



# Up Close and Personal

A Conversation with Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

## Revive Our Hearts

### Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth reminisces . . .

**How well I remember receiving that** call from Dennis Rainey, which—long story short—culminated two years later in the launch of *Revive Our Hearts*. Dennis (founder of FamilyLife Today) had no way of knowing that his call had been preceded by God's—that the Lord had been birthing in my heart a strong and inescapable sense of mission: to believe Him for a movement of revival and reformation in the hearts and homes of Christian women.

From the outset, I had realized that embracing this calling would require swimming upstream. The thought of launching out into the deep with a daily radio program was even more daunting. The Lord graciously shepherded my heart through the initial point of surrender and then a lengthy process of seeking to know His will on the matter. (This booklet includes some excerpts from my journal written during this time.)

It's probably a good thing the Lord didn't show me how drastically my life would change once the decision was made to proceed. In one fell swoop, I was tossed into a tempest of harder work, longer hours, tighter deadlines, and greater challenges than I had ever faced in my life. But the grace of God has been so real each step of the way.

Not only have I grown personally in many different realms, but we are also being given the opportunity to proclaim Christ and to speak truth into the lives of women in a way that is desperately needed in our day.

As a result, lives and homes are being sanctified, God is being magnified and glorified, and His Kingdom is being furthered in this world. What a great privilege! And what a joy to be yoked together with you in fulfilling that mission. *Thank you, Lord!*

Great is His faithfulness!

Nancy Leigh DeMoss

## Excerpts from Nancy's Journals

**September 15, 1997**

I have been reading about the historical development of secular and religious feminism. My spirit is exercised within me. . . . As I read their writings, I am angry at the powerful lies that have been foisted on a whole generation of women, at the pervasiveness of feminist thinking in our whole culture, and at the extent to which Christian women have bought into the whole philosophy.

What can be done to turn the tide? What does God want *me* to do? A handful of women have succeeded by their writings and influence in destroying and brainwashing an entire generation with their godless philosophies. What could God do with a handful of women who were determined to "reclaim surrendered ground"?

I don't have in myself the ability, the courage, or the drive to tackle this matter in the way it needs to be done. But I can't help but wondering, what if this issue were crucial to bringing our generation back to God and His Word? What if this is a necessary part of "turning many to righteousness" in preparation for a visitation of God from on high?

O Father, I ask that You would guard my heart; protect/keep me from the evil one; guard my mind. Help me to understand Your heart, Your ways, and Your Word. Grant me courage to face whatever task You place upon me. May You be glorified and Your ways exalted through my life.

**September 17, 1997**

*One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the Lord your God is He who fights for you, as He promised you (Josh. 23:10 NKJV).*

This word gives faith to my heart, as I have been contemplating the possibility that God might want me to become more engaged in confronting the influence of feminism by promoting a biblical view of womanhood. I have felt that to do so would be to spend the rest of my life in the "lions' den"--and to take on a battle that there is no hope of winning--the enemy has done such a masterful and thorough job of deception and devastation.

But I am reminded of numerous situations in which God placed His children in a position where they were hopelessly outnumbered--that He might show them that "the battle is the Lord's." If this is a battle of *His* choosing for me, then *He* will fight for me, *He* will conquer the unconquerable, *He* will cause the walls of Jericho to fall, *He* will defeat the enemy, no matter how numerous or deeply entrenched they may be.

**April 16, 1998**

*Sing, O barren one, who did not bear;  
break forth into singing and cry aloud,  
you who have not been in labor!  
For the children of the desolate one will be more  
than the children of her who is married" says the Lord.*

*Enlarge the place of your tent,  
and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out;  
do not hold back; lengthen your cords  
and strengthen your stakes.*

*For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left,  
and your offspring will possess the nations  
and will people the desolate cities." ~Isaiah 54:1-3*

The Holy Spirit quickened this passage to my heart this morning. Are you wanting to make me more fruitful? Are there steps I am to take to "enlarge the place of [my] tent" in preparation for the blessing to come? Are you planning to give me spiritual "offspring"?

