bedroom, that's where our mind goes.

We're walking around the mall and we're just randomly looking around and – *oh, Chick-fil-A*. You've got to have Chick-fil-A.

Or wow, "New sale today, 70% off." And you just allow yourself passively to be led around. You see a sad show and then you're sad. But Jesus said, *No. You be proactive. Make up your mind. You're in charge, you're the boss.*

A Slave-Master Relationship

You have a relationship with your thoughts and it's either slave or master. Either your thoughts will control you or you will control your thoughts. Either you'll be a slave to your thoughts or you will master your thoughts. I would just ask you right now — on a scale of 1-10 (with 0 meaning you are a total slave) — who's in charge: you or your thoughts?

Whatever pops in your head, is that where your thoughts head? We call this "mindless people." They don't formulate their own thoughts. Whatever people tell them, that's what they believe. They're like sheep. Baaaaaaah.

And 10 being you're a complete master of your thoughts. Where are you on that continuum? Because that will really determine the quality of the life that you lead. To the extent that you exercise control over your thoughts, you will have freedom and joy and peace and all these other things.

Isaiah 26:3 promises, *"You will keep in perfect peaceful him whose mind is steadfast because he trusts in You."* When we trust in God and keep our mind steadfast, keep it steady – and we start getting these crazy thoughts, I'm not going to make it. I'm not going to succeed, there's no way. Nothing's working in my life. Stop. And say, *"No, mind. I'm not going to be your slave today. I'm not going to be depressed today. I'm not going to eat Oreos and potato chips and watch TV all day because that's what you feel like doing. I'm the boss. I'm in charge. I'm the master of my own thoughts. I'm not a victim here. I'm not a slave."*

The Bible says in Isaiah 26 that God will keep us in perfect peace when our mind is steadfast. It's steady and it's fixed. Why? Because we trust in Him.

Lamentations 3:20. This is a great one. 20-22. Jeremiah first acknowledges where he's at: *"My soul is downcast within me."* Jeremiah had some really bad stuff happen, right? His country was going into captivity, nobody was listening to him. They threw him into a well. He just really was having a bad day. He said, *"My soul is downcast within me."* I'm having a bad, no-good day. I woke up on the wrong side of the bed. Everything's falling apart. The country is going to you-know-where in a hand-basket.

Yet. That's the next word. He acknowledges there's more to the situation than what he thinks and feels. He's honest: *"I'm in such a bad mood. I don't see anything good happening. Yet, even though I feel bad and feel depressed..."* *"Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope."*

Did you catch the progression? I really want you to get this. Because this is the verse that was just like, Wow! Jumping out at me this morning as I was praying about this.

Acknowledge Your Thoughts & Feelings

Number one, acknowledge. Yeah, I'm feeling depressed. I'm in a down mood. Yet I'm going to be intentional. I'm not going to let my emotions rule. I will call to mind something specific that's going to give me hope in a situation that looks hopeless. He's got a strategy. *"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed. His compassions never fail."*

Jeremiah says, *"I'm looking at the situation, it's making me feel depressed so right now I'm going to snap myself out of it. By a decision of my will, I'm going to choose to focus my mind in a direction that's going to bring hope to me. And that direction is real specific: I'm going to remember God's love and His compassion."*

Ebenezer

When we deliberately think about how much God loves us, all that He's done for us in the past, we can have hope despite our circumstances. I love that word "Ebenezer." The word "Ebenezer"

literally means: "Thus far, he has brought us. Thus far, he has been faithful." Maybe you need to set-up an Ebenezer stone. We had one, a big stone at this church I used to attend. It was a big, huge rock right in the middle of the church. Because that rock was on the land that they believed God was going to give them and of course, He did. They built the church around it. So they had this big Ebenezer rock right in the middle of the church. People would walk in, see this big boulder and ask, "What is that?"

And the church members would explain, "That rock? That's the rock Ebenezer. That is our reminder that thus far, God's been faithful."

No matter how bad it's been – in the words of Elton John, "I'm still standing." That's my testimony. I actually love that line: "*I'm still standing.*" After all these years, I'm still here.

