

Issue NO. 03 June/July 2022



Revealed

Standing for Marriage Restoration

MARRIAGE REVEALED MINISTRIES INC.

THE LONG
WALK TO THE WELL

THE HUNGRY SOUL
VS
THE FULL SOUL

*Living
Waters*

FROM STANDING
~TO GIVING UP~
TO RESTORED

*Well
With My
Soul*

FROM
DESPAIR TO
PRAISE



Revealed

Do you have something you would like to share with us to publish? 2500 word limit

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- Budgeting/Financial
- Spiritual Growth
- Creative/Inspiration
- Bible Study
- Restoration Testimonies
- Health

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ASK SHEILA

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SPOTLIGHT -RESTORED TESTIMONY

HEATHER
GRIFFIN

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MarriageRevealedMinistries.com

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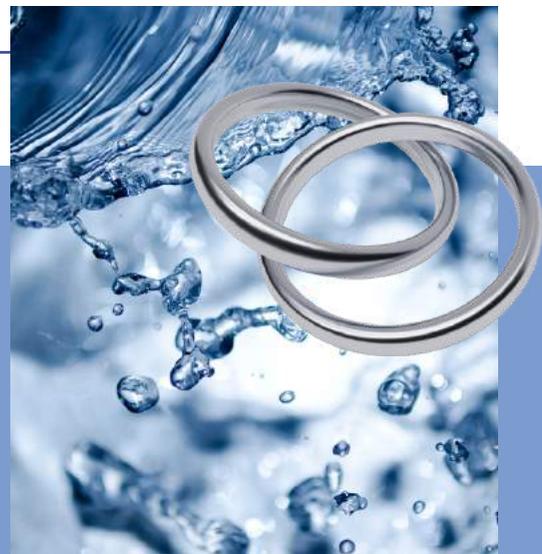
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Revealed

Standing for Marriage Restoration



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Many Thanks to our GUEST WRITERS!

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MARRIAGE REVEALED MINISTRIES INC.



EDITOR'S NOTE

Sheila Hollinger

Revealed



Hello Standers,

The theme for this issue is Living Waters. In my article "The Long Walk to the Well" I went deeper into the depths of what Jesus meant when He told the woman at the well about living water. I came to see how many times in my life when I came to that place and didn't see what He was really offering, but instead wanted what I thought He was offering.....no more struggle. No more endless toil that seemed to never end, and only produced enough to get me by, but never enough to fully satisfy. As I really looked deeper at the woman at the well, there was so much about her life that while I could not relate to her having 5 husbands, I could relate to her shame and condemnation, as well as her being an outcast being forced by her shame to draw water from the well during the end of the day, instead of the cool morning hours with the rest of the other ladies. I could understand and relate that she was so ready and desperate for a Savior, but because she didn't realize the kind of Savior she was looking for, she missed it-more than once. Two of the ways was when He was right before her and He said "*If you had known God's free gift,*" replied Jesus, "*and Who it is that said to you, 'Give me some water,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.*" John 4:10 Thinking He is still talking about the well in front of her, she states that He could not offer her a drink because He has nothing to draw water with (vs11) And then again when she misunderstood and thought He was offering her freedom from physical thirst and the suffering of having to daily take the long, lonely, shameful walk to the well each day. (vs 15) "Sir, give me this water so that I will not get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

Jesus could see that she was missing it. The first thing He pointed out to her was that she didn't even know of the free gift of God that was available to her. That is why she missed it. When you don't know what God is actually wanting to offer you, you will start out your relationship with Him thinking He is going to remove struggles, instead of teaching you how to grow, mature, thrive, and be transformed through those daily struggles, because that is partly what living water does!

Sheila



The Sovereign LORD has given me His words of wisdom, so that I know how to comfort the weary. Morning by morning He awakens me and opens my understanding to His will. Isaiah 50:4

WHAT IS A STANDER? WHAT IS STANDING FOR MARRIAGE RESTORATION?

A Stander is a man or woman, who chooses to stand on the Word of God and fight for their marriage despite adultery, separation, and divorce.

While we have adopted the term Standing for marriage restoration, we are doing anything but standing still. We are actively moving towards progress in the areas of healing and forgiving. We are seeking to mature in our walk with the Lord, and pray our spouses do the same, all the while prayerfully interceding for God to restore lost spouses to Himself while believing in marriage restoration.



It's familiar knowledge how adultery is common and the leading cause of divorce. What is not common is how many would actually **STAND AND FIGHT** to save their marriage if that option was given to them, along with a community of others to uplift, encourage, and train them so they are equipped for the long warfare. So many are told that once there is adultery, then divorce is really the only option.

Standing is not only an option that opens the door to restoration, but it also opens the door to healing the right way. Many Christians will testify that because of standing, they found a true, real, intimate relationship with God at levels they never had before.

We here at Marriage Revealed Ministries Inc. are living proof that **God saves marriages**. Restorations happen after adultery, after divorce, and yes, even **AFTER** they mistakenly marry the other person! If you feel God calling your heart to stand, we are here to stand with you, welcome! It's not an easy journey, but worth it because the lessons you learn along the way, make the traveling worth it!

Our Mission

Marriage Revealed Ministries Inc. supports and encourages those who are called to stand for the healing and restoration of their hurting marriage while providing them a safe place for God's will and purpose to be revealed and manifested in their lives.

My brethren, if any of you should be overtaken by a fault, you who are in The Spirit should restore him in the spirit of humility, Galatians 6:1

Our Principles

We believe in the sacredness of marriage as revealed in the Word of God.

"Haven't you read," He replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

Matthew 19:4-6

A Giving Opportunity For You

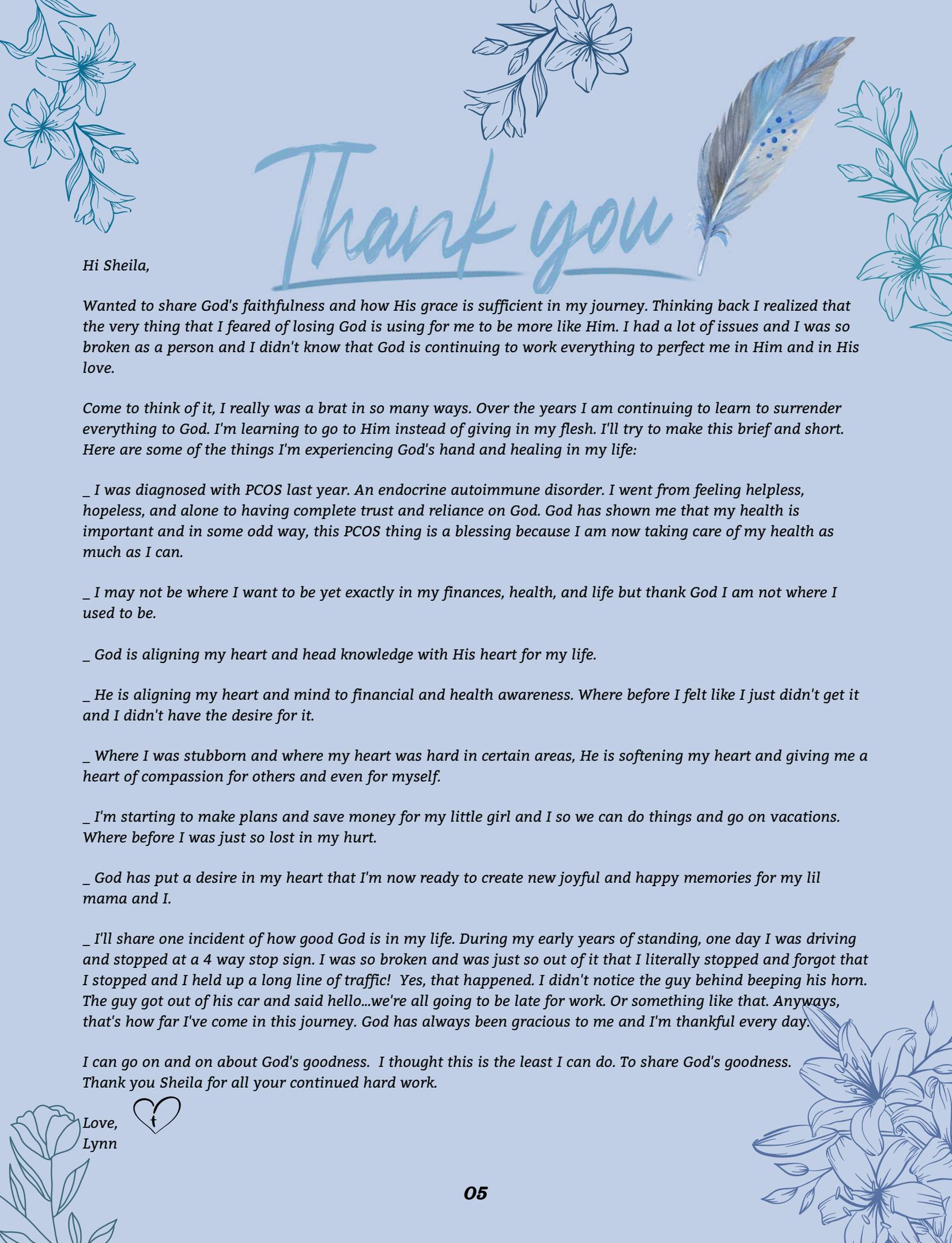
Marriage Revealed Ministries Inc. is a 501c3 nonprofit completely funded by Standers just like you! And because of your support, we have been able to reach more and more Standers who have been alone and bring them a community.

Would you consider being partners with us to help us bring support, hope, and encouragement to Standers around the globe?

You Can GIVE today at marriagerevealedministries.com/donate/



Want to find out more about Standing? Visit us at marriagerevealedministries.com



Thank you

Hi Sheila,

Wanted to share God's faithfulness and how His grace is sufficient in my journey. Thinking back I realized that the very thing that I feared of losing God is using for me to be more like Him. I had a lot of issues and I was so broken as a person and I didn't know that God is continuing to work everything to perfect me in Him and in His love.

Come to think of it, I really was a brat in so many ways. Over the years I am continuing to learn to surrender everything to God. I'm learning to go to Him instead of giving in my flesh. I'll try to make this brief and short. Here are some of the things I'm experiencing God's hand and healing in my life:

_ I was diagnosed with PCOS last year. An endocrine autoimmune disorder. I went from feeling helpless, hopeless, and alone to having complete trust and reliance on God. God has shown me that my health is important and in some odd way, this PCOS thing is a blessing because I am now taking care of my health as much as I can.

_ I may not be where I want to be yet exactly in my finances, health, and life but thank God I am not where I used to be.

_ God is aligning my heart and head knowledge with His heart for my life.

_ He is aligning my heart and mind to financial and health awareness. Where before I felt like I just didn't get it and I didn't have the desire for it.

_ Where I was stubborn and where my heart was hard in certain areas, He is softening my heart and giving me a heart of compassion for others and even for myself.

_ I'm starting to make plans and save money for my little girl and I so we can do things and go on vacations. Where before I was just so lost in my hurt.

_ God has put a desire in my heart that I'm now ready to create new joyful and happy memories for my lil mama and I.

