

Who Do You Love The Most?

By Muriel Cook

Muriel Cook

Before I start speaking, I would like to share a little something with you about my dear friend Sybil Endersby. You know, I brought her along, and she's really God's gift to me. When and I can't travel with Norm, my husband, I feel like I should have a traveling companion, especially for big conferences or when I go overseas and Jesus sent them out two by two. So Norm and I talked about it and we prayed about it, and we decided that it was going to need to be someone who could really be a supportive person for me and would be able to pray and understand the Ministry and wouldn't mind being the last one to leave after the meeting. And he said, you pray, and I'll pray. And we came up with the same name, and it was Sybil.

And Sybil is a counselor. Terrific counselor. Young people love her. She has a real Ministry with College age young people in her home, and she is a speaker. And so if you want someone to counsel you, I know that Sybil would be just delighted to hear from you. She has College age children of her own who adore her, too. So I've asked her to come up here for a few minutes and just say hello and a few words before we start.

Sybil

Thank you. It's really a real privilege and a pleasure for me to be here tonight with you girls here at Biola. This is a girls meeting boys. I love young people. It feels really like yesterday that I was your age and the years just really fly away. They do. And I remember how I felt when I was your age as if it was yesterday. Those feelings, those deep down feelings, some of them you don't

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even share with anybody else, and some of them you do share with your closest girlfriend those feelings of wishing you looked different. I always longed for long, thin legs, and God gave me short, fat ones, and I have to learn to accept that. But that's how he made me.

I also remember how I felt about boys and those romantic feelings in my heart towards them.

They didn't ever know that I felt like that. But those romantic feelings stay in our hearts as we find the right person in our lives. And I still feel those romantic feelings from my husband. As you hear from my accent, I speak a little differently. Do any of you know where I come from?

Yes. Right. Good. Lots of people don't know that.

Each Wednesday night, we have a young people's Bible study in our home, high school age children from our local public school, Awold High School in Mountain View. For those of you who may know up in Northern California area and the leaders are all College aged kids. It's a young life Bible study, and we have the campaigner's part of it in our home. The thing that I love best about this is my Ministry that the Lord has given me on an individual basis with these kids, both the College, both the leaders and the high school kids. I love sharing with them where they're coming from, their problems.

Most of them come from nonchristian homes, and they share with me the problems that they have with their parents. It's interesting hearing it from that side. I would like to just take another minute and share with you my life verse. And I don't know if any of you girls have ever thought of choosing a life verse, but it really is a good idea. And the one that I chose really many years ago is Colossians 3:17. Whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

And then a few verses down from 17, verse 23, says almost the same thing, and whatsoever you do, it heartily as unto the Lord and not unto men. I'm just an ordinary woman. I'm nobody

special. But that verse has been such a comfort and a help to me in being an ordinary woman. It says in whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. It doesn't say when you're preaching a sermon or when you're off on the foreign mission field or when you're being super spiritual, do all in my name.

No, it says whatsoever you do in word or deed. And the job that God has given me first and foremost is to be a housewife and a mother. And it's a fun job, but there are some dirty jobs to be done as a mother. And I have found that even cleaning dirty toilets, washing dirty floors, washing smelly clothes, even those mundane things as a wife can be a joy as I do them unto the Lord. And keeping my house clean for Jesus Christ first is wonderful, and I would recommend it to you girls who someday will be a mother and a housewife, do it as unto the Lord and there will be new joy in it.

And then the verse, and whatsoever you do, do it heartily as unto the Lord and not unto men.

What is my motive? My motive is to please Jesus Christ in all that I do, and then my family benefit when my motive is correct and I'd like to share one other verse with you, Ecclesiastes 9:10, whatsoever thy hand finds to do, do it with thy might another whatsoever in scripture.