Thirty years ago, I sat down next to the Delaware River, a drug addict. I sat down as a person who was completely out of control. I could not control anything in my life. I was involved with different types of crime. I was promiscuous. I had been an alcoholic and then became a drug addict. I was a drug dealer, dating some guy in the mafia.

My life was completely out of control. I was probably mentally ill, I was a mess. And I sat down at that riverbank and the power of God came over me and He set me free. I'll tell you, I've had many hard times since and a lot of things in my life right now that would tempt me to say, "My soul is downcast within me," just like everybody else listening to the sound of my voice.

But you know what? I can point to that rock of Ebenezer and say, "God's not let me down. There's been some tough times but His love remains. I've not been consumed. His great love has been with me. His compassions haven't failed me. No matter what mistakes I've made, He's forgiven me. No matter what wrong choices or wrong paths I've gone down, even though I'm not the woman I want to be. Yet His love is there with me. His compassion is with me. And thus far, God has led me."

Record Your Victories in a Book

We've got to choose to focus our mind on all the victories.

I shared this when we talked about David, when we talked about Abigail. Abigail said to David, "Remember all the victories you have won. Don't get so caught up in how your mind is going crazy about the situation you're in right now. Force your mind to recall all the amazing things that God has done" (paraphrased).

And this is your assignment for today: I want you to get out a piece of paper or in fact get out a notebook and make it your Ebenezer. Go to Walmart. For 50 cents, you can get a brand new notebook. And write on the front of it "Ebenezer. Thus far, He's led me. Thus far, He's been faithful." And you fill that book with every good thing that God has done in your life, every good thing you've seen God do. You fill that book.

When your mind starts trying to tell you, "It's never going to get any better. Look at the mess you're in. You may as well just eat a bag of Oreos and go back to bed or watch a soap opera. Why don't you just don't read a romance novel and feel sorry for yourself?"

You take out that Ebenezer notebook and say, *You know what, brain? You're crazy. Let's remind ourselves what God has done and then we will have hope.* Jeremiah says, "This I call the mind, God's loving compassion, therefore I have hope because I've seen what God has done before I know what he's capable of" (paraphrased).

I don't know, is it me? This encourages me. I love the Bible because it's so real. Jeremiah doesn't say, "Well, praise the Lord. Hallelujah. Thank You Jesus." Yeah, I'm just not real patient with the phoniness kind of a thing. I'm talking about real stuff, okay?

Be Made New

Ephesians 4:23. Again, here's a command. This is from Paul. He said, "Be made new in the attitude of your mind." You. You do it.

Be made new. Get a new attitude, a new you. Jesus taught The B-Attitudes. Because your attitude determines who you'll be, who you'll become. It's all attitude.

Philippians 3:19 says – it's talking about the people we don't want to be. It says, "Their destiny is destruction. Their god is their stomach. Their glory is in their shame." This verse is talking about way too many Americans. That's why bad things are going to happen. But then it's all going to be good because the darker it gets, the brighter the church is going to shine. But I do think that there are a lot of people in America who fit that description. Their destiny is destruction. Their god is their stomach. Their glory is their shame. "Their mind is on earthly things." That's where their mind is. Their mind is on earthly things. Is that where our mind should be? Well, okay. Listen. **If your stomach is your god, then your mind is on earthly things.** Ouch.

Peace Guards Your Mind

Philippians 4 – I'm moving right along from that – Philippians 4:7 talks about presenting your requests to God with prayer and thanksgiving. When we present those to God, "The peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard our mind." What I want you to grab out of that is that God says His peace will guard your mind. How many of you need to set a guard? Wouldn't that be great? Can you picture like a little centurion guy? Got the outfit, he's got the hat, he's got the sword or whatever. God says, "Listen. If you will present all the things that are bothering you to Me – just give them to Me then I will put a guard at your mind. It will block out those thoughts."