_ I'll share one incident of how good God is in my life. During my early years of standing, one day I was driving and stopped at a 4 way stop sign. I was so broken and was just so out of it that I literally stopped and forgot that I stopped and I held up a long line of traffic! Yes, that happened. I didn't notice the guy behind beeping his horn. The guy got out of his car and said hello...we're all going to be late for work. Or something like that. Anyways, that's how far I've come in this journey. God has always been gracious to me and I'm thankful every day.

I can go on and on about God's goodness. I thought this is the least I can do. To share God's goodness. Thank you Sheila for all your continued hard work.

Love,
Lynn





The SOUL THAT IS HUNGRY

vs the

the SOUL THAT IS FULL!

The heart and soul

of the message our ministry brings is the belief that most marriages relationships reflect the relationship two people have with God. If that relationship with the Father is not at a peace, where they are spiritually full and satisfied, it leaves a soul hungering, thirsting, and starving. This lack over time creates a deeper and more intense desire to be fed. A hungry soul will start to wander and stray in search of nourishment.

The Hungry Soul-Part One

by Sheila Hollinger

But the signs of a hungering soul, wandering, straying, and searching, may not be openly visual or recognizable to the Stander. Some hungering souls withdraw and turn inward to hide the longing and discontent. They may do a quiet soul searching to figure out where the unhappiness is coming from. While others are more open and vocal as they wander around trying to find new and exciting things to ease the discontent and boredom. They may even recognize a lack and void in their relationship with God and start to seek Him, but the hunger that is within is too great and requires a bigger meal, not the milk that many Christians live on. Meat only comes to those Christians who are willing to deny flesh, put down selfishness and pick up their cross and follow Him.

A hungry soul is a soul that is starving to know their identity, purpose and the reason it was created. All these answers come when a spirit is born again, becomes one with God and starts to grow, and as it grows, it FEEDS the soul. Our souls were designed and created to be unified with our spirits, letting the spirit take the lead because we the only way we get to really know and have a relationship with God is through our spirits. When the soul is hungry and searching and doesn't understand where to get the food its starving for, it becomes weak and vulnerable to the enemy, who also fully understands how humans were created and what they need.



The enemy knows exactly how to provide counterfeit meals for those that have come to the place in their life where they have started to wander and stray in search of food. He knows exactly how to snare those that are weak and wandering and feed them enough to capture and keep them bound.

Don't worry, I am going to take you through the scriptures to teach you about this.

It all starts here. With this scripture.

A soul that is full shall tread upon the honeycomb : and a soul that is hungry shall take even bitter for sweet. Like a bird that strays from its nest is a man who wanders from his home. Proverbs 27:7-8



This scripture was a blessing to find. Digging deep into the meaning of these words opened up the hidden truth of the struggle that goes on when a soul is hungry and what happens when it comes upon 'honeycomb'.

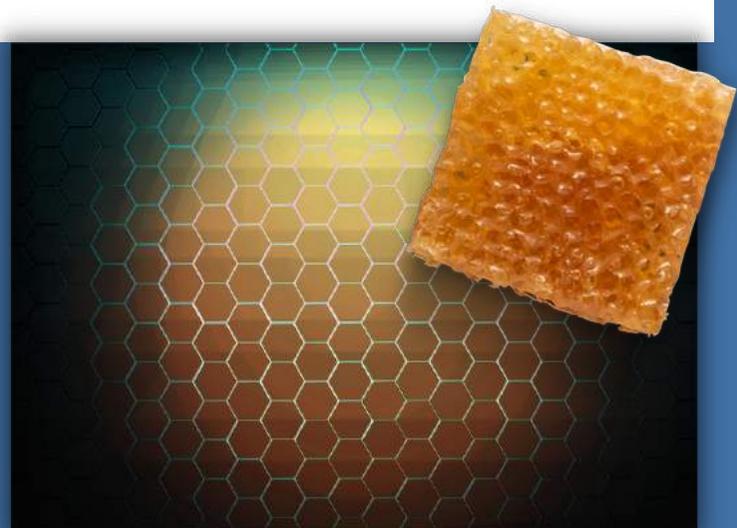
Proverbs 2, 5, 7, and 9 teach us many things about the spirit **ZUWR** (Strong's Concordance #2114). This spirit which is gender-neutral goes by many names but most often is identified as a woman, like the strange woman, adulterous woman, immoral, foreign, harlot, forbidden, another man's wife, loose, estranged, another, and the most popular term the standing community has used is other as in other woman, or other man. But again, this is important to remind you. This is a spirit, not a person, and it's gender-neutral so men can also become ensnared by this spirit to snare others.

Zuwr has one purpose, to provide the hungry and weak soul a substitute food that will lead them into the snare to be captured.

We often think that zuwr's weapon is sex, lust, and attraction to the eyes, but in fact, while it does use those things that engage the lust of the eyes, they are not actually not powerful enough to create the type of snare needed to break up a marriage and convince a person to leave their spouse, home, family and responsibilities. There has to be something so much more than just lust of the eyes that convince a person to leave. So the true weapon of zuwr is its ability to give a starving soul the food that it needs. And that food is honeycomb.

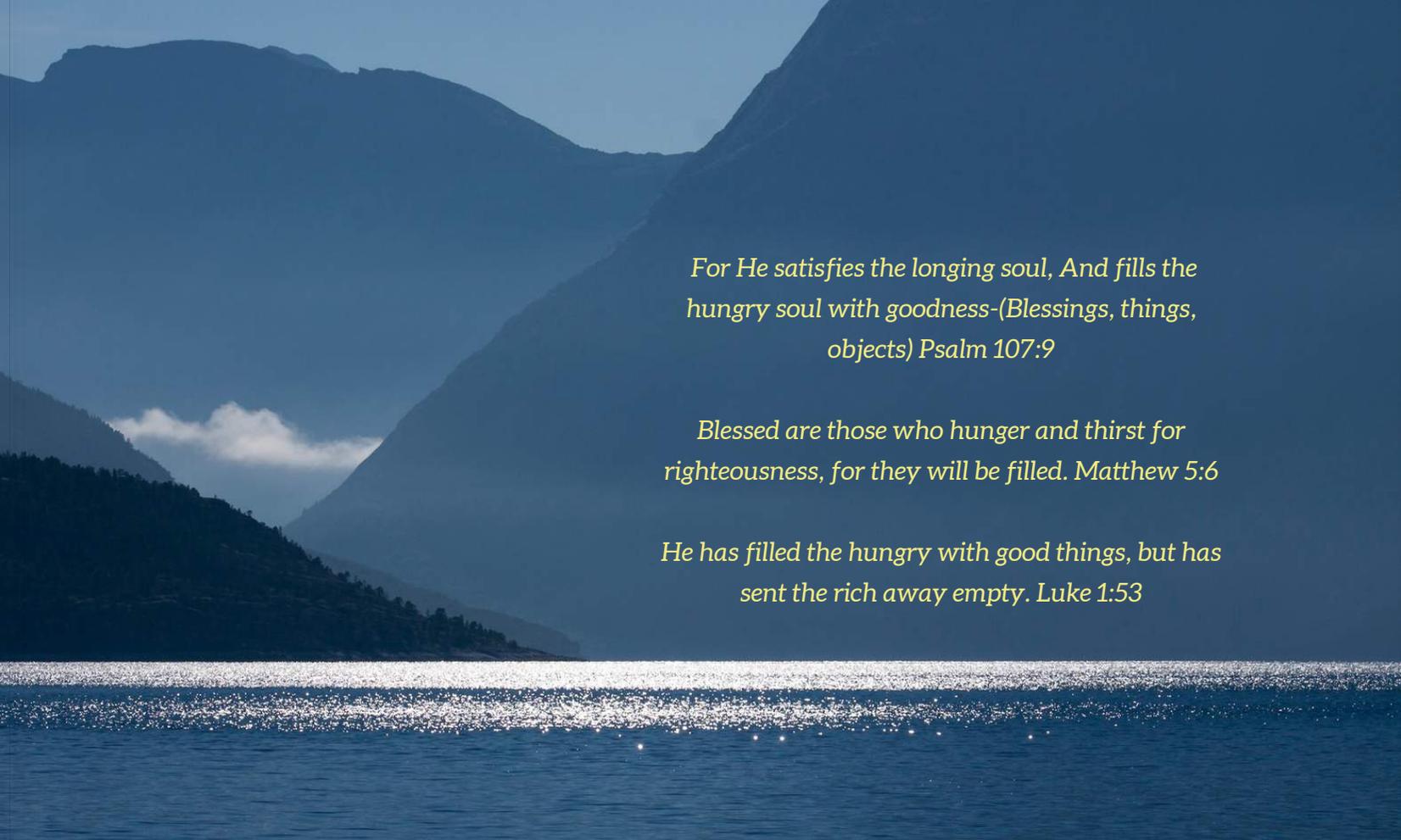
THE POWER OF THE HONEYCOMB

For the lips of a strange woman drop as a honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: Proverbs 5:3



Strong's Concordance reveals that when honey is mentioned in the Word of God as a weapon of zuwr, it's not honey at all, **but flattery with sweet words that smooth over rough places**. This sounds ridiculous to think that flattery is powerful enough to destroy a marriage. But that is because we most likely never have understood flattery and what the Word of God shows us about it.

Flattery comes from the word "thaumazó" which means that when you are flattering someone, you are trying to evoke an emotional astonishment in them, stirring them to be amazed and marvel in wonder at what your words of flattery just did inside of them. Strong's Concordance says that flatterers perform (put on a show) to powerfully strike the viewer personally, uniquely, and individually right where they need it the most.



For He satisfies the longing soul, And fills the hungry soul with goodness-(Blessings, things, objects) Psalm 107:9

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Matthew 5:6

He has filled the hungry with good things, but has sent the rich away empty. Luke 1:53

And where do they need it the most? In the rough places. (Remember that flattery is a smoothing over of rough places.)

Rough places are anything in our life, that we look upon and face that might appear to be a hill to others but to us, they feel like a mountain.

We all can relate to the feeling of facing a giant in our lives that we stare at and think “How will I ever overcome this? It’s impossible.” This giant sized mountain could be just about anything in our lives that we are struggling with that brings torment and unrest. It could be feeling unloved, unworthy, unappreciated, disrespected. It could be feelings that come when your spouse ignores you, are too busy and puts other things as a priority. It could be the inability to make enough money to provide and have that peace that comes when you are able to provide and contribute financially.

Some of these mountains are there because of the bondage of addictions that people can’t break free from.

The guilt, shame, and condemnation creates huge mountains that make us feel incredibly powerless. The only reason these rough places take on giant mountain sized proportions is because we can’t seem to figure out how to overcome them on our own. We have the tools or the ability to figure out what is needed.

And that is where the flatterer comes in and works its magic. In one conversation, with lips dropping honey, it comes and puts on a show of lies that makes the lost person hope that those mountains can be leveled. Each time the lost spouse engages with the flatterer, they are fed more and more of this honey and become stronger by believing what the flatterer is promising. The enemy knows what the spouse needs, what the mountains are because they not only helped create them, they also helped keep the solutions away on how to overcome them until the perfect time came to offer a solution that would snare them.