Whatsoever thy hand finds to do. And right now you students are finding yourselves studying, or next week you will be. And I would really recommend when these studies get hard and it's a Drudge to do them, do it as unto the Lord, and it will help tremendously what a privilege and opportunity is for you this week to have Muriel and all these other wonderful speakers, and I really would recommend that tonight and every other night that you hear Muriel, girls, that you take your notebooks and your pencils and write down every word she says. She is fantastic. She has very practical things to tell us. And if you write it down, then you can go back to it and refer

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to it. It's amazing how much we forget of what we hear. We think we won't, but we do forget it. So get out your note paper and pencils and hang on to every word and write it down. Thank you.

Muriel Cook

Sybil says she's not very special, but she's very special to me, and she has lots of fun I'll tell you. When I went to the mission field, I was 22 years old. We were the youngest missionaries to ever go out with overseas crusades. And it was quite an experience. I was terribly excited about going to the mission field, and I was all eyes and all ears. For two whole weeks I had the tourist mentality, and then it came crashing down with a thud. And I realized that I was going to have to stay there for years and maybe all my life. And things began to look a little different to me. And what I thought had been so cute and quaint became kind of difficult to handle. It's one thing to go and observe a culture. It's another thing to become a part of it. And there were little things that really bothered me and got to me. And let me give you one of those. Oh, by the way, in overseas crusades, we had the motto, every heart with Christ is a missionary, and every heart without Christ is a mission field. And so now I'm afraid that you're viewing me as the missionary, but if you have Christ in your heart, you're also a missionary.

And so I don't want you to set me apart. We're just the same. The only difference between us is location. You know, what it says in the scripture is about the fact that we are supposed to be witnesses in Jerusalem and in Judea and into all the uttermost parts of the Earth. Well, God has called you right now for this period in your life to be a missionary and his witness at Biola College, and he just called me to the uttermost parts of the Earth, but we're just the same. So please don't think that I should have been more spiritual than to have problems.

Do you have problems? Well, do you get your feelings hurt? Well, missionaries who live overseas do, too. And all this week, I hope that you can just see missionaries as people just like

you are, because that's what you are, a missionary. And it's just amazing how I felt some of these things about the culture intensely. And let me just share one with you. One of the experiences when I would go out on the Street, I would be followed. I wasn't quite used to that. And I sometimes would be followed by 25 people or 30.

This is on the island of Taiwan in the capital city of Taipei, in, you know how old I am. Anyhow, I be followed. And they weren't being discreet about it. They walk all around me and then talk in Chinese, which I did not understand. [Inaudible] It was always that word Biza. And I thought, what are they talking about? And they would touch my skin. And they always wanted to know if that was stockings or if that was skin on my legs. It was very interesting.

And these were mostly children, of course, but the grownups were pretty curious, too, especially in 1952. And finally, every time I'd come out, they'd all shout that [inaudible] and I said, oh, what is that word? Well, one day I was with a senior missionary and I said, every time I come out on the street, the children always yell that same thing. What are they saying? Oh, she said, they think you have a big nose. Well, do you know that it hurt my feelings? Do you know why it hurt my feelings? Because I think I've got a big nose, too.

And what I didn't know was that they think all Americans have big noses. And by the way, girls, we do in comparison. Now, you just look around at some of these Darling Oriental girls right here and they just don't have any, hardly. In fact, you can put a pencil right across the arch of their nose and it'll rest on both eyeballs. You try that. And so, of course, my nose is a little bit larger than the ordinary Americans. And, you know, that's the very thing that was my biggest sore point in my own eyes was my nose. And the gentlemen that are here are most welcome. But you just have to forgive the girl talk, okay? That's one thing you can't cover up. If it was your hips, you can put on a different kind of skirt, but not your nose. It's just going to stick right

out and there is no way you can hide it. And it just got to me and broke my heart and I couldn't do anything about it. And I used to think bitterly, oh, they are not going to let me be one of them. And then I decided after a little while I wasn't too sure I wanted to be.

Do you know what the problem was? I had a poor self image. And that's the very first sore point that as soon as I got into the Ministry and I got out there, that was where Satan put his finger.

Because the heads were such a poor self-image, it just cropped right up right on the scene. The first thing out of the box. And I want to tell you, there's a principle. If you have a poor self-image, it's going to get you in trouble right away. Every time you try to do something for God, there's going to be somebody better looking, there's going to be somebody smarter, somebody with more personality or something else. And if you have a poor self-image, it's going to hurt you in the Ministry.