Where The Mind Goes

Colossians 3:2. We're seeing this over and over in scripture, aren't we? "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." Where is your mind set? Where the mind goes, the man follows. Where the mind goes, your life follows. Change your mind, change your life. Again, we can do our little scale of 0 to

10. Watch yourself today. What is your mind focusing on throughout the day?

Are you thinking about how hungry you are and what you want to eat and how you're tired and you really want to sit on the couch instead of going for a walk? Are you focused on earthly things or have you set – and again, this is clearly a choice of the will – have you set your mind on things above?

Fill your mind with what we're doing in the 90-Day Renewal. Fill your mind with those affirmations. I was thinking about this. Every one of us should have those little index card folders.

You know what I mean? You get spiral-bound **index cards**. Again, you all need to go to Walmart as soon as you hang up. (or just order on [amazon](#))



I love these. They have them like in white or various colors. Get those index cards, spiral bound and fill it with scripture verses. Fill it with your affirmations from the 90-Day Renewal or the 90-Day Jumpstart if you've done that or going to do that next.

Fill it with positive quotations or little notes. Sisters, I'm telling you something. I have written entire books just from my little index cards that I saved up. I if get enough – if I open my cabinet right here above my head, it's filled with these little index card notebooks. It's so easy. You carry it in your purse, wherever you go. A lot of the ladies when I was teaching at the local church decorated laminated the cover. Then you can carry it around in your purse – and listen to me. Put it on your nightstand. Put it under your pillow.

Then as you're falling asleep at night or first thing every morning, open up your index cards and be intentional about what you're going to set your mind on that day. Take a Bible verse or pick an affirmation. Then focus your attention on that. Again, that's why I think you need to do your 90-Day Renewal first thing in the

morning because it will give you a scripture verse. Maybe rewrite that on an index card or rewrite that on a post-it note. Stick it in your pocket or stick it in your pocketbook. Put it on the refrigerator.

Same with the affirmation. Write it out on a Post-it note or a couple Post-it notes and just stick it around the house. Stick it on your bathroom mirror. That's what I'm going to think about today. I'm setting my mind. I'm choosing where my mind is going to go.

Do Not Conform

And of course our key verse, we can't talk about the mind without talking about Romans 12:2: "Do not conform." Again, this is a command, right? This is a command from God. *"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed" – how? "by the renewing of your mind."*

Yes, we need to go to church. The pastor at my church is doing an amazing series and you go and you listen to him for a half-hour, forty-five minutes. That's great. But I love you enough to tell you that will not change your life. It just won't. No way – it's not going to happen because we're in the Information Age and we are bombarded with information.

Information Forms Our Thoughts

Information forms our thoughts. I promise you that 99% of the information that's forming your thought patterns is not Godly and is not good unless you are intentional about it. When I get in my car, it's either on the Christian radio station or now more often, I'm listening to Teaching CDs. When they finish the sermon series at church, I buy it and then I listen to it over and over again. Or I go on the Internet to download the podcast. So when I'm out walking, I'm going to have my iPod on. [Now it's iPhone]

I promise you, my iPhone is not filled with a bunch of stupid, secular love songs that are going to make me discontent with my

life. My iPhone is filled with good teaching. You can download this one to your iPhone! In fact, I do. I download these sessions and then I critique myself. If I get too depressed, I jump forward and I'm like, "Ugh."

Anyway, I listen to teaching, I listen to worship. Every day when I'm getting ready in the morning, I'm doing my make-up and doing my hair, I have teaching tapes or I have worship music playing. If I'm in the kitchen and I'm making dinner, guess what? Worship music or teaching tapes. I am constantly, every day being intentional about filling my mind with Godly thoughts, filling my mind with things worth thinking about.

Be Intentional

If all you do is turn on the television set or just turn on the secular radio or just the silence of your own wacky thoughts, you're never going to be transformed. You're going to be conformed. If you're undisciplined, you're not going to get there. We've got to be intentional. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world. **What I'm saying is: unless you're intentional, you will be conformed.**

You're like a little piece of Play-Doh and you're just kind of being conformed into the image of the world. Instead, be transformed by the renewing of your mind. That cannot happen once a week, that's gotta be every day. And not even just once a day or I-have-my-Quiet-Time-and-then-on-my-merry-way. No, your Quiet Time and then throughout the day, keep renewing your mind. Then and only then you will be able to test and approve what God's Will is – His good, pleasing, and perfect will. We want the perfect will.