I envision countless women being set free from sin, self, pride, rebellion, and bitterness--released to love God with all their hearts, to love their husbands and children, to populate our desolate, ungodly communities.

**December 2, 1999**

Two days ago, I met with the FamilyLife team in Little Rock to discuss the possibility of launching a radio program for women. This thought has been simmering in my heart for the past couple years, and I sense the Lord is now pressing me to give it more serious consideration.

Yesterday I felt prompted to begin a twenty-one-day fast, as the Lord enables, to seek Him on this matter. My mind and heart are flooded with a multitude of thoughts as I contemplate this challenge. I feel a bit like Moses at the burning bush, telling God all the reasons I am not qualified to fulfill His call and fervently hoping He will raise up someone else for the task!

Interestingly, like Moses, when I was half the age I am now, I had all kinds of aspirations and self-confidence. But now, when it may be God's timing to thrust me out, I am filled with reservations and reticent to step out.

I am torn between that lifelong vision of 1 Corinthians 7—the call as a single woman to wholehearted, reckless abandon to the will of God—and my natural longings for “normalcy,” security, and a private life of my own.

This undertaking would require:

- faith (lots of it!)
- dependence
- discipline
- God—His calling, enabling, undergirding
- launching out into the deep
- perseverance/endurance
- sacrifice

I must know *You* are the One calling. And then, *You* must give me grace to say, “Yes, Lord.”

*Send me anywhere, Lord;  
only go with me.  
Lay any burden on me;  
only sustain me.*

*And sever every tie, but the time  
that binds me to Thy service and Thy heart. (David Livingstone)*

## **January 1, 2000**

*"At your word I will let down the nets' . . . [Peter] and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken" (Luke 5:5, 9)*

Faith in and obedience to His word, paved the way for the miracle. Futility and fruitlessness gave way to abundance. As He is wont to do, Jesus didn't just give an average (or above average) catch. He demonstrated His great power by providing an abundant, overflowing catch. "Much fruit" is the result of abiding in Him--of walking in faith and obedience.

I don't want to settle for small, predictable outcomes that are merely equal to time and effort expended. If and when You want to send a "great catch" of souls, I want to be there in the boat with You, letting down my nets at Your word. I want those around to be astonished at what You do that exceeds all human possibilities. Grant, I pray You, *much fruit*, for Your glory alone, and for the sake of Your great kingdom.

## **April 16, 2000**

For the first time today (after months of prayer and waiting on the Lord), I sense that He is giving me the freedom to pursue developing a radio ministry. There has been released within me this morning a flood of ideas in relation to format, approach, etc., as well as peace and confidence that He can enable me to do what has seemed like a virtually impossible task (and it *is*, apart from Him). He is giving faith and a clear-cut burden to reach women in this way.

The passage on Apollos in Acts 18:24-28 has been my first biblical "light" on the matter. Among other things that spoke to me in that passage, is Apollos' "mission statement": *"[He] helped them much which had believed through grace"* (v. 27). How I long to come alongside women who "have believed," and help them in their walk with God.

I have no illusions about this being easy or pain-free. To the contrary, I expect to be challenged and stretched beyond anything I have experienced in ministry to this point.

I will continue to wait on the Lord to confirm His leading through the Scripture, through godly counsel, and through the unfolding of circumstances.

*Show me Your ways, O Lord;  
Teach me Your paths.  
Guide me in Your truth,  
and teach me.  
For You are God my Savior,  
and my hope is in You all day long.  
(Ps. 25:4-5)*

### **May 13, 2000**

*One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the Lord your God is He who fights for you, as He promised you. Therefore take careful heed to yourselves, that you love the Lord your God. (Josh. 23:10-11).*

Lord, I want to live in the realm of the supernatural--to walk and wage war by faith. I am one very small, weak, foolish, struggling, limited, wavering woman. But You are a great God. Nothing is too difficult for You. Fill me with Your Spirit and use me for Your purposes and glory.