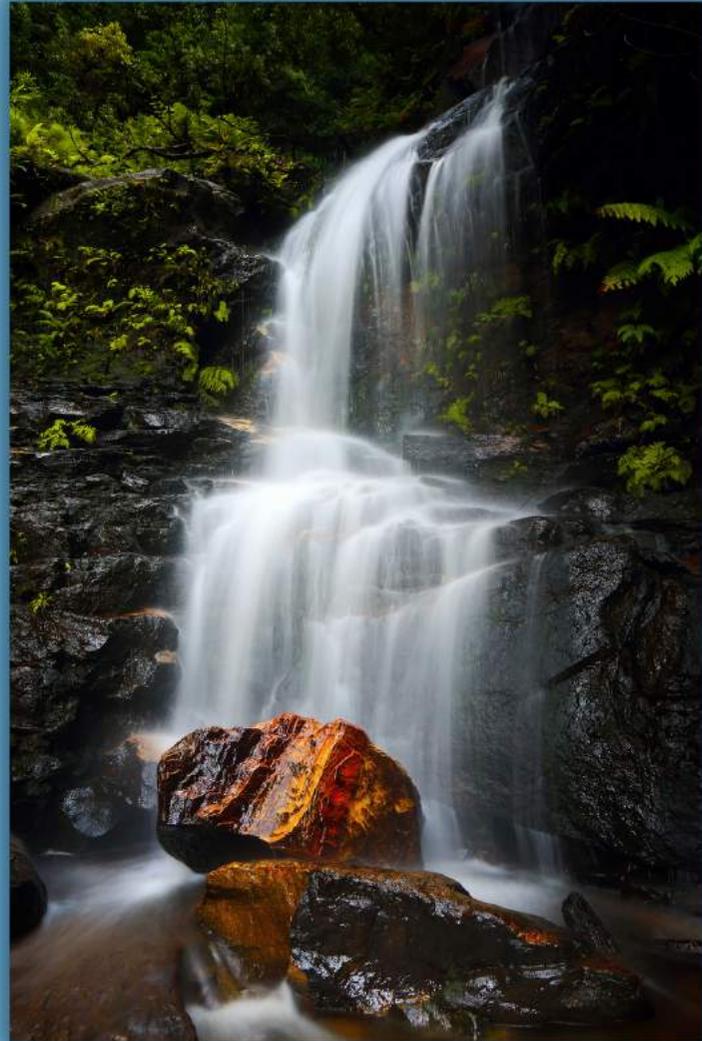
We have established who zuwr is, and how honeycomb is flattery used to flatten those mountains that people have in their lives. This flattening brings such awe and wonder to the person, amazement that they were able to come into their life and offer so much help that their hungry souls were strengthened and this is the snare that captures them. They feel to give this person up, would mean going back to starvation. This is why the flatterer snares the heart and keeps the heart from turning to God.

GOD'S WARNING AGAINST THE FLATTERING TONGUE

Lord said: "These people draw near to Me with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. Isaiah 29:13

And Jesus quotes His Father and calls them hypocrites, which are stage-players, dissemblers, and pretenders. Hypocrites are those who judge under, like a performer who hides under a mask (i.e. a theater-actor);) a two-faced person; a "hypocrite," whose profession does not match their practice - i.e. someone who "says one thing but does another." Strong's Concordance # 5273

Jesus answered them, "Isaiah prophesied correctly about you hypocrites, as it is written: 'These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. Mark 7:6



Why is God allowing this to happen?

For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: Proverbs 5:3

Her lips "drop as honeycomb" is one word, 5317. nopheth, from the word, nuwph. Drop is not so much an action as it is a CREATION of a situation. The strange woman (zuwr) with her flattering words, create a situation that a starved souls finds themselves in. A situation that will cause them to feel a great shaking, sifting in their hearts.

Last issue of Revealed (Issue No.2 April/May) I did an in-depth bible study and article on the place that the lost must go in order to be sifted so the separation of wheat from the chaff happens. How Jesus told Peter that satan had come asking permission to be sifted, and Jesus was allowing it and would be praying for Peter.

Jesus didn't stop Satan from sifting Peter, but prayed for his safe return because the process of separating the wheat from the chaff requires a harsh shaking process, this shaking is required because the eternal resting place of the soul depends upon it.

For those that have ignored the invitation to come to the well and drink, to come and be fed, God has not given up on them. He has allowed a way to come and snare them in hopes that in the snare they will come to see the truth and turn in repentance, and He will hear and rescue them.

12 For he will deliver the needy when he cries for help, he afflicted also, and him who has no helper. 13 He will have compassion on the poor and needy, And the lives of the needy he will save. 14 He will rescue their life from oppression and violence, And their blood will be precious in his sight;--Psalm 72



HUNGER BITTEN

And this brings us to the last part of the scripture.

and a soul that is hungry shall take even bitter for sweet.
Proverbs 27:7

Hunger: 7457. Raeb-it means hunger bitten, a soul that is weakened by hunger, so hungry that it's being pinched, which causes it to go wandering and looking for food.

Job 18 is another place that talks about the soul that is hunger bitten, AND the snare and how they easily fall into it BECAUSE they do not know God.

*Job 18:5 "The light of the wicked indeed goes out,
And the flame of his fire does not shine.*

*6The light is dark in his tent,
And his lamp beside him is put out.*

*8For he is cast into a net by his own feet,
And he walks into a snare.*

*9The net takes him by the heel,
And a snare lays hold of him.*

*10A noose is hidden for him on the ground,
And a trap for him in the road.*

*12His strength shall be hungerbitten, and destruction
shall be ready at his side.*

*14He is uprooted from the shelter of his tent,
21Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked,
And this is the place of him who does not know God."*

Sheila

THE FULL SOUL- PART TWO

by Sheila Hollinger

A soul that is satisfied shall loath(tread upon) the honeycomb : and a soul that is hungry shall take even bitter for sweet. Like a bird that strays from its nest is a man who wanders from his home. Proverbs 27:7-8

WHO LOATHES HONEY?

If you read the first half of this article, then you understand that honey really isn't honey when God's Word is trying to teach us about the state of the soul and the consequences of starving it. A hungry soul finds that "any bitter thing is sweet." Proverbs 27:7 while a full soul that comes upon the dropped honeycomb will loath and trample it underfoot.

This speaks to awareness and how a soul that is being fed by the spirit, has their spiritual eyes and understanding open to see the snare and the purpose for which it was created. To understand what this soul is full of, we take a look at where else this word is used so we may get a clear understanding of WHAT fills a soul that will open the eyes and bring wisdom to protect a person from being vulnerable to the enemy's traps of honeycomb.

As for me, I shall see Your face in righteousness; I will be [fully] satisfied when I awake [to find myself] seeing Your likeness. Psalm 17:15

The fear of the LORD leads to life, and whoever has it rests satisfied; he will not be visited by harm.

Proverbs 19:23

Blessed is the one You choose and bring near to dwell in Your courts! We are filled with the goodness of Your house, the holiness of Your temple. Psalm 65:4

For He has satisfied the thirsty soul, And He has filled the hungry soul with what is good. Psalm 107:9

These were just a few of the many scriptures the Word shares to teach us how a soul is fed. A soul that is seeking God will not be left hungry but filled, and fully satisfied. A soul that fears the Lord, and truly desires and wants God as part of its life is the one that has its hunger met. And a soul that is full, is a soul that is wise and see's through the lies of the enemy. THAT is the soul that finds the flattery, sweet words of the strange woman spirit loathsome!

With God we will do valiantly, For it is He who will trample down our enemies. Psalm 108:13

"Loathes" in Hebrew is literally "treads upon," "tramples underfoot," which is an expression of the greatest disgust and contempt; this tells us that in order for someone to feel that level of disgust and contempt when they come upon something that others fall for as sweet and wonderful, means they have been with the Father enough to recognize and see deception when they encounter it.

Our Spouses are Starving!

When I sat and looked at how all these scriptures came together, my heart was troubled. Our spouses are out searching for nourishment because their souls are perishing from lack of true spiritual food that is found in surrender and submission to God's Word, and get snared and taken advantage of by the pretender. The two-faced actor that chooses their words carefully to drop what will be enticements like honey.

You can still be a Christian and hunger. So many live in unbelief, shame, guilt, and condemnation, which prevents them from accepting the truth and letting the Word nourish them so they feel full and satisfied. Many are unable or unwilling to forgive or fight to get out of the strongholds and bondages that are preventing them from feasting at what God has openly placed before them.

This makes me think back to my own life when I was a Christian, but so lost and troubled that I was searching and snared in so many things that seemed so much more enticing than God. I would complain that He was too hard to find, but the truth is, I was impatient and made it hard. I never searched. I didn't want to read from the bible, I wanted something I could hold, touch, hear, taste, and feel. Since I was searching in my flesh, I wanted things in the flesh. I was not searching in faith. It's important to know and understand our bodies, all three parts we are made up of. Just as we know what our flesh needs to be healthy and strong, we also need to learn to daily feed our spirits with the Word of God.

My Heart's Desire

When I was young, I remember my mom trying to get me to love water instead of the Kool-Aid she had regretfully gotten me used to. I understood why water was needed, healthy, and the best choice, but when I drank it, my brain rejected it, as it listened to my senses, which were accustomed to something far more flavorful. Over time, my taste changed and transformed into what it finds either appalling or appealing. After my morning coffee, I drink nothing but water, and I'm quite picky about the water I choose.

I remember the same struggle I had in 1997 when I said the sinner's prayer and started calling myself a saved Christian (I didn't actually know what that meant until 20 years later). I knew Christians were supposed to read the Word of God and love it, as they were being nourished and fed by it. But when I opened the Word and tried to read it, love was the last thing I felt. I was so covered by shame and condemnation that when I read the Word, condemnation turned the Word back on me - as a tool to use against me - like a disapproving finger from God saying, "You will never change or measure up to my standards." Condemnation kept me from seeing and experiencing a loving Father because I felt I disappointed Him by not being able to keep the rules He required.

Standing changed all that.

In my desperation to prevent what was happening, from destroying me, I pressed back against lies of condemnation. I pressed back by choosing to believe God's Word, over what I was hearing and feeling. As the condemnation left, the Word of God started to take on a whole different voice. Instead of beating me up and making me feel overwhelmed with impossibilities, it started to be a voice of one that was on my side, rooting for me, encouraging me to keep going and to look at things in a different way.

I discovered, as I went through healing and deliverance, that I was able to see God's nature and character, unfiltered. He became very appealing to me. The more I learned about Him, the more I wanted to be like Him. I started to desire GOOD, and detest the evil I was once passive about.

Romans 12:9 Love is to be sincere and active [the real thing—without guile and hypocrisy]. Hate what is evil [detest all ungodliness, do not tolerate wickedness]; hold on tightly to what is good.

So what happens when I open the Word now? When I read directions like "**Romans 12:12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.**"? I don't see it as a setup for failure but as "THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE". John 14:16 If my ultimate goal, hearts desire is to know Him more, be as close to Him as possible, then I see everything in the Word as direction on how to make that happen, so the Word excites me because it holds the answers to get me to what I desire the most! -HIM- This is radical transformation of what I have come to want in my life, because when my storm first started, no.....God was not important to me. I did not have any desire to be like Him, not even the slightest. I wanted happiness, peace, comfort, and ease. And God seemed to be against all those things.