Settle the Matter

1 Corinthians 7:37. "The man who has settled the matter." Note it's talking about marriage and singleness. So the context is not relevant but I'm just showing you something that the scripture reveals about the function of the human mind. *"The man who has*

settled the matter in his own mind but is under no compulsion but has control over his own will and who has made up his mind."

I'm going to read that again because I want you to get this. 1 Corinthians 7:37. "The man who has settled the matter in his own mind who is under no compulsion but has control over his own will and who has made up his own mind." Now I'll tell you: this impulsivity was one of the biggest enemies in my life. In fact there was a time not long ago where I wrote down "Enemy #1 = Impulsivity" I wrote it at the top of one of my prayer journals. Because I would just wake up in the morning and a thought would pop in my head and it might even be from a Bible verse or something I read. *That's it! That's it!* Boom! Change direction.

Impulsivity is an Enemy

Impulsive. Stop everything I'm doing. Boom! I'm going in a new direction. I'm telling you, I meet Christians like this. They're very impulsive. I was the absolute worst! I really feel like God has made major progress just in the last six months in my life because I used to be so impulsive. Like e-mails. I would just write whatever popped into my head and then press "Send" and Boom! Just send it out not thinking about how someone might react or whose feelings might be hurt or how it might be misconstrued by someone. Very, very impulsive. And this verse is saying: Don't be impulsive.

Don't be compelled by whims and fantasies.

We have to exercise control over our will. We have to stop and say, "No, wait a minute. This is a course of action that I've set myself to. This is a decision that I've made and I've consulted with people in my life. I talked with my husband. I talked with my friends. I talked with my pastor. I prayed about it. I researched it. I've made my decision. I'm setting out on this course, this is how I've laid it out step by step. I've planned my work, I'm working my plan." And then you stay the course.

We taught this in my other study, The 90-Day Jumpstart, about the night before planning out your day and making up your mind.

I hope you're getting this. You make up your mind the night before. You settle the matter and you write down: *Okay, I've made up my mind, this is my #1 and my #2 priority for tomorrow. That's what I'm going to do. And then I want to try to do these other things but I'm definitely going to do these top two.*

Plan Your Day

Make out a list of 10 things that you've made up your mind are important and need to be done. Then note the top two. Okay, these are the two most important things. Then set your mind and do them. Rather than waking up and then just wherever the day goes and wherever you feel like going, just meander through the hours. Or bounce around like a little ping-pong ball. Or, what does that machine called? Not ping pong... I can't remember it. You know, this little machine. Pinball! There you go. Pinball. And the balls just go bouncing all over the place and you get to the end of the day and you didn't do any of the 10 things that you set your mind the night before you were going to do it.

Does this make sense? You just get this compulsion of *"Oh, I can't do any of those things. I've gotta go do something else."* Totally unrelated and unconnected. I'm telling you about my own life and what I've struggled with. And what I see in women that prevents them from becoming who God would have them to be. We need to make a decision just like this verse says. Settle it in our mind the night before. This is what—as far as I can control it —my day is going to look like. And go with it.

The day better include:

- * Starting your morning with God. Spending time with Him.
- * It needs to include getting in your daily exercise.
- * It needs to include focused time with your family.
- * It needs to include exercising self-control over what you're eating and your diet.

You decide. You are in charge. We do not have to be slaves to impulses. We don't have to be ruled by impulses or compulsions that just come from nowhere. We can exercise self-control. We can set our minds. God has given us the ability to do that otherwise He wouldn't command us to do that.

