

## GCW National Director's Address –

“Recalculate” May 23-25, Colorado Springs, CO

Welcome to “Recalculate.” This is our opportunity as women in leadership throughout the Christian and Missionary Alliance to gather and ask ourselves some “Where Are We?” questions: I want to begin my Director’s Address by drawing our attention to these two banners: “Placed for a Purpose” and “Together.” I have been giving careful thought to our “next steps” as an auxiliary ministry of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. We are “Placed for a Purpose.” Whatever we do next, we must do it “Together.”

We are the women in this Christ-centered Acts 1:8 family.

**Acts 1:8** reminds us that our power comes from the Person and work of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.

*(Acts 1:8 NIV) But **you will receive power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and **you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8 NIV)*

As **Family**, we do our work **Together**

*(Acts 2:1-4 NIV) When the day of Pentecost came, they were **all together in one place**. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting... **All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit...** (Acts 2:1-4 NIV)*

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Dr. Henry Cloud, a clinical psychologist, leadership expert, best-selling author, and follower of Christ, suggests

**Three questions for families: What are your values? What is your strategy?  
What is most important right now?**

**- Dr Henry Cloud**

The answer to all three questions begins here: **We Will Love.**

*"What are your values?"* **Love.**

Scripture gives priority to love.

Consider the words of Jesus:

*(Matthew 22:37-40 NIV)*

*"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. **All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.**"* (Matthew 22:37-40 NIV)

*(John 13:34-35 NIV)*

*"A new command I give you: Love one another. **As I have loved you**, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, **if** you love one another."* (John 13:34-35 NIV)

*"What are your values?"* **Love.**

*"What is your strategy?"* **Together.**

What does this look like?

**We are Placed for a Purpose. Together. - In Relationships**

Scripture informs us:

*(Ecclesiastes 4:9 NIV)*

*Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

*(Ecclesiastes 4:9 NIV)*

- God created relationships to be mutually beneficial. Satan seeks to kill and destroy all that God has created, including human relationships.

We have an example in Scripture of two women who were placed for a purpose, but failed to move forward together:

*(Luke 10:38-42 NIV)*

*As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed--or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:38-42 NIV)*

This story makes me sad. I am disappointed that Mary and Martha were in conflict. They both loved Jesus. They both desired to serve Jesus. Yet, they found themselves at odds. They were out of sync. I don't know why. Perhaps they skipped the important step of communication, each agreeing to her part in preparation for Jesus' visit. Perhaps His visit was a surprise and each woman operated out of her natural tendencies. I don't know; this is only conjecture.

But I am disappointed that they were unable to settle their dispute between just the two of them. Martha found it necessary to "call out" Mary in front of Jesus. It makes me sad.

I would love to know "the rest of the story" – what else did Jesus say to these sisters to help them move forward together? Did He speak the truth we find elsewhere in Scripture?

Perhaps He said something like this:

*"Value your sister above yourself, not looking to your own interests but each of you – Mary and Martha - to the interests of the other." (my paraphrase of Philippians 2:3-4 NIV)*

Or this:

*“Anyone who loves God must also love her sister.” (my paraphrase 1 John 4:21 NIV)*

If I had the opportunity to write “the rest of the story,” this is what would happen: both women would take the opportunity to make Christ-honoring adjustments & find themselves both at the feet of Jesus. Together.

Before we leave this story, we need to ask ourselves: *“What relationship story in my life makes me sad? Am I out of sync with someone? Someone in this room? Someone in my ministry? Someone in my family? What Christ-honoring adjustments do I need to make?”*

*“What are your values?”* **Love.**

*“What is your strategy?”* **Together.**

*What is most important right now?* **Reconciliation.**

The gospel declares that reconciliation is possible. I have seen it in my own life. I have seen it in the ministry of Great Commission Women.