Standing changed what my heart desired most. HIM, and because of that, the Word has now changed to something that only it can do, fill me with living water that connects me directly to Him and satisfies my soul.

LESSONS LEARNED THROUGH THE STORM

MY STORY PART TWO- LYNDA CASTLEBERRY



Bible Study

The first few months after my husband left me went by in a haze of pain. I could not bear to remain in my apartment so I found myself traveling 2000 miles away to stay with my father. We had not seen each other in over 40 years. He was a stranger to me and I to him, yet even in the midst of all my anguish, I felt God leading me there.

Dad lived on 7 acres of land near a tiny little town. It was in the solitude of that place I began to regain my footing. As Dad and I got to know one another, I found a part of me that had been missing. God told me that He was going to restore other desolate places in my life, not just my marriage.

This was the beginning.

I had not been raised with a father, and even though I loved God, I had a hard time picturing Him as my heavenly Father. God had taken me to meet my earthly father to help me. Through the strength of Christ, I was able to tell my Dad that I forgave him for his abandonment of me as a two-year-old and that I wanted to move forward and establish a relationship with him now. He told me how nervous he was wondering how I would behave or what I would say to him. He was afraid I would vent anger and possibly hatred. When it didn't come, he was astonished. Through the days I was there I was able to show my father that there was a way to live, not driven by emotions, but by the love of the Lord.

As I spent my time in tears and prayers, God tenderly met me at every turn. The Word became even more alive, especially the Psalms. The internet was very fresh and it was there that I learned about standing for marriage through another ministry that was relatively new. As the weeks went by I felt strengthened and I started longing to return home.

Not all days were good. I remember a time when I felt like a leaf tossed upon a fast-moving river. It was just being swept along, hitting rocks, being pulled under the water, flipping over, and turning every which way. My life felt like that. How was I ever going to survive the chaos? In an instant, God spoke and said *“Daughter, I have your life in My Hands. I have the control. Look and see where this river comes from.”* I looked and saw the river was flowing from Him, from His throne. It is the River of Life that flows from God through us. In those times I felt like there was chaos He was still in control. I needed to learn to take my hands off the situation and allow God to work it through. It is a process that continues even today.



Living Water

Water is essential for life. A human male's body is made up of approximately 60% water. If we do not replace water that is lost on a daily basis we will soon become dehydrated. We can survive weeks without food, but only about 3 or 4 days without water. Dehydration can lead to headaches, dizziness, fatigue, and other health issues. Eventually, it leads to death.

Just as physical water is necessary to physically survive, Living Water is needed to spiritually survive.

Where does this water come from?

“Then the angel showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb” Rev. 22:1

This water is necessary for our eternal life. If we are not drinking from it regularly, we become spiritually dehydrated. This leads to discouragement, depression, hopelessness, and loss of faith. Eventually, it leads to spiritual death.

How do you, as a Stander, keep yourself strong to not just survive this storm, but even thrive in the midst of it? Drink deeply and frequently from the Living Water.

Verses for Further Study and Contemplation

Psalm 23:2

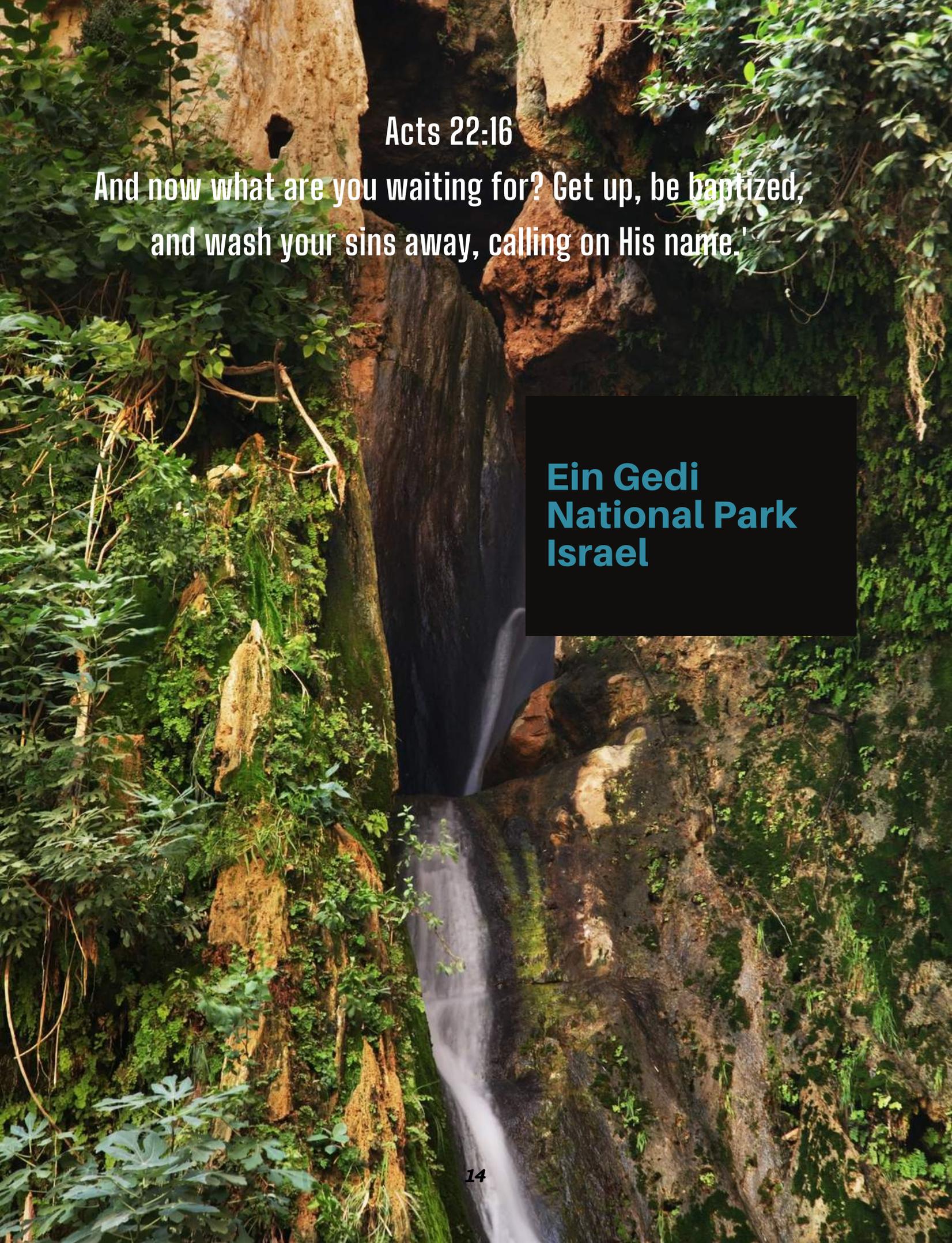
John 7:38

Isaiah 44:3

Revelation 22:1

John 4:14



A photograph of a waterfall in a lush, green forest. The water is cascading down a rocky cliff, surrounded by dense vegetation and moss. The scene is vibrant and natural.

Acts 22:16

**And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized,
and wash your sins away, calling on His name.'**

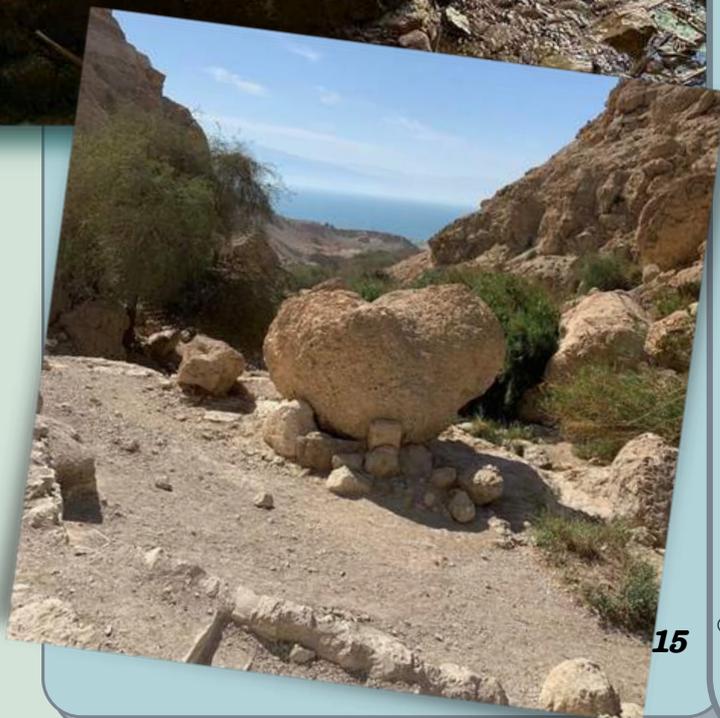
**Ein Gedi
National Park
Israel**

“The Saturation of My Word, Sustains Through ALL Things”

He highlighted these words to me:

Word/Saturation/Sustains

By Jessica Perrin



I often hear so many Standers say, “*I can’t do this anymore, it looks impossible, I am so weary*”. Well, I have news for you...you are right! YOU CAN’T do this, but through HIM, you can do this! His Word says,

“I can do ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST who GIVES me strength (Philippians 4:13).”

I take a few things from this passage of scripture - one, there is NOTHING we can’t walk through, when we walk with Him, two, HE GIVES, which means that it comes directly through Him—it’s not by you or your actions, or your strength, but it’s all done through what He gives you!

People still ask me, “*how did you do it, how did you stand so long, even through a divorce?*” My answer is always the same—through HIM and HIS WORD! His Word was water to me, it is life to me! I can’t stress this enough to you guys- His Word is POWERFUL - it GIVES LIFE, GIVES TRUTH, GIVES HOPE, GIVES STRENGTH.... It EMPOWERS US!

His Word is such a gift, straight from the Father Himself. As I stood, I would spend hours in the Word, daily, as the Lord spoke to me, encouraged me, built me up, strengthening me to do His will!

If you are trying to stand, while you aren’t in His Word daily and you aren’t walking in a deep relationship with Him, you are right, you may not be able to do this and may even feel like quitting. Does this mean that you will not have moments of weariness? Of course, you will.... I had many moments like this, but I didn’t stay in that place. I would sit daily with the Lord - even if I was angry, I still sat with Him & His Word. Every time He was so faithful to meet me, give me strength and empower me for another moment. I say moment because there were days when I needed His strength every second and I know He will do the same for you!

When I was in Israel, I took these pictures at Ein Gedi. It was where David wrote the book of Psalms and where he was hiding in the desert from Saul. This place was one of my favorite places in Israel. It is an oasis in the middle of the desert and is unbelievable to see and experience!