Porcupine State of Mind

That was just all that God gave me this morning. I'm excited about this. But now I want to talk about this thing with "The Porcupine State of Mind." Let me tell you the story of how God gave me this illustration. I was invited to speak at a retreat center about an hour and a half from where my family lives. I thought, *I want to be a good witness to my family and share the love of Jesus with them.*

So I flew in a few days early and I'm going to stay with my sister. She's one of my best friends, we're very, very close. I'm telling you, I was not at her house a half hour when we got into a knock-down, drag-out fight about something that happened to me when I was in Eight Grade. I'm telling you, we were going at it. We were ready to rip each other's heads off. Because I know what happened to me when I was in Eight Grade.

She was determined that I was wrong but I knew that I was right and I was not the problem, she was the problem because I was right and she was wrong and I knew that she was wrong. We were just going back and forth.

For the next three days at her house, I couldn't think straight. I couldn't read my Bible. Remember I had supposedly made up my mind before I got on the airplane? I had set my mind that I was going to be a positive witness to my family. That was the whole reason I was flying in three days early. To try to spend time with them and to share my faith with them and share my life with them.

But now, what happened? I'm at the kitchen table and this compulsion comes over me. This impulse that I've got to prove I'm right about what happened in Eight Grade. Does that matter

at all? Yet for three days: Can't read my Bible, I can't pray, I'm not even having a conversation with my sister! I'm ignoring her, and in my mind – I couldn't even sleep! Because I was marshaling all these good points in my brain that I could prove to her that I was right and she was wrong.

Have you ever like practiced in the mirror? This is what women do. Someone's hurt our feelings or done something wrong, so we like literally practice in the mirror what we're going to say to set them straight. I call them my silent sermon. Sometimes I even practice aloud. Like what I'm going to say and really prove them wrong.

Finally, my dad drove me down to this conference center. I stepped onto the elevator and there on the elevator, I literally heard God speak to me. You want to know what He said? He said, "Donna, you're right, she's wrong. Look how far it got you. You're nothing but a porcupine." And I'm like, What? Did God just call me a porcupine?

What IS a Porcupine?

I started thinking about it. What's a porcupine? **It's a creature with a lot of good points but nobody wants to be around it.** I thought, What a picture of my life too often. I've got a lot of good points because my mind is busy – my mind is like a "good point manufacturing" machine. It's like a full-time, around the clock industry. All of my good points that always prove how I'm right. All my good points that prove I'm not the problem and everybody else is wrong and everybody else is the problem. And if they would just listen to me and follow my advice and do what I tell them to do and what I think we should do then everything would be great in the world.

If my family, if my church, if my friends, if everybody would just listen to me, it'd be great.

We have all of our good points – it's "The Porcupine State of Mind." You want to know how far it gets you? It gets you nowhere. It gets you nowhere. This message that God gave me

has so resonated with Christian women. Because what trips us up – we love God, we want to do the right thing, we believe all the right things, we go to church, we're not alcoholics anymore, we're not drug addicts anymore, we're not running around with men anymore. We've been set free of all those things.

That's not what trips us up anymore. For so many of us, it's not our own sin but our sinful response to the sin of others. Our sinful response to the disappointment of life— of things just not going our way and not turning out right. I've gotta tell you, sisters, this was such a battle in my life. The battle of my mind was the battle to drive out the porcupine that had taken up residence in my head. It was literally so exhausting to listen to that little porcupine talking all day long. *I can't believe she said that. I can't believe he did that. Why did she say that? Why did he do that? Well, that's not right.*

Whenever you hear yourself saying, "I think" or "I don't think" "I want" "You know what I want?" "You know what I really want?" or "I feel" – whenever you have any of those, you are in a "Porcupine State of Mind" because you're marshaling all of your good points.

Marshaling Armies

One of the things that God has shown me so powerfully and even on a deeper level this past week as I've prayed about it. I knew I wanted to share the Porcupine with you. But it's really deeper than that. All of my life, I have been marshaling mental armies. And God has created and destined me to raise up armies. That is what I'm called to. I am a mobilizer in the body of Christ. That is my call. It's to raise up an army.

