

MIGHTY OAK MINISTRIES



Growing Deeply Healing Progressively Maturing Splendidly

June 2010

Weeds! I Hate Them!

Weeds! Don't You Hate Them?



As soon as the sun began to shine after a long winter of rain, I tackled the weeds in my garden. It took days of sitting on the ground pulling up those pesky critters. But

you know what? Before I even finished the job, they were back. Spouting up right where I had already pulled them. Spreading wide and tall. Crowding out the plants I wanted in the garden.

Someone said to use mulch, which can smother some weeds but works better once the weeds are removed. After I had pulled all the weeds, I applied a nice layer of mulch in all the bare spots. It looked great for a while, but before long the weeds were back! I had to stay diligent.

Someone else said to use a pre-emergent. Kill 'em before them come up. I learned that pre-emergents don't actually destroy weeds and their seeds. They simply stop them from growing. Some seeds can last fifty years, so if the herbicide isn't applied each year, the weed will grow right back.

Not all weeds are alike. Some are easy to pull and the impact is huge. One grab around the root stalk and dozens of tentacles move from garden to garbage, leaving a nice clean slate. Others require a spade or even a shovel to remove. Some weeds go deep and the roots intertwine and wind around the good stuff, choking it off. And I've got some weeds in my garden that I've grown so accustomed to or that are in little-trafficked areas so that I ignore them and let them grow at will.

Weeds! I hate them!

Most of us have weeds in our lives, too. We may call them problems, issues, or weaknesses, but the truth is,



*They will be called (mighty) oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor. Isaiah 61:3*



many of them are just plain sin. Yep, sin. I know that's not a popular word. That's why we camouflage it with other nicer-sounding words. But the truth is, sin is like weeds in the garden. It crowds out the positive character traits that are supposed to be there and quickly overruns any boundaries we may have set. Sin spreads quickly and returns if not permanently

eradicated. Sin requires constant vigilance.

As I minister to people, I find that almost everyone has areas of sin that have become so familiar that they are ignored. And almost everyone has areas of sin that seem unconquerable. I know I do, and I'm pretty vigilant. Many of the people I minister to are not as vigilant and have some pretty ugly weeds in their gardens. And those weeds hinder us from growing deeply, healing progressively, and maturing splendidly. If growth, healing, and maturity are our goals, we must be as disciplined with our lives as I am with my garden. We need to identify and eliminate the weeds.

We also need to determine what problems are enabled or nurtured by the sins in our lives and what problems were not caused by our personal sin, but may be held in place by our sin? For example, as a victim of childhood abuse, that initial sin was not mine. I did nothing wrong. I was sinned against. But what about my attitude? Have I forgiven my perpetrators? Have I refused to allow bitterness to take root in my heart? Have I been diligent to guard my heart in those things I have responsibility for? All too often, we allow the sin of others to activate sin in ourselves. We have to go after those passive sins with the same diligence as we do the sinful choices we make every day.

When sinful behaviors and attitudes have been with us for a long time they become second nature. They become part of us. We may need a friend or prayer minister to help us identify them, to help us see that we don't have to remain a victim or slave to that sin, and to pray through it with us and for us. We may

need to evict evil spirits prompting the sin with the same diligence as we evict the weeds in our gardens. And then we need to maintain those clean spots in our spirit, soul, and body.

How can we do this?

1. *We need to apply the pre-emergent of the Word of God to every area of our lives.* Peter tells us that His divine power has *already* given us *everything* we need for life and godliness (1 Peter 1:3). But it won't do us any good unless we apply it liberally, regularly, and deeply. Not just a verse or a psalm, but chapters and books.

2. *We need to pull up every sin as soon as we identify it and replace it with godly behaviors.* Paul tells us "to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness"

(Ephesians 4:22-24)



3. *We need to apply the mulch of community and love to keep those weeds under control.* None of us can do this alone and we're foolish to think we can. We need a small group or a prayer partner to hold us accountable, to pray for us, to point out when that

sin is creeping back in, and to encourage us to change.

If you need help in conquering your weeds, check out the resources on page 4. **Conquering Your Giants** is a life-transforming Bible study through the book of Joshua. **Blessing Your Spirit** will help you enlarge your human spirit, which is responsible for spiritual growth. **Biblical Foundations of Freedom** is an excellent workbook to target weeds like anger, unforgiveness, bitterness, and many others.