Our trip to Israel

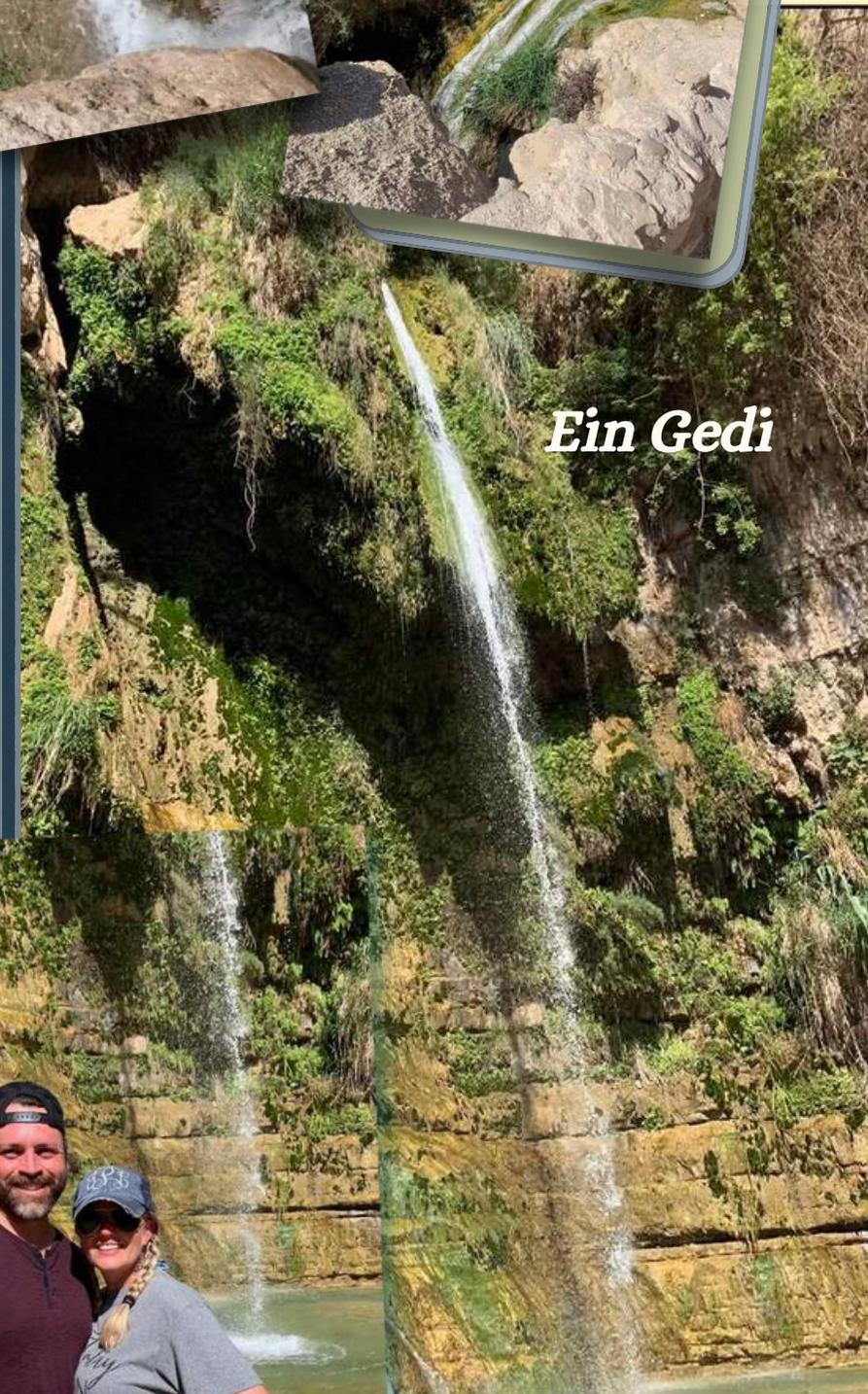
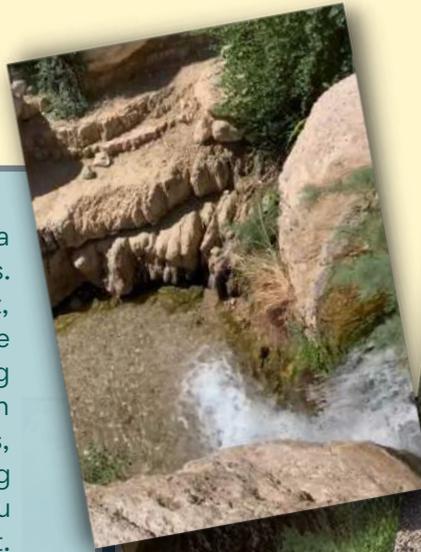
When I was there, the Lord used it as a sweet encounter of what His Word is to us. His Word is a stream in the desert, refreshment to a weary soul, hope to the hopeless, light in the darkness, a hiding place, a refuge, a safe place, and a firm foundation! As you look at these pictures, my prayer is that you imagine this being what the Word is. I am sure most of you feel like you are in a wasteland, a desert. Imagine sitting in these places from these pictures and seeing all this water and imagine you were thirsty for weeks in the scorching desert... it would be like heaven, right? You would want to jump in for refreshment and a nice drink!

Standers, this is what the Word is! It is a must in EVERY SEASON of life - more so in this season that feels like a wilderness. In reality, this is actually the sweetest place to experience God and all the amazing things HE GIVES His children, and as He gives, you can continue to do the HARD things through Him and be that lighthouse to others going through the same desert experience as you are.

You guys are amazing and I know that as you seek Him and get into His Word, it will bring life-giving water and refreshment to continue in your stand and believe for the impossible to be made possible in your lives!

Be warned - This water that He gives you, is a water that will never leave you "without", or leave you wanting more..... the only thing you will want more of, is HIM and HIS word!

Let the saturation of His Word sustain you through ALL things. It is the key to the very water and source of survival in the desert!



Ein Gedi



*Jessica
Perrin*



Find us on **YouTube!**



WANT TO CONNECT WITH OTHER STANDERS IN A SAFE, SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY?

Want to be notified when we have guest speakers, Q and A time with Sheila, general discussions and topics, and prayer nights?

Send an email request for Zoom notifications to :
admin@marriagerevealedministries.com

BE KIND TO YOUR MIND

Water-the Universal Solvent

Nasa says that in it's quest to find alian life, they follow the water. Water is a universal solvent, a mediator of life's chemical reactions, and it has a structure unlike that of any other liquid.

If life was going to get started on any planet, it would FIRST need flowing water. Water is life's true and unique medium. Without water, life simply cannot be sustained.

Take care of your mental health, and it will take care of you!

I absolutely love learning about the brain as it's the most fascinating parts of how God created humans.

I will read books and listen to podcasts by neurologists on a regular basis just to marvel at the complexity. I love obtaining tools to help encourage my patients to take care of their brains. One of the most overlooked ingredients for a happy brain is actually water.

The brain is a very soft organ made up of over 70% water! (The brain also loves a lot of healthy fat!) It seems like such a simple solution to drink clean water but it's so impactful to our mental health.

Over the years, I have had a fair share of patients have complete turnarounds in regards to their brain-related symptoms by just simply drinking more water! Dementia patients having drastically improved memory and cognition, ADD/ADHD patients reducing symptoms, and depression and anxiety drastically decreasing are some of the outcomes I've seen by a plan to drink water from waking until evening! Studies have shown an inverse relation between increased water intake and depression and anxiety symptoms.

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6147771/. Research has also shown better emotional wellness and a sensation of "satisfaction" with more water intake www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3984246/.

Often, when people are struggling with a down day they tend to grab more caffeine-containing beverages and forget the water. I had someone tell me their job was so stressful they didn't drink anything but coffee until they got home in the evening so they could stay active and awake! Unfortunately, their anxiety was through the roof and their irritability was causing problems at home and work. Little did this person know the caffeine was further dehydrating them, compounding their symptoms as well as simultaneously depleting their magnesium levels to boot. Simply bringing a water bottle to work allowed them to focus on tasks better within a day and improve their emotional well-being.

I don't think it's a coincidence that we need water all of our waking hours of the day. Jesus talked a lot about our human need for water and the thirst that drives us to seek it.

In John 4:14, Jesus says, ***"But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."***

I am constantly in awe of how our Father draws us to him by our desperate needs. While we are standing for our marriages, we think that we will never be able to function without our spouses. I know I did. And that desperate need every waking hour draws us to our knees before Him. I love that He uses the picture of water to describe what He offers to us: quenched thirsts and eternal life. His plan is perfect. Our needs and desires can draw us closer to Him in every area of this life.

It's important for Standers during this time of intense stress and change to take care of their mental health and physical bodies. Many times we think of therapy, exercise, meditation, eating right, sleep and yoga for mental health interventions and these are all evidence-based and wonderful! I will be addressing almost all of these tools when working with a patient. But don't forget every day to simply hydrate your body to help your mind. So as we drink physical water to replenish our brains and boost our mental and emotional health, we rely on Him to quench our spiritual thirst with His living water!



~ Bethany 

Bethany is a practicing licensed professional counselor with a bachelors degree in psychology and a masters of science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and a fellow Stander. She treats her patients holistically using varied methods including cognitive behavioral therapy, wellness tools and bibliotherapy.



*Hebrews 10:22
let us draw near with a true heart in full
assurance of faith, with our hearts
sprinkled clean from an evil conscience
and our bodies washed in pure water.*

RECONCILIATION TO GOD THROUGH STANDING FOR MY MARRIAGE

By A Fellow Restored Stander



One night - back in the Fall of 2016

I felt that twinge of emptiness when I got home from work. Once my daughter was fast asleep, I moved from the bedroom to the quiet living room, where I no longer felt the presence of my husband, nor the togetherness of family. It was just an empty moment when I felt inclined to clean, probably something I did to fill the emptiness, but managing to be productive, given the reality that I was single parenting, having to go to work the next morning, and accepting that my husband was not home. I began to pull out a neglected bin of papers from the shelf, slowly purging and cleaning through our stuff. That's right, I had to, I was about to move out of our apartment. I needed to start preparing to move out our stuff... what was left of it.

I was cleaning out these papers. It was a good time now that my husband was already gone. Just a few weeks earlier, I was informed about his decision to leave...he wanted a separation...and, what would soon come - a divorce.

I pulled out a stack of random papers. In the pile was a print of what looked like legal documents. Turns out, it was a divorce filing that I had printed and asked my husband to sign and date. However, this was not a recent document. In fact, what was a lost memory, now came flooding back, the instant I recognized what this document was.