And I never dreamed that it would be uncovered like that. And do you know that I lost my peace over it and I became offended. It was like all these little things that were different was like an ice pick that just poked little holes in my spirit and all the peace leaked out. Now, sometimes they're not just little problems that make us lose our peace, but there are big problems.

But first, let me go back to this self-image thing. If you can handle it now, get used to it. Do everything you can to improve yourself, by all means, and then make up your mind to accept what you can't change. Because God loves my nose. And you can see that I've accepted it because I could talk about it now and point it out. Where before, I just try very hard not to bring it up. But it's not always the little problems that make us lose our peace. Sometimes there are big problems that come into our life that loom up like mountains.

And so tonight I want to talk about the peace formula. And first of all, Matthew 17:20 talks about mountains. Jesus said, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, move

from here to there, and it shall move, and nothing shall be impossible to you. Matthew 21:21.

Jesus says again, truly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you shall not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain be taken up and cast into the sea, it shall happen.

Jesus was using a mountain here to illustrate, I think, a big looming obstacle. I don't think he really meant a mountain. I think he was talking about a problem. It's an implication of something huge. It's bigger than we are, something that we feel like we can't handle. And so he used that as an illustration. The mountain as an illustration. I remember the first time I saw mountains. I was born in China and came back to this country at six years old. And we moved to the Midwest. We lived in Kentucky and Indiana. And when I was nine years old, my dad planned a trip to California, and he kept talking about it. We were going to drive, and he said, we're going to go over the Rocky Mountains. And I had never seen mountains. So he described these mountains to me, and he described them as being beautiful.

And so on the trip, I had this idea that we were going to see something glorious and wonderful. And the closer we came to the Rocky Mountains, the more he talked about it. And then one day as we were driving, he said, look up there on the horizon.

And I looked over there and there were these dark shadows, and he said, those were mountains. Well, I didn't want to tell him, but that was kind of scary to me. And the closer I got, the more frightened I became because they got bigger and bigger. And I thought, it's going to fall over on me now. I really appreciate mountains now, but I'll never forget how I first felt about mountains. And I understand why Jesus used that to illustrate a problem. Because if you're sitting down at the base of a mountain, what can you see? Just nothing but the mountain. Isn't that right? But it's not always the big things that cause us to lose our peace.

I am with College students quite a bit. In fact, one lives at our house, and I see that she loses her peace when she gets behind in her classwork. And I know that you can lose your peace over a lot of little eroding problems, such as the rooms just a mess all the time. And maybe it's not your fault. Maybe it's your roommate, and maybe you just can't get caught up in your laundry and all your drawers are stuff full of dirty clothes.

How did I find that out? And every time you go to get out a clean pair of socks, it's dirty and it gets you discouraged, doesn't it? And sometimes it's just that things aren't going very well with your social life. It's not just always the guys aren't dating you, but you're not always being invited to be included with the girls either. And maybe you're feeling lonely. It's hardly believable that you could be in a place like this and feel lonely. But I know many of you are lonely, and this can cause you to lose your peace.

It doesn't mean you don't know Jesus as your savior, but you can just lose your peace over things like that. I think another thing that can make you lose your peace is a difficult personality. Some of you are working on campus and you have to work with people that are very difficult or you're working off campus. Some of you are living with difficult people, and it can take away your peace. And I would like to tell you it's easy for us to lose our peace just reading the newspaper or watching the television program, just even the wrong kind of program.

I would like to suggest to you that there is a way to get our peace back and to keep the peace in the big crisis, in the big problems, and in the eroding situations. And I like to call it the peace formula. For those of you who have a scientific mind, we will call it formula. For those of you who don't, we'll call it a piece recipe, but it's found in the scripture in Philippians chapter four. Would you turn to it, please? And for your notes, it's four, verse four through nine, and I will read it through. And then we'll go back over it. And I was so much like for you to get this down

in your soul so that you will know when you lose your peace. How to get your peace. Here it is, the formula.