My part is to love You, cleave to You, obey You, listen to You, follow You, and be wholly available to You. Your part is to fight and win the battles. May I not "limit" You by unbelief or by a heart that turns aside from following You.

### **May 20, 2000**

As Judges 6 begins, we see Gideon as a fearful man--as he had good reason to be! (vv. 11, 27). God dealt with Gideon's fears by revealing Himself to be a present, powerful God--more powerful than the Midianites. As Gideon experienced the power of God, his fears gradually subsided. His trust was transferred from human strength, resources, and options to divine ones.

Before dealing with the matter of the Midianites, God directed Gideon to deal with the *root* issue, which was the idolatry of the Israelites. Gideon was to tear down the altar of Baal that his father had erected and the grove that was by it. In their place, he was to build an altar to the Lord and offer a sacrifice to Jehovah on the altar.

God was declaring His sovereignty over all other gods. He was setting Himself forth as the supreme, living God, to whom His people owed their loyalty, allegiance, and worship.

I see here a description of what I sense to be God's calling in my own life, to throw down the altars of false gods that Christian women in our generation have erected—false, deceptive thinking; temporal values; immoral ways; self-centered living, etc.—and to build in their place an altar to the Lord, to declare His ways and His right to rule over all our ways.

I probably don't wrestle with fear as much as I do with feelings of inadequacy, comparing myself to more "heavyweight" contributors and wanting to stay back on the "threshing floor" rather than launching out into the demands of more public ministry.

However, God's commission cannot be ignored: "*Do not I send you?*" (v. 14).

His promise is sufficient: "*I will be with you*" (v. 16).

And His provision will be there as needed: "*the Spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon*" (v. 34).

## **May 27, 2000**

Day twenty-nine of a forty-day fast. Am seeking the Lord for direction in relation to major ministry decisions, including the possibility of launching a radio program for women.

My heart is at rest in Him; yet I feel pressed to inquire of Him. I have so many questions and "unknowns." (Yet all is known to Him.)

I know my highest/supreme/unchanging calling is to walk with God, to love Him with all my heart, and to be conformed to the image of His Son. Beyond

that, I need direction in relation to the “good works He has prepared beforehand that I should walk in them.”

Through the process of these past months, God has worked in my heart to make me willing to be used in this way (no small achievement!) and to instill faith in my heart that He can do this through me, in spite of my still-strong sense of inadequacy and inability.

As I have prayed so many times over the years, I continue to pray:

*Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness . . .  
make your way straight before me.*

*Send out your light and your truth;  
let them lead me. (Ps. 5:8; 43:3)*

I drove down to the lake tonight to read, pray, watch the sunset, etc. Through all of my Christian life, I have known His calling: to launch out into the deep; to walk by faith; to make His wonders, His beauty, His glories known, to the fullest extent possible—to the ends of the earth.

As best as I can hear the Shepherd’s voice, I feel I need to move in this direction—to develop demos and have them evaluated by spiritually discerning Christian leaders and radio industry leaders—to give God the opportunity to show that He is or is not in this.

**June 2000** Nancy placed a call to Bob Lepine of FamilyLife Today, to tell him that God had confirmed in her heart that she was to proceed with the launch of a radio ministry! She later wrote in a letter: “As soon as I hung up the phone that day, with tear-filled eyes and quivering voice I sang all four stanzas of ‘Leaning on the Everlasting Arms.’”

Over the next six months, the Lord forged a partnership between three national ministries—Life Action Ministries, FamilyLife Today, and Back to the Bible—that came together to begin this new ministry. It was determined that *Revive Our Hearts* would become the successor program to Elisabeth Elliot’s *Gateway to Joy*, when she retired from radio in the fall of 2001.

**January 2001** Nancy recorded the first radio programs with thirty women in a small classroom at Summit Church, in Little Rock.