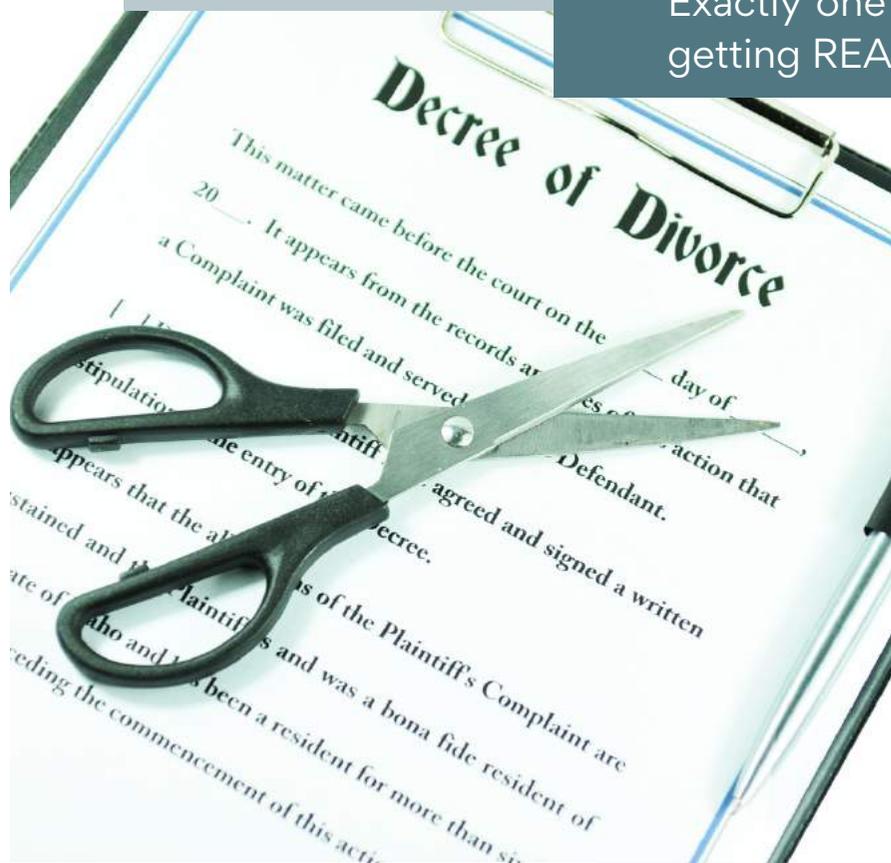
In my anger one morning, after a heated argument and in an impulsive move, I printed out this document that I found online and asked my husband for a divorce. I was not serious, just extremely frustrated and bound in anger. I had signed and dated it myself: September 15, 2015 .

That morning, he refused to sign it saying he would never divorce me. With aggression and a sense of power, I egged him on to sign it, to make him agree with me in my anger, so he did. He signed and dated it. Nothing came of it, as that was how I usually threw my weight around, in anger, to communicate my strong emotions with him.

At the time I didn't think anything would come of it. But fast forward to this moment - when my husband was actually gone and was now desiring a divorce himself, I wondered, *“did nothing come of my actions then, or am I seeing a manifestation of it now?”*

Looking down at these papers I had found while cleaning, I noticed that the new set of divorce documents from my husband was dated September 15, 2016, one year to the date of when I, in my foolish anger, printed out the exact papers for him to sign. My heart dropped.

Exactly one year later TO THE DATE, I was getting REAL divorce papers from him.



Do you see the point I'm making here? The year before, through my anger, control, and emotional manipulation, I printed out divorce papers for my husband to sign - not to really divorce me, but from a feeling of anger and frustration, as an act of emotion and due to a lack of self-control. Now here he was giving me papers dated the same day and month, one year later.

This was not an accident. It was a moment that humbled me that night in 2016.

I dropped to my knees and in that moment, I could hear God loud and clear. I was convicted by the Holy Spirit and confessed my sin to God right then and there - all these years without God having my heart, my mind, and my marriage.

All these years living a lukewarm Christianity and keeping God on the sidelines of my marriage. I wanted God's blessings but never wanted to live in full obedience, according to His principles, when it came to my marriage because I thought I was okay and knew how to live as a wife in this marriage, without really knowing what God said about covenant.

"Oh God, I was hearing You loud and clear that night!"

I needed to repent and let God cleanse me. Yes, I was hurting and scared, amid finding my husband leaving me and our daughter, at a time when I thought I needed him the most. But O, my God, was God getting my attention. The deterioration of our marriage was being used by the enemy to gain a foothold in both of us, where we did our own thing, leaving God out of our individual lives and out of our marriage. Yes, we went to church; yes, we prayed occasionally with one another; but we had so many areas of our hearts that excluded God – His healing, His hold on our hearts and minds, and His sovereignty over our lives.

With that said, I began confessing. I knew now why God kept highlighting my anger. He wanted me to deal with it! As I confessed, I felt compelled to burn these papers! I decided I would act on this inclination now, not wait one more second. I grabbed a match, and the papers and went into my dark bathroom and set them on fire over the toilet (Halfway through I had to blow out the fire, as the flames grew and I didn't want to risk the fire alarm going off)! Trust me though, when I say I burned them, trashed them, and confessed in my heart so that it would be burned out of my heart! Then, I remembered:

James 5:16, "Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power to prevail."

I called my pastor and his wife and told them of my sin of anger and how I initiated the divorce a year before, without realizing the damage my anger had caused my husband and the actions I was responsible for, in my marriage.

The pastor and his wife, who initially only knew one side of my story - that my husband left me, responded with "Wow!" They received my confession and they prayed together with me. They then joked with me about my anger, showing me God's grace and making me laugh. Ah, how God's grace is like water to a thirsty soul! I felt refreshed to confess my sin and even as I share it in this article, there is no shame in this confession, but praise in giving God glory for delivering me from this sin! He wanted me to address this ungodly, toxic emotion of anger and how damaging it was to my marriage and my life.

As much as I would have wished and prayed for my repentance to have some level of impact on changing the mind of my husband it didn't. He pushed the divorce through and the Lord protected me and guided me through a painful process. However the first part of the process was to show me where I needed to be humbled, learn to see my own mistakes and reasons of how and why we got to this place... and I was seeing clearly more and more...a place where God wanted to show me my anger, my resentment and where I acted on those unhealed areas of my heart and mind that needed to finally be addressed once and for all.

The healing work that took place in my life during our separation was one that needed to happen. It's not a journey I would've chosen for myself but I chose to seek God and let Him lead me in this process where I was broken and willing to let Him show me where I was in my life, how my marriage got to where it did and what I needed to learn from Him to grow out from these ashes, especially while I had a little girl to raise on my own. That's a whole different story but it's one worth mentioning that in the time of separation that there were a lot of good things happening despite the divorce.

And in that time, there came a point when my husband returned home after a few years. There was a build-up to this pinnacle where a breakthrough occurred in both of our lives that allowed for my husband to return home and be restored to God, our marriage, and our family.

Fast forward to 2020...

I was cleaning our new home once again rummaging through some files and came upon some papers that belonged to my husband. Again, I found the divorce papers which my husband had in his files. I didn't want to touch or meddle with his belongings while he was gone. So, when I presented him with a stack of papers, he went through them one by one. Suddenly, he went to the backyard and began to ignite a fire in the BBQ grill.



Since he loves to BBQ, I wasn't surprised by this, thinking he was about to grill, as he often does. But lo and behold, my God, he pulled out the stack of papers that included the divorce papers and began to BURN them one by one! I couldn't believe what I was seeing!! Was God speaking to him too? Was the Holy Spirit convicting him, as He did with me a few years prior?

As I asked this question, I also knew this was between my husband and God, as I witnessed him burning those papers. For both of us to go through years of anger, acting on these unhealed hearts and going our own way, separating and divorcing as we did. Then to see God bring us back together and restore our marriage, by FIRST burning away the filth and residue in our hearts, that we needed to have addressed and removed! How grateful I am to God for this cleansing, healing, and restoration - to God first and then to one another.

There is nothing pleasant, comfortable, smooth, or convenient, about the healing process God undertakes in our hearts, as we go through something as awful as separation and divorce from our covenant spouses, especially when our children are involved in this mess. We have to remember, however, that this is not what God desires for His family.

We need to let God into these areas of our hearts that are hardened by anger, resentment, frustration, and unrest. For our own sake and that of our children, we must humble ourselves and strive to keep the peace. Often we don't know how to, when our hearts are in a place of hurt and unforgiveness. Stop the fight in your mind and let God into the areas of your life to address your heart and mind and heal you! More than reconciling the marriage, He wants you and loves you. God never leaves you, nor will He forsake you.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:^[a] The old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin^[b] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Keep releasing your heart to God, including your anger and hurts, all of which He can handle. We need to fight this out in our closets, with prayer, so that our children, who witness and watch us in this trial, can see peace in us and peace between their parents - even with one parent lost and blind.

Abide in Him and He will abide in you. Be propelled into a place where God has your attention and let Him restore you first to Him, reconciling you and your children to His heart and you will see how God restores His family together, as He ordained it.

**A Stander,
Standing with You**



But what if you are not sure if there is abuse?

*Making that first step can be scary, and that is what advocates at the **National Abuse Hotline** are there for. To help you work through that fear and replace it with understanding!*

**Call: 800.799.SAFE (7233)
Or visit them online
and Chat live**

<https://www.thehotline.org/>

Abuse of any kind is never ok!

Marriage Revealed Ministries Inc. is committed to helping bring healing and restoration to couples who are struggling in their marriage. We do this through the revelation of Who God is and His heart and design for marriage which never intends abuse in any form





From Standing

From Standing -to giving up - to restored.

Yes, you read that correctly. I gave up my stand at the end of January 2019, after standing for my marriage for 8 months prior.

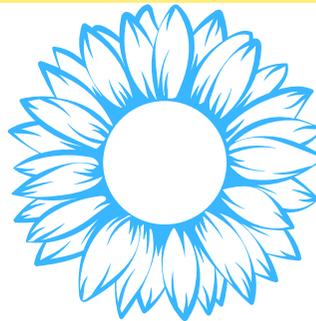
My husband and I had separated mutually in April of 2018. We were done with each other. The day I moved out, my mom faced me in my apartment and asked if I thought Don and I would ever get back together in the future. I listed all the reasons why that simply could not happen.

Within a month, I was miserable and missed him terribly. I had my awakening moment on my bed one morning and wanted my marriage back more than anything. Going to my doctor, I explained the situation and asked for medication for depression. She told me she had not really heard of a couple who had gotten back together. I left with a prescription and no hope. Next, I went to a therapist. Again, I explained my situation and she too said she had not heard of a couple getting back together. Again, I left with no hope and soon realized I was going to need some divine intervention.

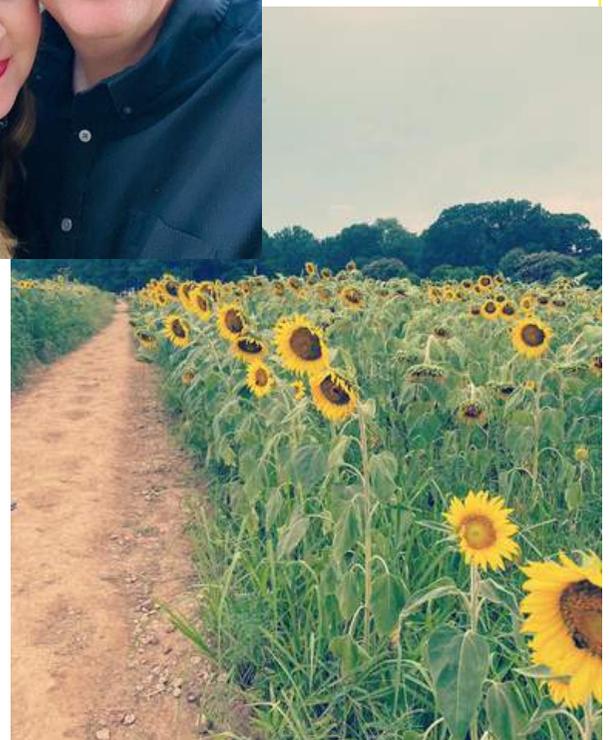
I regretted so bad that I had not done the trial separation as another friend suggested. To go stay with my family for a few weeks and clear my head so I could figure out what I really wanted. Oh, how I kicked myself for not doing that! Instead, I had moved out and got my own apartment 45 minutes away. Huge mistake.

to Restored!