With the 90-Day Renewal, I'm trying to raise up an army of wise, well women. Women who are healthy in spirit, soul, and body. An army of women who will rise up and go into their communities and go into the world. Women who will be healthy and whole and strong and lead people. People in this country are desperately,

desperately crying out for the health and wholeness and the well-being that is available to us as Christ-carriers.

I'm raising up an army of women, that's my destiny. Mobilizing literal armies. But you know what I've spent my life doing instead? *Mobilizing little mental armies*. Little soldiers in my head that could fire off verbal volleys against anybody who hurt my feelings. Is this making sense?

An interesting thing about the porcupine is that when everything is going its way—it's not angry, it's not afraid, everybody's being nice to it— it's a beautiful balmy day and it's just kind of sitting there in the forest. It's actually very soft. No problem. Wonderful. But the minute someone disturbs it, the minute life is not going exactly the porcupine's way, forget it! The minute it's angry, it's afraid—the minute life is not going exactly the way the porcupine wants it. Out come the quills and look out, world.

The Porcupine State of Mind

I thought, *Wow, isn't that a picture of us?* I'm the most spiritual, godly woman in all the world when I'm in my prayer chair in the morning. And then my family wakes up. Right? And that Porcupine State of Mind, I'm telling you, this is something that so many Christian women struggle with. When I do my live events, I literally have "Porcupine-Drowning Ceremonies." You should come to one of the events, you can have one at your church. We drown the porcupine and say, *"No, I'm not going to listen to you."*

The Bible says that we can take every thought captive. I think what we need to do when we hear ourselves marshaling our good points to prove that we're right or to prove that someone else is wrong or that life isn't fair etc. etc. I think you know what I'm talking about. Take that thought captive and make it obedient. Make it obedient to Christ.

Your mind is a battlefield in the spiritual war. It is the battlefield in a spiritual war and we can take those thoughts captive but it's up to us. I'm not sure if I've shared this before but it's worth sharing again. Again, I was in my prayer chair and allowing God

to speak to me – the reason I like writing books is because God has spoken into my life so many times through books. I was reading a book one day and it had a poem in it that said this:

"A bitter old woman is one of the crowning works of the devil."

A Bitter Old Woman

That sentence just pierced my heart because I knew that's where I was heading. Because I wasn't a drug addict anymore. I wasn't an alcoholic anymore. I wasn't going out to the bars and picking up guys anymore. I wasn't doing any of those things but my mind was so filled with thoughts about how everybody had done me wrong and how nobody was fair to me and nobody ever gave me a break.

My mind was filled with these bitter thoughts. I could always justify it and say, "Well, I'm absolutely right." But where is it getting me? I was becoming one of the crowning works of the devil. He wants your mind to be his playground. He wants your mind to be filled with bitter thoughts or he wants it to just be an empty place that bounces around. He'll take either one – a passive mind or a mind that's playing around with his kind of thoughts. He'll plant bitter thoughts! I believe this. If you go read C.S. Lewis' ***Screwtape Letters***, it's about a senior devil coaching a junior devil on how to tempt people, especially church people. It's funny but I think C.S. Lewis knows how the devil works and how the human mind works because it is just so accurate. He wants to plant those destructive and negative thoughts.

And then there's one other that I want to share with you and again, I think I may have shared this before but it's really one of my absolute favorites and one that God used in my life in a powerful way. Once again, I had been crying out to God because even though I loved God, I was chronically sick and tired. I know I've shared this with you because that's why I wrote this book because I was so sick of being sick. Even though I read the Bible, I was chronically sick and tired.

I'd taken out a notebook and I'd written on the top "What is the source and the solution to my chronic illness?" Because clearly, the solution was not antibiotics or cough drops or cough medicine or any of these other things that treated the symptoms. I was on antidepressants at the time also. I said, "God, what's the source and solution to my chronic illness and my chronic depression? I love You, God. I don't want to live like this anymore." I know that there are Christian women who truly love God and are chronically sick and tired and depressed. I know it because I've been there. I read in a devotional book called ***Come Away, My Beloved*** sitting there in my little rocking chair and I read these words:

How can I give you healing for your body while there is anxiety in your mind? So long as there is dis-ease in your thoughts, there shall be disease in your body. You have need of many things, but one thing in particular you must develop for your own preservation and that is an absolute confidence in my loving care.