Philippians chapter four, verse four, says, rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, Rejoice, let your forbearing or your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, or don't worry about anything. But in everything, by prayer and supplication with Thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Verse eight, finally, sisters, whatever's true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good report, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things, the things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Practice these things, and the God of peace shall be with you. Now that's the peace formula, it's glorious. Let's study it. Going back to verse four, step one, verse four, it says, Rejoice in the Lord always. And again I will say rejoice. And when I saw that, I thought, now you're kidding. What happens when your peace goes? Well, joy goes, doesn't it? Sure does. And how can you rejoice when your joy is gone? You need to remind yourself of some things right away. Remind yourself that God knew this was going to happen to me. He knew I was going to get down there at Biola, and I was going to get this miserable roommate. He knew this was going to happen.

And God's not surprised. I am, but he's not. And that's a real comfort. You know that Psalms 139 tells us that every day of our life is scheduled. That's very exciting to me. That means that God is in control, and we're going to talk a lot about that this week. God being in control, even of the things that seem like tragedy. And he is in control, and he loves me. How do I know that he loves

me? How do I know that he loves you? Well, in Psalm 139, it tells us that his thoughts about us are precious.

Listen, take it in. What do you really think God is thinking about you? For years I thought he could look down and see all my uglies, and that that's what he was seeing. And it almost embarrassed me to pray because I just would cower under how God must see the real miserable me. And sometimes we get a vision of God that he's up there and he's just going to discipline us, and he's going to crack down on us because I'm so rotten or I'm such a failure. But that's not true. That's not a scriptural biblical concept of God.

Please turn the tape to side two for the continuation of this message. Thank you.

Psalm 139 tells us that his thoughts about us are precious, not negative. If you can get a hold of that, that'll change your life. When he looks at us, he doesn't see all the miserable things that we do, and that's not what he's thinking about. But the passage here in Psalm 139 tells us that his thoughts about us are more than all the sand on the seashores of the world, and they're all precious. Isn't that fantastic? That's really love. Well, let's give you some other verses that will help you know that he really loves you.

Jeremiah 31:3. God says, I have loved you with an everlasting love. It's not gonna stop. It's not gonna stop. Romans 8:35 through 37, whom shall separate us from the love of Christ, shall trouble, distress, persecution, danger, and all these things. We are overwhelmingly conquerors through him who loved us. Isaiah 43:25 and this is great. We've heard it so much that we almost become dull to it. But I want you to listen. I, God says, even I am the one who wipes out your transgressions or sins.

I am the one who wipes out your sins. For my own sake, I will not remember them. Do you know that I thought that the Lord forgave me of my sins because I needed to be forgiven. And

here it tells us in Isaiah 43:25 that he forgives us because he needs to have our sins forgiven. It's for his sake that he forgives us. He loves us so much that he can't stand to think that we're dirty or that we have anything wrong with us. And he loves us so much that he wants us to be forgiven and cleaned up because of that love that he has for us. Oh, that's precious. And I can understand that just a little bit as a mother.

Isaiah 49:15 and 16 is also precious. I will not forget you. God says, I will not forget you.

Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands. He can't forget you. He's got your name written in his hands. Can we doubt that he loves us? And then because of that, can't we say, thank you, Jesus, even though there's a looming mountain in our life? That's why it's his rejoice. And I think that's why it's step one in the peace formula, because there is no way you can get peace until you realize that you are loved and cherished, measured by God and that he's in control. And verse five tells us, step two, let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. I don't know what happens to you when you lose your peace, but I know what happens to me. I get crabby, I get snappy and cross. Isn't that what happens? You get really uptight and irritable when you lose your peace. But here it says that's the very time to get quiet and be gentle. And most of us bluster and storm around when we blast her peace. But it says, don't do that. You know why it says, don't do that? Because the Lord is near.

I think that's tremendously interesting. You see, the Lord Jesus is here and he sees us. He sees it, and he is grieved. And Besides that, he's standing there and he's saying, Muriel, I'm here to help you. I'm right here. But when we're storming around, we don't realize he's there. So the second step in finding peace is to get quiet and realize the Lord is right here. He's right near.