On **September 2, 2001**, Nancy wrote the following entry in her journal:

On the eve of the official launch of *Revive Our Hearts*, I want to offer a sacrifice of praise to You, O Lord. Words cannot express the greatness of Your grace and mercy to me through this past year. I stand in awe of Your providential hand and all You have done to bring this ministry to fruition. What a wonder it has been to see You at work, orchestrating all the pieces in a way we never could have done.

Your provision has been so faithful throughout this launch phase. Day after day “all I have needed, Your hand has provided.” Yet You have kept me in a place of utter dependence. This calling is so far beyond my natural gifts and abilities. My eyes are on You. O Lord, how I want to be a faithful servant and steward of what You have entrusted to me. You are able—help me to trust, to stay in the yoke with You, to rest in You, and to serve You with gladness of heart and in the fullness of Your Spirit.

I consecrate myself afresh to You, O Lord. I am Your servant—set apart from the womb for You. All I ask is that You would fulfill Your holy, eternal purposes in and through my life. May my life bring You pleasure. Set me free from bondage to the expectations, praise, and censure of men. May I live only for Your approval.

I pray for wisdom and supernatural enabling sufficient for this task. I ask for protection from every weapon the adversary forms against me. Guard my heart. Keep it pure. Guard my mind and emotions. Sustain me by Your Word, Your grace, and Your sweet Spirit. Fill me with Your Spirit. I pray for the mark of Your presence—for Your anointing on our feeble efforts.

O Lord, would You be pleased to multiply the seeds we have sown and produce a great harvest of revival and righteousness in the lives of women. How I pray for a movement of Your Spirit that cannot be explained in terms of human effort. Would You turn Your face toward us, cause it to shine upon us; and turn the hearts of women toward Yourself. May You be magnified through this ministry. Forbid that I should take any credit or accept any glory for what You do. May I walk in humility and a contrite spirit before You.

O God, from my youth you have taught me,  
and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.  
So even to old age and gray hairs,  
O God, do not forsake me,  
until I proclaim your might to another generation,  
your power to all those to come. –Psalm 71:17-18

## In Nancy's words:

On September 3, 2001, *Revive Our Hearts* went on the air for the first time. For me, it was the beginning of a new season of life and ministry, one filled with opportunities for faith and fruitfulness.

As we celebrate our tenth anniversary, my heart is full of gratitude to the Lord for His incredible grace. His promises, presence, protection, and provision have been unfailing. I also want to express heartfelt thanks for the faithful prayers, support, and encouragement of so many dear friends and ministry partners.

As we look to this next season of ministry, my prayer and that of our team is that His strength would continue to be magnified through our weakness and that His great Name and saving grace may be made known and worshiped through our lives!

## A Conversation with Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth on *Revive Our Hearts* 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

As *Revive Our Hearts* celebrates ten years on the air, Nancy responds to several questions regarding how this ministry has impacted her life, some of the challenges and struggles she faces, how she finds encouragement in the midst of those challenges, the vision God has put on her heart for the future of ROH, and how caring friends can support her and the ministry in prayer.

### **How has your life changed since starting ROH radio ten years ago?**

For starters, I have a much greater confidence in the Lord and in His enabling, sustaining grace and power.

At the same time, I have a constant, conscious sense that I can't make it apart from Him (that's a good thing!). I have seen more of my weaknesses and experienced more of His strength . . . more of my sinfulness and more of His grace. I've learned a lot (and am still learning!) about relinquishing control and letting the Lord and others manage things.

As a result of seeing Him come through on my behalf and the ministry's behalf again and again and again (we call them "Red Sea moments"), I have even more reason to trust Him and less reason to doubt Him or to panic or be anxious in the midst of storms. Not that I never doubt or panic—I do! But my heart is steadied as I remember His faithfulness over these past ten years.

### **How do you decide what to teach on ROH?**

I usually select topics or Scripture passages based on either what the Lord is teaching me and how He is working in my own life or an issue I sense needs to be addressed as I listen to other women share their struggles/burdens or read letters and emails from our listeners.