Sisters, isn't that exactly what Jeremiah said? I mean, isn't it exactly what he said? Let me go back to that Jeremiah verse. "My soul is downcast within me yet this I call the mind, and therefore I have hope because of the Lord's great love." We are not consumed for His compassions never fail. It's Lamentations 3:20-22. Same thing. "Jesus said, 'Come to Me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest.'" When your mind is at rest, your body will build health.

Who Needs An Army?

Remember the Isaiah 26:3. "You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast because he trusts in You." Are you hearing it? Absolute confidence in God's loving care. When we truly believe that God is looking out for us, then our mind can be at rest.

You want to know why my mind was a battlefield, always marshaling all my good points? Do you want to know why my mind was filled with an army of porcupines that were ready to

lash out with good points at anybody who didn't do things my way? Because my heart was not at rest with the love of God. I was not convinced in my own heart that God loved me and would look out for me so I had to defend myself.

You know who needs an army? Someone who needs to be defended. When you believe that God is your Defender, you don't need an army anymore. I am preaching to myself. Get it. When you become convinced deep in your mind, deep in your soul, that God has an army of angels defending you – that God himself is your Defender, your Avenger, He is your Vindicator. At that moment, you no longer need to marshal your own army because you don't need to defend yourself and vindicate yourself. You don't need to fight for yourself, you let God fight for you. This is so huge.

I was sitting in church one day – it's years ago – I was looking around and – anyway, I'll make a long story short. People gossip – I know this wouldn't happen at any of your churches but this church I was at, people were gossiping. Women were gossiping about each other and they were gossiping about me. And a really nasty rumor was being spread about me and it got back to me. I was sitting there at church and I was marshaling all my good points. I was going to march into the pastor's office, I was going to tell him, "After all I've done for this church and all I've done for these women, they want to talk about me behind my back? You better fire this person and you better tell....."

Are you with me?

I was sitting there and I was in my Porcupine State of Mind and I was getting my army ready to go in there and fire off all my ammunition. I can't even describe it but it was like I felt God put His hand on my shoulder and speak to me. It was one of those moments where God came down. He said, "Daughter, I've got your back." It was one of the most powerful moments in my entire 30 years of following God and carrying Christ. He said, "Daughter, I've got your back."

God's Got Your Back

"I've got your back" is a military term, sisters. In war, each individual soldier needs to fight the real battle that they're called to; each one has to fulfill his assignment. And they need to know that their fellow soldiers will watch their back so they don't have to be distracted. And God said to me, "Daughter, I have given you a real Kingdom assignment. A real Kingdom assignment. And it's not proving that you're right or defending yourself, that's for sure. Your Kingdom assignment is mobilizing an army of young people for The Great Commission. Your mission is mobilizing an army of women who are healthy in spirit, soul, and body who will do the work of advancing the Kingdom. That's your mission, daughter. Focus on that. I've got your back. I'll fight these other little battles for you. Don't focus on them. Don't worry about them. I've got your back."

My mind doesn't need to concern itself with all that other stuff. I need to set my mind on things above. Set my mind on the high call of God for my life. Let my mind be filled with the assignment of God, the call of God on my life and God will take care of all these little skirmishes and all these little battles. He'll fight them for me. I don't need to marshall my army of porcupines to defend me. And then my mind can be at rest. My mind can be at peace because it trusts in Him.

God has got your back. So keep your mind at rest. Many of you have heard me say that my life motto is this: "Soul at rest, body in motion." I want to be a soul at rest and a body in motion. The more your soul, your mind, your will, and your emotions are at rest in God, having absolute confidence in God's loving care – the more your soul is at rest in Him, the more your body will be energized so that you can go out and do and be all that God has called you to do and be.

Well that's a lot for today, isn't it?