Verse six. Just the third step, tells us to be anxious for nothing or stop worrying. And I think that's an amazing thing for the Bible to say. Women especially worry. Well, men worry, too, but

women are terrifically, notorious for it. And how do you stop worrying? We cannot snap our fingers at our emotions and just say, stop being afraid. Stop imagining all this. It's just part of our emotions. We have to do it with our will. You can command your will. And we're going to talk more about that this week, too. You can't command your emotions, but you command your will. Then you know that when you worry that you're sinning and you're not trusting.

And I think that the best illustration for that, you may have heard it, but it's meant a lot to me so I'll share with you, is the story of the little girl. And my daughter said to me, Mama, I finally learned that older women are just little girls, grown up. So we're all little girls. It's the story of a little girl who has a broken doll and she wants her Daddy to fix the doll.

So she takes the doll to Daddy and she says, Here, Daddy, I've broken my Dolly and I want you to fix it. And she's perfectly happy for him to fix it. And she goes off to play. But pretty soon she misses the doll. And so she comes back to check to see how far along dad is. And he isn't far wrong at all. The doll's eyes are still crossed or whatever it is his father. So she says, Daddy, I want you to fix my doll. And why don't you do this? Do that, Daddy. And she gets her fingers in there, and Daddy can't do anything because her fingers are in there. And then in her upset, this little girl says, oh, give me back my doll. I didn't think you could fix it anyhow. And I realized it's just a picture of me.

That's what worry is all about. Don't give it to God because I just have to worry about it. I have to carry it myself. And when we do, God can't work because we can't please him if we're not trusting. So we with our will take our worry as many times as it comes to us, to the foot of the cross and leave it there.

That by the way, is Matthew 15:30. Take those people that you're so concerned about that you love so much and you're so worried about, take them each time you start worrying about take

them to Jesus and lay them in his feet. And you know what the scripture says there. And he will heal them all. He will take care of everything. He will heal it all. But sometimes we think, well, I won't worry. I'll just pray. And so we say, Dear God, Oh, Lord, please help. Please help. Lord, help, Lord, please help. You know that we do that, dear Jesus, please help. And then we say, Amen. And we're really worrying and calling it prayer. Don't you do that? It's amazing how often we do that and excuse it as prayer. At my house. If I tell my husband something by the third time, he's quite unhappy. It insults his intelligence. And he will say very firmly and very quietly, I heard you, Muriel, the first time. He doesn't want me to say it over. He said, well, what do you mean? I don't understand. Aren't we supposed to pray? Yes, but there's a difference in the prayer of faith and a nagging prayer.

And you see, that's not the prayer of faith. Well, what is the prayer of faith? The prayer that Jesus prayed in John eleven when he said, Father, I know you hear me and you're hearing me now, just as you always hear me. It says to pray with Thanksgiving. Now, let me tell you what is not a Thanksgiving prayer. Okay, Lord, please do it this time. You haven't done it before, but just this once. See how ungrateful prayer that is? How many times people have prayed like that? I needed justice once. Lord, can't you help me out this time? You don't ever answer. But I need you to answer this time. That's not a prayer of Thanksgiving. Prayer of Thanksgiving is, Lord, I remember all the times that you've helped me through other problems when I've lost my peace. And by the way, I've got to count some time and find out how many times the word remember is in the scriptures. Maybe some of you even know. But we're supposed to remember. And it's so easy to forget God's blessings and help at home, by our table we have a little notebook and we call it our miracle book.

And as the days go, we will write down the miracles of God in our lives. And sometimes it's just some little thing. But we're looking for miracles to give God glory and honor and Thanksgiving. And he does so many things that we just take for granted. The prayer of Thanksgiving is to remember all the times in the past that he's provided for your needs financially, and he's met your needs socially and he's fulfilled you and be thankful.

