

Bethel Student Silences Satan's Lies With This Unexpected Tool

Anne Ballard never expected to start a jewelry company. But her business goes far beyond making stylish fashion statements. With an emphasis on the prophetic, Ballard's company, The Crowning Jewels (TCJ), seeks to speak life over women, call forth their destinies and create beauty.

But Ballard didn't always see things that way. Growing up in the church, she had faith in God, but one based more on religion than relationship. Her image of herself and understanding of God's character were somewhat distorted. Ballard found herself asking two of life's ultimate questions: "Who am I?" and "Why am I here?"

When she heard Pastor Bill Johnson of Bethel Church in Redding, California, speak, she felt he had the missing spiritual key to a truly personal relationship with Jesus. So Ballard decided to attend a three-year program at Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry (BSSM), where students are taught to "enjoy the presence of God, say what He is saying and do what He is doing," to minister in the style of Jesus.

Initially, Ballard says she didn't know what to expect at BSSM.

"I went to ministry school, not really knowing what ministry school was about or what I would learn—but it absolutely changed my life," she says. "In your third year, you choose someone to intern for, and you just serve them. Usually, people choose someone who has a ministry that aligns with the calling on your life, and honestly, I was still figuring that out in my second year."

Thankfully, during her third year at the school, the depth of her understanding grew when she started serving at Igniting Hope Ministries, led by Steve and Wendy Backlund.

“[Steve’s] message of hope, identity and learning the power of our words really impacted what I would later do,” she says.

Along the way, Ballard learned God was not the judgmental, critical deity she had always imagined Him to be. She says she knew she’d been delivered out of religion—which she associated with judgment and criticism. She saw God as “keeping a list of everything you’re doing wrong rather than cheering you on and loving the way He created you.”

Ballard’s personal transformation was so powerful it birthed a desire to lead others toward their identity in Christ.

“I was really impacted by the message of identity and just learning who God created me to be,” she says. “I wouldn’t say I had a strong identity growing up. As many of us are, I was just kind of tossed about by the messages we get in the media and the world—from magazines to movies to TV, and all of those things. Unless we are firmly rooted in our identity in Christ, we can be tossed about.

“So as my identity started getting shaped and rooted back into truth during my time in ministry school and through serving Steve and Wendy, that started changing me. I saw this need within me, and I knew [there was a need] within other people as well, for a way to practically renew your mind with truth.

“Jewelry just kind of lent itself to that. I’ve always loved beauty, and meaning is really important to me. And the jewelry just became this platform that bridged those two things, something you could wear that was stylish but also carried a weighty message that I was needing to believe at that time.”

Creating for the Kingdom

As Ballard found her footing in her relationship with God, she sensed the Holy Spirit calling her to help others understand who they are in Christ.

“I knew I was called to impact that in the church,” she says.

The creativity that lingered in the background as she spent many years in the “safe” profession of nursing came into play when she founded a company called “The Crowning Jewels” (TCJ) in 2013. She continued as a nurse for two and a half years while she established her Redding-based jewelry company. It has now grown to 10 employees—including herself and four jewelry makers—and also uses some contract workers for photography and other needs.

The company’s name originated with the British crown jewels.

“The name came from this idea of our identity and who God created us to be,” Ballard says. “[There’s] a calling on our lives: the fact that we all are known and loved by Him, that we are worthy. All of those values and those beliefs are like crowning jewels when we choose to incorporate them into our lives, when we choose to renew our minds with truth.”

Ballard also believes quality is important.

“Everything we make right now is high-quality silver- and gold-plated, either gold-plated pewter or gold-plated,” Ballard says. “We do want to move into precious metals in the future, but right now, this is what we have, and it’s really high-quality.”

Either TCJ or the customer can choose the words that are hand-stamped on the jewelry. With its “Heaven Inspired” collection, the customer provides a favorite style and chain color and the name of the recipient. Then the team asks God for an encouraging word for that person and uses it on the jewelry. The “Custom” collection follows a similar process, but this time, the customer asks God for a word or uses a word they’ve

already received.

“The point is, we believe anyone can hear from God and be reminded of His truth,” says Ballard, noting that the pieces come with a handwritten card.

Participating in the custom jewelry making has proven meaningful to many.