### **How do you go about developing new series?**

Some of the richest series for me have been birthed out of a change I have made in my personal devotional life. For many years I made a practice of reading consecutively through the Bible at least once or twice a year. This approach has been of great blessing and benefit to me—I love getting a panoramic view of the Scripture and seeing how each portion interrelates with other parts.

However, in recent years, I have felt the need to slow down the pace at times and meditate more deeply on smaller portions of Scripture. So I have spent months at a time poring over and pondering individual passages such as Psalm 23, 2 Peter 1, the book of Habakkuk, the Lord's Prayer, etc.

I get immersed in the passage, reading it over and over and over again, memorizing it, meditating on each word, phrase, and verse (not only in my quiet time, but often throughout the day), cross-referencing to other portions of Scripture, journaling, asking the Lord to work that portion of His Word into the warp and woof of my life.

Once my mind, heart, and life are saturated with one of these passages, I usually end up developing a radio series based on the overflow of where I have been living. After spending extended time doing personal meditation, I will pull out other commentaries to shed additional light on the subject.

### **What are the greatest challenges you've faced since starting ROH radio?**

- Maintaining a "quiet heart" and personal intimacy with the Lord in the midst of the demands of my daily schedule.
- Managing my time effectively around *His* priorities and agenda. Far too often, I look back at the end of a day and realize I was busy all day with "urgent" demands, but did not accomplish the "important" things that most needed to be done.

There are always more opportunities, requests, and demands than can be humanly fulfilled. I have to keep reminding myself of what I have said to others many times over the years: "There is time in every 24-hour day to do everything that is on *God's* agenda for my life this day." That means I need to be prayerful, tuned, and sensitive to the Spirit, so I can know what is on His "to-do list" for my day.

- I struggle with the reality that in so many areas of my life I know I am not consistently living up to the biblical standard to which I am calling others. To be honest, sometimes I don't even want to live up to that standard—I get weary at times of always being spiritually vigilant and constantly waging war against my flesh, the world, and the devil. But in my heart I really do *want* to be like Christ and to glorify God. So I seek to be responsive to the conviction and the work of the Spirit in my life and to walk in the light—confessing and repenting of sin as He reveals it, receiving His forgiveness, and pressing on by His grace.
- There have been significant changes in the Christian radio industry in the past ten years (reflective of a drift in the evangelical world as a whole). Though there are exceptions, it seems that the industry as a whole has become more "market-driven" than "message-driven"—i.e., many decisions are being made based on the question, "What do people *want* to hear?", rather than questions like: "What do people *need*

to hear? What is the message that needs to be communicated to this generation?"

I have to wrestle with these pressures in my own teaching. I know that certain topics are "guaranteed" to generate greater response (and contributions!). But I have to be sure I am willing to teach on unpopular subjects or take counter-cultural positions as the Lord leads, even if that means we pay a price in terms of audience response.

### **What are some of the greatest personal battles or temptations you face?**

- When I feel overwhelmed by deadlines (writing a book, preparing for radio recording sessions, writing ministry communication pieces, etc.), I easily fall prey to discouragement and doubt. In those seasons, I wrestle a lot with a sense of inadequacy and feelings of inability to do what I have been called to do.
- I am prone to focus more on the challenges and "hardships" in my life and ministry than on the Lord. I have to consciously "counsel my heart" according to His Word and choose to look at those difficulties from His perspective and to embrace them as a necessary part of the process of sanctification in my life and a means through which He can be glorified.
- Lack of self-control in my use of time, physical disciplines (diet and exercise), my tongue, etc. I have been studying this whole topic and asking the Lord to develop this fruit of the Spirit in my life. Someday I hope to be able to teach on this subject on ROH—and have a life message to back it up!

### **What are some of the things God uses to encourage you?**

- I'm amazed at how the Lord will sometimes prompt someone to call or send me a note of encouragement just when He knows I need it most. Sometimes it is from a dear friend, other times from someone I've never met. That encouragement means a lot to me, whether verbal or written.