**By: Heather
Sloan Griffin**



to Giving Up





but there is no way we would ever, ever get back together. We had done the right thing by separating, we should have done it sooner, he had never really loved me, etc.....

Those things were hard to hear, but I was determined to not give up. I began going back to church and seeking God. Praying and asking many people to pray for my situation. Reading the Word, writing out and praying scripture with our names in it. In the meantime, things seemed to get worse. We fought about everything and I could not keep my lips zipped. He was dating someone else. Everything we had agreed upon in our separation agreement was not happening. Lawyers got involved. Friends and family took sides. It was an all out war.

In desperation, I sent him emails preaching to him. Videos to watch that might help. None of that helped. It honestly made things worse. I just wanted him to cooperate! To get right with God and come home. I wanted the pain to end.



From Standing

A friend on my social media site was back to her maiden name, so I reached out to her, asking if she was separated too. She replied back and said yes, but that she was standing for her marriage. Not knowing what that meant, she explained to me that she was believing for God to restore her marriage. I immediately wanted to do the same.

So, I started standing. It was the most painful experience of my life thus far. My friend told me about Rejoice Marriage Ministries. Helped me get into standing groups on social media and explained to me about the “standing world” which I had no idea existed before this. I also reached out to my Pastor’s wife and requested a meeting with them.

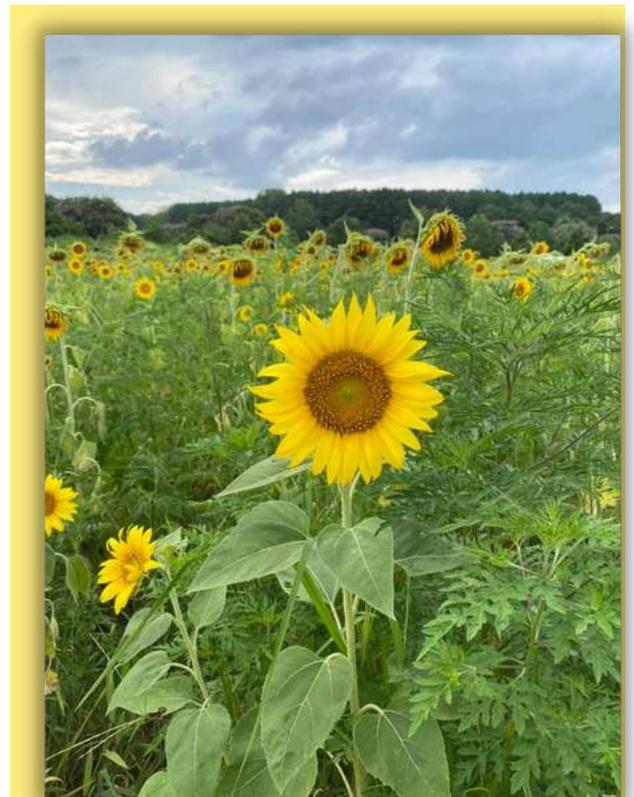
They immediately set up an appointment with me. I was the prodigal coming home. My pride broken off. I needed help badly. My Pastor, whom I had not seen in years lovingly told me that I needed to get my life centered on God. If I did that, everything else would fall into alignment. I was on board with that immediately.

I repented, truly repented, and began to clean my life up. The remorse, guilt, and shame over my rebellion was a lot. A lot of tears, a lot of sobbing, and a lot of crying out to God to ease the pain. This was not going to be an overnight alignment. Looking back, I can see God was cleaning me up first.

In the meantime, I didn’t know if I should tell Don I was standing and wanting to get back together. I asked two friends and they both told me why not? I at least had a 50/50 chance and if I didn’t tell him, how was he to know? So I sent him a long email apologizing for all I had done wrong in the marriage and told him I wanted to try again. He basically replied that it was too late. He was glad I was in therapy and taking meds,

The months dragged by ever so slowly and painful holidays passed. I was so relieved when they were over, so happy to go back to work and get my mind off things for at least 8 hrs. The loneliness was ever-present. The regret constantly staring me in the face.

Would the pain ever end? And on top of it all, no one could tell me for sure that my husband was coming home. In all the church services, not one “Thus sayeth the Lord...”



I decided it was time for me to cut all ties with him and move on somehow in life.

January rolled around and I went to a New Year's service that first weekend of 2019. It was to be praise and worship and preaching. We sang and soaked in the presence of God for hours. Somewhere toward the end of service I went up to be prayed for. The Pastor laid hands on me and said "Listen to the birds singing! Your spring is here!" Immediately I assumed he meant my husband was coming home. After I left the service around midnight or after, I even saw the beloved Swift truck standers were always talking about, the first one I had ever seen. I had so much hope!

At the end of January, Don reached out to me and said he did not love the other person, but me. He wanted to work things out! My prayers were being answered! Yes, my spring was here! This was on a Friday if I remember correctly. Saturday came and went and he still had not broken up with the other person.

I began to get very upset, asking a lot of questions. By the time Sunday came around, he told me he was not sure this was going to work. That night, I received an email from him. He told me he was going to stay with the other person, that he was definitely not coming back to the marriage and that we were getting divorced. I couldn't understand how he had gone from one extreme to the other in such a short time.

Talk about devastated. I cried so hard. So very hard. So very disappointed. Then came the anger. In a moment, I decided I would not keep standing. He was not going to do this to me ever again and the pain was unbearable.

to giving up

I then had a "fake awakening". I looked at circumstances and human reasoning to conclude that I had this whole time been in denial, not faith. God must have been telling me, "No" and I was not accepting His answer. After all, no one told me my husband was coming home. I had even had a dream he was at the kitchen sink washing his hands while he turned and looked at me in the dream. Another friend interpreted this as that we were not getting back together and that my husband was washing his hands of me.

Quitting my stand included the following:

- 1) That same night I made a profile on a dating website to see what was out there for when my divorce was finalized (let's just say I realized starting over was going to be much harder than I had originally thought).
- 2) I wrote him a goodbye note, sealed it, and put it in his shoe box with all the other notes I had written during my separation, planning on giving him once we were restored. Now, what was I going to do with all those letters? It was my "faith box" so to speak. There was even a Bible in it with his name engraved on the front in gold, and writing on the inside about how we were going to get back together. I couldn't give it to Goodwill and I definitely couldn't throw it away.
- 3) I decided to try to sell my wedding rings because we were definitely getting divorced and hopefully that would help pay for it.
- 4) I told my friends I was done, gave away my standing books, removed myself from all standing groups, and went to a divorce support group that happened to be within walking distance from my apartment.
- 5) I emailed him that we were done and I meant it. Our conversations from then on were only about the kids. No more begging to get back together, no more preaching at him.
- 6) I planned to move back to our hometown and start my life over fresh as soon as the divorce was final. While packing boxes, I couldn't figure out what to do with my wedding dress, all our family pictures, and the cake topper from our wedding. I put that in a box by the door for Goodwill.
- 7) I kept a calendar and marked off the days one by one until it was one year and we could file for divorce in our state. I estimated how many days after that it would take until it was finalized. I emailed him often to say I wanted this done ASAP and don't forget. (Maybe we could at least be friends one day in the very far off future)

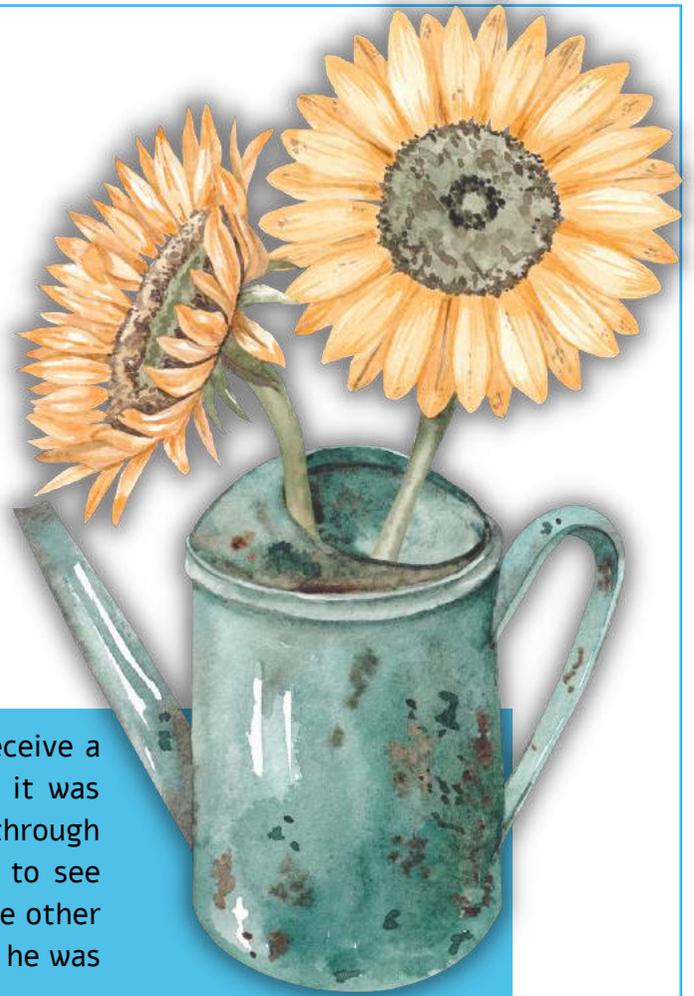


April final came. This was the month! We could file for divorce. Bad news hit that since I had moved to a different county, the paperwork would have to be put off another week. **I was big mad! BIG. MAD.**

Another week of this?! Ok, I came to terms with it because I had no other choice.

That week went by and on Friday, we were discussing through email that we would file for divorce on Monday. Saturday night my daughter called me hysterical. Someone had stolen her debit card and spent all her money. She called Don to tell him too. (I didn't know this event would lead to his awakening).

Sunday came and I went to church, it was Resurrection Sunday. There was a lot going on behind the scenes that I had no clue about. No clue! My feelings told me otherwise.



Monday! Monday was here. I was driving to work and receive a text. It was Don. It was not about getting the divorce, it was about stopping it! What?! Wait.... No, no, no.... I went through this before. I told him if he was for real, I would have to see actual fruit in his life. He would have to cut it off with the other person. He would have to live for God and repent. He said he was willing to do all of that. "Well, I'll believe it when I see it."

That week he met with my Pastor, broke it off with the other person, and was taking steps to clean up his life. He wanted to talk to me constantly. Texts, emails, and phone calls. I knew this time something was different.

Saturday came and it was my moving day. Friends from church helped me move to my hometown. Don and the kids met me at the apartment. My daughter came in the apartment wide-eyed and out of breath. "Mom! You will never believe it! Dad is outside with the guys from church and they are all standing around him praying for him!" (The prodigal Don would NEVER have allowed this.)

In this moment I knew my husband was back.

to Restored!

The next morning I walked into church with my husband and four kids. I'm thankful that I gave up my stand, stopped trying to "help God" and got my hands out of the situation. God was able to handle it completely without me!

The best thing you can do as a stander is get to a point that no matter what happens, you know you will be ok. Become totally obsessed with God. Finally, stay out of God's way! Trust Him, He knows what He is doing!