“That might be people ordering something tied to their spiritual walk, perhaps a season of life, or it may be that the Lord has told them a word for their life that they want to remember,” she says. “And so they can submit that word, whether it’s that ‘I’m Worthy,’ or ‘I’m Beautiful,’ or ‘Hold Onto Hope’ or something like that. And we’ll make a custom piece for them with that word from the Lord or a word they want for their friend.”

TCJ also stands out among Christian jewelry companies because of its emphasis on the prophetic.

“Every month, we sit down and we pray and ask the Lord what He’s doing corporately for the month that we’re praying about,” Ballard says. “Out of that comes a blog for that month, and then we design pieces to go along with that.”

These designs are two limited-edition handmade pieces that reflect each month’s truths and declarations. Ballard sees this as “a way to come into agreement with heaven’s promises as a worldwide family.” The company’s website, , declares, “We believe that your words create worlds.”

TCJ has several levels of jewelry subscriptions, Ballard says, “so people will get a piece in their mailbox every month, so that if the blog is about hope that month, then the piece may have ‘Hope’ on it, and then it’s got a description of what that means for that month.”

The company also has monthly prophetic pages, which she

describes as “a guided interactive journal of a way to incorporate what God is doing corporately into your own life and be activated in the prophetic.”

Cooperating With Holy Spirit

Ballard emphasizes the importance of renewing the mind, not just as something God does, but as progress the believer makes through cooperating with the Holy Spirit.

“Growing up, renewing my mind was a concept that always felt so lofty and nebulous,” she says. “[I felt] almost like God would do that, and I didn’t have to have an active role in that. As I started studying, and especially being in BSSM and serving under Steve and Wendy’s mentorship, I started realizing that renewing your mind is a very intentional practice that we all have to participate in if we want our thoughts to change. Because what we think becomes what we believe. What we believe becomes what we say. And what we say becomes what we do. So if we want our lives to change, we have to start with changing what we believe.”

Ballard made strides in changing her thinking by learning the power of declarations.

“If I’m struggling to be brave in an area, or if I’m feeling insecure or scared about something, I really need to renew my mind with a word from the Lord,” she says. “That’s in the Bible. So let’s say I’m struggling with my finances. I might start making a declaration of ‘The Lord is my provider.’ In that process, I’m renewing my mind with truth rather than focusing on the lie that it feels like I don’t have enough right now. That’s the process of renewing my mind. And our jewelry fits in there beautifully because, in that example, I might get a piece of jewelry that says, ‘The Lord Is My Provider.’”

The Spirit and the Scriptures work in tandem through TCJ’s jewelry. Two product lines, “Icons” and “Legacy,” tie in to

key figures in the Bible. In conversations with other Christian women, Ballard observed their attraction to stories of certain women of Scripture who are heroes of the faith. Many believers would identify with those stories.

"They felt like they were a Deborah or a Sarah or a Mary in their own way, or they'd received a prophetic word about that," Ballard says.

In response, she created the Icons line—with Esther as the first piece. She later included Deborah, Sarah, Mary of Bethany, Hannah and Abigail. The Icons reflect "powerful women who believe God and change the world," Ballard says.

By contrast, the Legacy collection highlights women in the lineage of Jesus: Mary, Bathsheba, Tamar, Ruth and Rahab.

"There was power in honoring the women that God chose, especially because they almost all have a bit of scandal in their story, and yet God deemed them worthy, and He chose them," says Ballard.

TCJ also has some unisex products appropriate for men, but for now, the company's main emphasis is on women. And the testimonies TCJ receives shows the jewelry is making an impact on the people the company serves.

"People who are feeling broken and hopeless will get a word that speaks to them and gives them hope," Ballard says. "Or they may get a word that says 'Whole,' and then the encouragement that comes with a handwritten card. We have countless testimonies of how that has changed people's lives. ... We have a lot of testimonies from the monthly subscription and how the word that came was just right on time, and it was a word they needed for that month."

In a statement on TCJ's website, Ballard explains just why words are so significant in the kingdom of God: "Words have the power to affect the world around me, as well as the world

within me.” {eo}

READ MORE: *To learn more about The Crowning Jewels, visit .*

Christine D. Johnson *is editor of Charisma Leader magazine and a Charisma Podcast Network producer.*