Okay, then verse seven says, if we take those three steps, isn't that three? All right, then the peace of God will guard our hearts and our minds. You know what that means? Heart is the seed of the emotions. The peace of God will guard your emotions. The Lord made women very emotional. We're supposed to be sensitive. We're supposed to be responsive, and that gets us in trouble. Our greatest asset also becomes our greatest liability. But if we will follow the peace formula, the peace of God will guard our heart and our mind. That means that God himself can change our thinking. Okay, now we've got the peace, right? We've got the peace. And sometimes we just get it and turn right around and lose it again.

How many times I've gone through the steps and I'm okay for an hour or two, and bang, I come crashing down and lose it. But this helps us right here in verses eight and nine to know how to get it back, or rather keep it. As soon as you see it where you're losing it, get into verses eight to nine, and it says, finally, sisters, think about whatever is true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, of good report. If there's anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.

It's interesting that it says, Put your mind on those things. Think. It's hard work to think, isn't it?

Do you know that every time you let your mind go, what happens to it in a human? The natural mindset is in a down spiral, almost always downward into the negative, into discouragement, into fear. And in order to keep our minds from going into negative thinking and into fear and into depression, we need to remember this verse. It says here, whatever is true and honorable and

good about Biola, whatever is pure and lovely. And if anything worthwhile about the situation you're in, you're to think on those things.

And verse nine says, practice. Some of you are music majors, and you know what it means to practice. Well, it takes hard work and it has to be done every day. Practice. And you may say, well, there's not very much lovely to think about in my situation. But let me ask you a question. Who is truly pure and who is truly right and honorable and lovely and of good report without a flaw? Only Jesus. And so we really have to go back to that, don't we? In that scripture in Isaiah 26:3, where it says, Thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee. We have to go right back to getting our eyes on Jesus instead of on the mountain.

I've been thinking that the biggest mountain of all is sin in the life, and there is no way that we can have peace in our life if we have sin in our life, that's got to be confessed before peace can come. And this formula will not work. Also, if you have not received Jesus Christ into your heart, this formula will not work. You see what everybody's here as a Christian, everybody here is a believer, I'm sure.

But do you know what John one nine says? No, it's John 1:12. There are believers and then they're receivers. Believing is the first step. And most people and most of you and I'm sure all of you have taken that first step. You believe in God and you believe in Jesus Christ and you feel like a Christian. But let me tell you that it's two steps. Takes two steps, and believing is only halfway. John 1:12 says as many as received him to them, he gives the power to become the children of God. And so believing is only halfway. And receiving is the second step. And if you don't have peace and you're not sure that you're born again, maybe you've only gone halfway and you need to take that other step. It's so simple, you can miss it. You can say, Lord, I believe, but I want to invite you into my heart to be my savior, and I want to do it now.

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You know, when you go back to the dorm tonight or you go back to your home, the mountain that you left could be gone. It could be. Do you remember the scripture we read at the beginning? If you say to this mountain, be thou removed, it can be removed. God can remove it. And sometimes he does just that. It's gone. Then there are other times that he does not remove the mountain at all. He just changes our position.

What's that? He changes our position from being underneath the mountain looking up at it to being on top of the mountain looking at Jesus. And it's a whole different scene. And I know that he wants to do that for you tonight. He wants you to put you and steal your peace, and he wants you to get your eyes on Jesus.

Let's pray, father, there are many here, I'm sure, that have wondered why they don't have any peace. And maybe you've been talking tonight to different ones. Maybe there is sin and you love us so much that you want us to confess it so you can cleanse us. Maybe there are even those that came to Biola thinking they were Christian. They've discovered that sure, they believe that they've never invited you to come and live in their heart. If there is anyone here right now like that, invite Jesus right now to come into your heart.

And then, Lord, we confess that there are so many things in our lives that loom up before us that seem impossible. And we've gotten our eyes on those things instead of on you. Lord, we would like to ask that you would remove those mountains if it would please you to do that mountain of loneliness and o Lord, you know all the mountains we can't name them all remove them Lord that would please you but if not father, change us right now. If you don't see fit to change and take away the problem, please change us help us to get our eyes on you and realize that you are in control and you mean all of this for our good. In Jesus name Amen.