- Hearing about people who pray faithfully for me and for the ministry of ROH. My heart is infused with fresh faith and grace when someone says, “I’d like to pray for you”—and does it right then and there—whether in person or on the phone.
- Hearing testimonies of hearts that have been revived and lives that have been changed as a result of the ministry.
- Relaxed meals (or phone conversations or walks) shared with close friends—sometimes women, sometimes married couples—who know me well, care for my soul, know how to ask the right questions, and don’t think of me as a “public person”!
- Sometimes what encourages me most is just getting out of myself and reaching out to someone God puts in my path who needs a listening ear, a caring heart, or a helping hand.
- Listening to the preaching/teaching of the Word—whether at church, online, through CDs, or at conferences I am able to attend occasionally. I sit and listen with a hungry, needy heart and am never disappointed—Christ-centered preaching fills my cup and fans the flame of my devotion for Him.
- Reading biographies of godly men and women and classic devotional books is also greatly encouraging.
- I have learned to encourage myself in the Lord by meditating on specific promises from His Word and affirming that they are true, regardless of what I may feel at the moment. I carry a list of some of those promises in my Bible and often turn to them to strengthen and encourage my heart.

### **How would you like people to pray for ROH?**

- Pray that the Holy Spirit will supernaturally anoint our efforts, and work powerfully in the hearts of women to receive and respond to the truth of God’s Word.

- Pray that doors will remain open to proclaim the truth of His Word through the airwaves and through other means of communication.
- Pray for wisdom as we think strategically about technological changes taking place and determine how to best utilize available technologies to communicate the message of revival and biblical womanhood.
- Ask the Lord to show us how to reach younger women with this message.
- Ask God to raise up like-minded women and men to serve with us in this mission—both as volunteers and in a full-time capacity.
- Pray that the Lord will raise up many additional financial partners to support the outreaches of ROH on a regular basis. Pray that some will be prompted and enabled to underwrite ministry projects and needs on a larger scale.

### **How do you want people to pray for you?**

- Thank you for asking! Please pray in relation to the specific challenges, battles, and temptations mentioned above.
- Ask the Lord to give me understanding into His Word and to help me proclaim the truth in a way that is faithful and pleasing to Him.
- Pray I will serve the Lord with gladness.
- Pray I will walk by faith and will choose to believe His truth, rather than being driven by my emotions or my circumstances.
- Pray every part of my life will be consistent with what I proclaim to others.
- Pray for “fresh oil”—for divine anointing of the Spirit on my life and ministry. Pray that I will be filled with His Spirit, will manifest the fruit of the Spirit, and will walk and serve in the power of the Spirit.
- Pray for spiritual protection in the battle, for endurance in the race. I want to run well for His glory—all the way to the finish line.

## Where do you want to see the ministry ten years from now?

In the next ten years, we want to expand our various broadcasting, event-based, Internet, and publishing outreaches to see the following take place:

- A **grassroots movement** of Christian women who reflect the beauty of Christ, are filled with the Spirit, and are committed to live out the implications of the gospel—in their homes, churches, workplaces, and communities. Women of purity, humility, love, faith, and wisdom.
- A widespread movement of **women who are praying fervently**—individually and corporately—**for genuine revival** in the church.
- Thousands of **local church women’s ministries** structured, equipped, and resourced to nurture and train godly women using biblical models and principles.
- A more intentional, developed **Titus 2 component** to the ministry—motivating, mobilizing, and resourcing women to “teach what is good” (Titus 2:3) to their children and younger women.
- **An integrated effort of biblically-grounded female authors and speakers** to shape and influence the lives and thinking of Christian women.
- **A more active presence in other languages, countries, and cultures**, including the ability to offer our resources to many more women who do not speak or read English. We particularly hope to see a full-orbed ministry to Spanish-speaking women, both in the United States and throughout Latin America.
- A host of women whose hearts have been revived actively involved in **ministries of mercy and compassion**—both in local, hands-on efforts, and in ways that minister grace to needy and oppressed women around the world.