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, I can see plainly that we have struck a chord. That I am not the only Christian woman who truly loves God but struggles with my mind. Lord I freely admit today that sometimes my mind is still a battlefield strewn with porcupines marshaling their good points, trying to defend me from anyone that I perceive as attacking me, opposing me, being unfair to me, taking advantage of me.

Lord I just cry out to You today even as I know many of these women are crying out to you right now. I say God, let me demobilize this army. Let me demobilize this army. I don't need to defend myself. God I thank You that my mind can be at rest because You are my Defender. God I thank You that my mind can be a peaceful place; that I can rest securely in Your loving care.

God, I thank You that You've got my back. You've got my back. Lord forgive us for all the times that we've been distracted fighting battles that just didn't need to be fought. Those unnecessary battles have taken away time and energy that we should've spent on the real battle which is the battle to take the Light of the Gospel at Jesus Christ into all the world.

I pray that You would use this teaching today to empower many women to win the battle for the mind. To win the victory over the porcupine. And to move closer to becoming the women that they want to be. And I ask this in the name of our King Jesus and for the sake of His Kingdom, amen.

If you enjoyed this book, turn to the next page to see how you can get even more support just like this!

Love & Prayers,

~ Donna

Get The Love & Support You Deserve

This book is just a small example of the power-packed teachings included in The 90-Day Renewal for Spirit, Soul & Body. This exclusive training program is offered just four times per year during strictly-limited open enrollment periods.

If you'd like to be notified the next time we have enrollment, just click here to attend the next presentation of "7 Secrets for Weight Loss from the Inside-Out": www.donnapartow.org/real

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for Weight Loss
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1. I've lost a few more pounds and have been maintaining my weight right smack in the middle of my ideal healthy weight range.

2. I doubled my wardrobe. I am now the same jean size as my super fit, slim husband. Haha!



*Jeff, Irene &
Evangelina Enriquez*
California

3. In October, my little family has moved out of my dad's house into our own cozy place. This is a big deal because I've been saying this affirmation for 4 months: "I have a place to live with my husband and our kids that is all our own. It's the perfect size, in a safe neighborhood, clean, comfortable, and in great condition."

4. I recently started a new home-based business as part of fulfilling this affirmation: "I bring in a lucrative stream of income apart from what my husband makes without taking time away from raising and investing in my family. We are financially free."

5. My husband received his water baptism this past week. An answered prayer of mine from 2009!

6. I was approached by my pastors about becoming an elder of our church.

7 Secrets
for Weight Loss
From the Inside-Out
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Sol Padilla
Mexico

My legs are getting toned. My back and joint pain are gone due to all the water I have been drinking. I was so dehydrated. I feel much better. I have been without caffeine for weeks ... that's a lot for someone who jumped out of the bed to fix a cup of coffee to wake up.

7 Secrets
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.....
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This has changed not only my life — but has also changed my husband's and son's lives by changing their habits from bad to good.

Dolores Wilson
Australia

7 Secrets
for Weight Loss
From the Inside-Out
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Just want to tell you what a blessing you have been to me. One of my goals was to become more courageous. I know the Lord has stripped away more fear from my life than I could have imagined and I know a lot of that is as a direct result of your coaching and example. So just a note to thank you and look forward to what is in store next!

Jane Elizabeth Bray
Hong Kong

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Something in me shifted and I desired freedom from my sugar addiction. I have said good bye to 28 pounds and 34 inches. I feel fantastic, I have so much energy, and for the first time in a long time I like what I see in the mirror. I am beginning to see the reflection of what God desires me to be.

I am being renewed on the inside and transformed on the outside. My doctor recently told me that ***my inside is cleaning up and my outside is catching up.***

Therese Giapponi
Connecticut

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I think differently about food and what I choose to eat. One of the things that I have struggled with for years was mindless eating especially in the evenings and weekends. I shared this with Donna during a live call and she agreed with me that it was a stronghold in my life and prayed for me. I started doing a specific strategy that we mapped out and my life has changed dramatically as the Lord has broken this stronghold in my life. I have no longer any desire to eat mindlessly!

Gina Dickson

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