Four years ago, when Edna Mapstone stepped into this role of National Director, I imagine she was saddened by the lack of unity. During her tenure, she did something, through the power of the Holy Spirit, that gave us the gift of a unified, wise, and gracious National Executive Team. I have been the recipient of both their wisdom and grace. In my first interaction with this team in May 2015, I made a huge misstep. I expressed a strong opinion, born out of frustration. Edna’s team absorbed my comments and responded with gracious prayers of commissioning. Four months later, in September, while once again meeting with this team, I came to the realization that I had sinned against them. My comments in May, while valid, were spoken at the wrong time and in the wrong place. I failed to recognize that this team was grieving the absence of Edna at what would have been her final training meetings with the GCW leadership team. I also failed to recognize that this team was exhausted! Although it was not my intent, I caused hurt to this wonderful group of women, a team that was transitioning to serve under my leadership. I had been a recipient of their undeserved grace in May. I knew that I needed to make a good confession and ask for their forgiveness. On the final day of our planning meetings in September, I asked that we begin with Communion.

Rosilio Roman was gracious enough to offer words of truth from Scripture. The bread was distributed. Before we ate the bread together, I asked to share a few words. This was the moment I offered a good confession. Without excuse, I acknowledged the hurt I had caused the team in May and asked for their forgiveness. Oh, my goodness! The outpouring of love was a testimony to the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ and reconciliation. These women had absorbed the hurt I cause in May, but didn't allow that hurt to create a root of bitterness. Together, as a team, they poured out grace and forgiveness. I was humbled. I was grateful. I did not deserve a team such as this.

We Will Love.

*"A new command I give you: Love one another. **As I have loved you**, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, **if you love one another.**" (John 13:34-35 NIV)*

As sisters in Christ, we will love one another.

This is where it begins: with reconciled relationships.

When we experience reconciliation, we are able to move forward into ministry.

As the women in this Christ-centered Acts 1:8 family that we call The Alliance, we begin our ministry with Christ. Christ is the source of our Love. Christ is the source of our message.

Together, let's take a look at John, chapter 4. I will be using the New Living Translation. Beginning in verse 3:

*(John 4:3-4 NLT) So he left Judea and returned to Galilee. He had to go through Samaria on the way.*

The first thing I notice is that Jesus had a sense of purpose. He HAD TO go through Samaria. As we read further, we learn that Jesus "Placed" Himself "For a Purpose" at Jacob's well:

*(John 4:5-9 NLT) Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink." He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food. The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?"*

Jesus' response to this woman is tender, personal, and filled with love:

*(John 4:10 NLT) Jesus replied, "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water."*

*If you only knew the gift God has for you.* A gift? From God? For me? This encounter with Jesus began a transforming work in this woman. You are familiar with the conversation. Truth was spoken. Uncomfortable truth. But somehow, the woman did not feel condemnation. Instead, she sensed LOVE, she gave herself permission to hope. The LOVE she received from Jesus changed her heart toward those in her community – those who had rejected and hurt her. Her response?

*(John 4:28-29 NLT) The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone, "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?"*

With a new LOVE in her heart, the Samaritan woman had good news to PROCLAIM. With a new LOVE in her heart, she was compelled to REACH out to those in her village.

*(John 4:30 NLT) So the people came streaming from the village to see him.*

*(John 4:40-42 NLT) When they came out to see him, they begged him to stay in their village. So he stayed for two days, long enough for many more to hear his message and believe. Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not just because of what you told us, but because we have heard him ourselves. Now we know that he is indeed the Savior of the world."*

The ministry of this Samaritan woman began with an encounter with Christ; it began with LOVE. As a result, new Kingdom work was LAUNCHED in this Samaritan village.

We are the women in this Christ-centered Acts 1:8 family. We are an auxiliary ministry of the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

We are Placed for a Purpose. A tremendous opportunity lies before us. It begins with Christ. It involves receiving power from the Holy Spirit. Power to Love. Power to Proclaim. Power to Reach. Power to Launch.

### **We Will LOVE.**

Pray with me:

*"Father of all that is good, grant us grace to succeed in love. Guard our hearts. Heal our hurts. Reconcile our relationships. May we, in all things, find the way of life."*

*"May Christ make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. May your roots grow down deep into God's love and keep you strong. ... May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God." (from Ephesians 3:17, 19 NLT)*