"If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it." Genesis 4:7

Need a Speaker?



Retreats or Conferences, Large or Small

Pat's primary goal is to minister the Word of God in a way that will encourage people to grow deeply, to heal progressively, and to mature into mighty oaks of righteousness. Pat loves working with wounded and challenging people, nurturing them to healing. For this reason, she especially enjoys small retreats where she can minister personally to participants.

Pat can speak on a wide variety of topics and is always willing to work with you to tailor an event for your audience and your budget. For a list of the types of workshops and retreats available, see the [Events and Conferences page](#) on the website.

Train Your Leaders



Pat is available to train your small group or ministry leaders. She has over 30 years experience in leading small groups and coaching leaders. Her first book, *Small Group Bible Studies: How to Lead Them* remains a classic, despite being out of print in the U.S. (It's in its 8th printing in Korea!) Her second book, *Why Didn't You Warn Me? How to Deal with Challenging Group Members* continues to answer the questions many are afraid to ask.

For a list of the wide variety of training available, see the Branches section of the [Events and Conferences page](#) on the website.

Are you receiving the newsletter by email? If not, sign up [here](#).

If you didn't receive the FREE PDF download "Making Time for Prayer" when you signed up for the newsletter, you can get it [here](#).

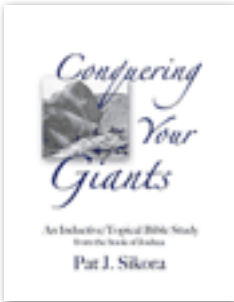
Pat has been encouraging Christians for over 30 years. She ministers through Mighty Oak Ministries at www.mightyoakministries.com and *Why Didn't You Warn Me* at www.whydidntyouwarnme.com.

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Resources

Mighty Oak Ministries is pleased to offer a variety of resources that will help you **Grow Deeply, Heal Progressively, and Mature Splendidly**. Visit our [website](#) for more resources.



[Order Book](#)

\$20.00

Conquering Your Giants by Pat J. Sikora

Like the Israelite spies that Moses sent to scout out the Promised Land, we often feel like grasshoppers as we face our giants. We feel inadequate, incapable, impotent.... Like the Israelites, we claim defeat before the battle begins. But defeat is not God's plan for any of us. Rather, God's plan is for us to conquer our giants and claim the land promised to us—becoming conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

Conquering Your Giants is a 12-lesson topical and inductive Bible study covering the book of Joshua from the perspective of conquering your personal giants. It is intensely personal and application-oriented, calling you to measurable life changes. Because of its personal nature, it is ideal for both individual and small group use, especially for people in need of healing or renewing the mind.



[Order Book](#)

\$14.49

Blessing Your Spirit by Arthur Burk and Sylvia Gunter

God designed our human spirit to rule over the soul and the body. It does this best when it is deliberately enlarged and strengthened by truth--the nutrient that most powerfully transforms the spirit. Your spirit needs to know the truth about who you are and who your God is. Some of that truth is spoken by the Spirit of God directly to your spirit; some is received through deliberate nurture and blessing.

This book offers a series of blessings designed to grow and mature your spirit. For 40 days, we explore legitimacy and identity from the Father's perspective. Then after we have seen ourselves from God's perspective, He invites us to see Him through 21 days of blessings flowing from the names of God. Finally there are several pages of verses that describe the range of functions and emotions of the human spirit. As you read these blessings to yourself and to others, you will experience an enlarging of your spirit that will enable it to bring your emotions and behaviors into conformity with the will of God. Just a few minutes per day will yield amazing benefits.



[Order Book](#)

\$24.95

Biblical Foundations of Freedom: Destroying Satan's Lies with God's Truth by Art Mathias

Dr. Mathias takes us on a step-by-step tour of the biblical foundations of sickness and freedom. He talks about sin; discernment; accusing spirits; and the major strongholds or principalities of Satan, including bitterness, self-bitterness, jealousy and envy, rejection, fear, and occultism, pharmakia, and sorcery. Within each chapter, he discusses illnesses caused by these strongholds and provides the biblical methods of overcoming each of them. He concludes with a discussion of our authority in Christ and biblical provisions for continuing to walk in health and wholeness. If these simple principles were followed, we would see considerably fewer illnesses in the Body of Christ. This is the book I wish I had written!