 Heather



Well with my Soul

By Bren Vinesett



Throughout this journey,

I felt like the woman at the well. I was sitting on the edge of the stones, waiting for my thirst to subside; hoping and praying that this earthly water would fulfill me, while I was in torment. Jesus, Himself came to me.

His words were set before me, describing the living water that was a gift from Him. Yet my focus was on my husband and the dry well that he left before me. I came to the well to meet the wrong man. Jesus allowed Matt to walk away. It was not a punishment, it was an invitation.

I have seen that often in my life, when I focus too long on the wrong thing, God will remove it. Sometimes it's permanent; oftentimes it is temporary. God is a jealous God and He will do whatever it takes to regain your focus and attention.

When Matt abandoned our marriage, I was nauseous. There were restless, sleepless nights when I could not bear the thought of closing my eyes. I found no comfort in company nor nutrition, even though my body felt parched and famished.

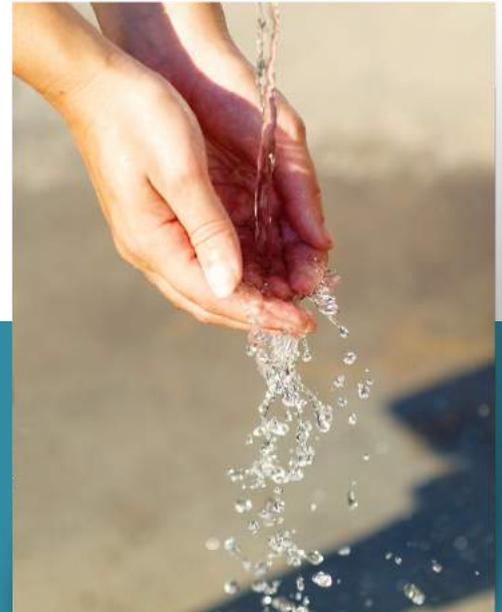
This is why Jesus tells us, to come to Him if you are thirsty.

"37 Anyone who is thirsty may come to me! 38 Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, 'Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.'" John 7:37-38



When we invest in another human to fulfill us, we are always left empty.

I remember going for long walks in the rain at night, begging God to bring Matt back home. I never realized the importance of the relationship that God wanted with me. God certainly cares about my relationship with my husband, but He wanted that relationship to be in the correct order. I am thankful that God answered my prayer to bring my husband back home...



However, I had to realize that God needed to be center stage. He needed to be my first call. My first love. He wanted to be the one that I longed for during the day and the one that I held onto at night.

Those midnight walks in the rain felt so cleansing. The water would trace my face and wipe away my tear residue. But I still felt the emptiness inside.

It was not until I gave it all over to God, my walks of pain became talks with purpose.

God was growing something within me, through those teardrops and rain storms, that were nourishing the soil, from where Matt was rooted out.

I began to understand why God said,

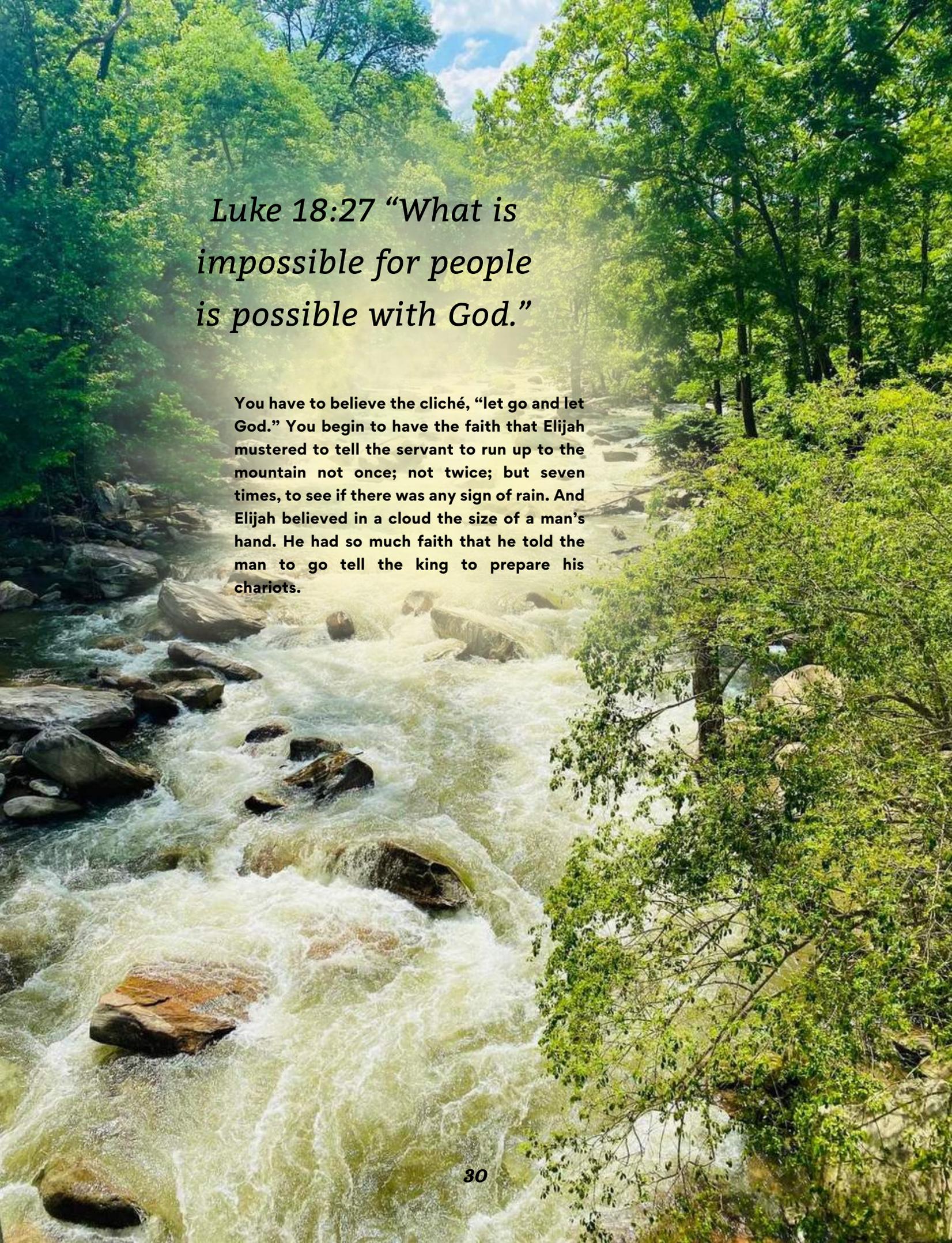
“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.” Romans 8:28

Everything, ALL things are not necessarily all GOOD things. All things are the good and bad together, that will ultimately turn your situation for good in the end. It was a two-year progression when my husband’s heart began to change - from when he ultimately decided to leave, until his prodigal journey back home.

You become numb. You don’t understand why these moments are occurring within the walls of your life. And you scramble to try to pick up all the broken pieces. But when the other person has reconciled the action in their heart and they have both feet out the door... There is nothing more YOU can do.

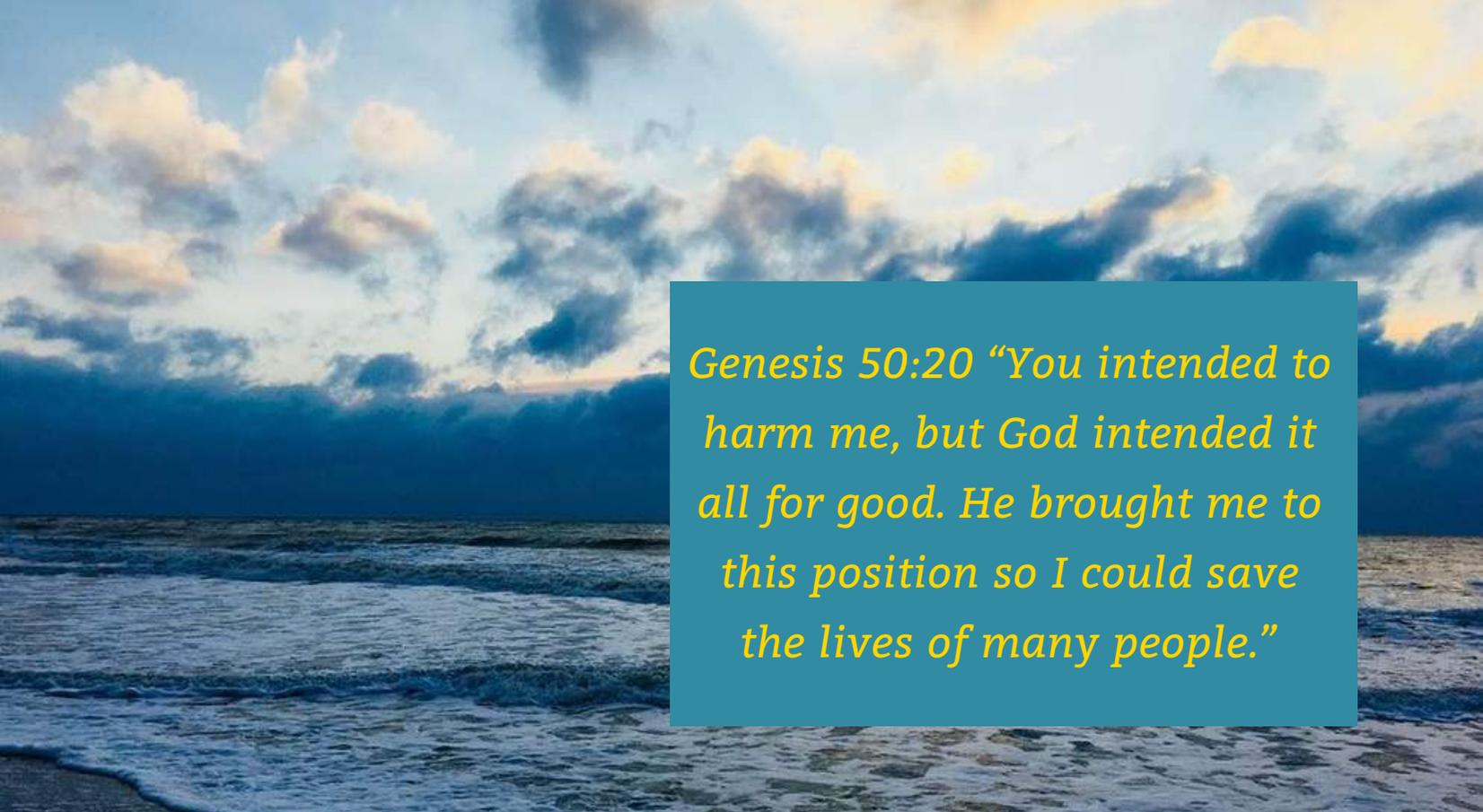
BUT GOD CAN DO ANYTHING!





Luke 18:27 “What is impossible for people is possible with God.”

You have to believe the cliché, “let go and let God.” You begin to have the faith that Elijah mustered to tell the servant to run up to the mountain not once; not twice; but seven times, to see if there was any sign of rain. And Elijah believed in a cloud the size of a man’s hand. He had so much faith that he told the man to go tell the king to prepare his chariots.



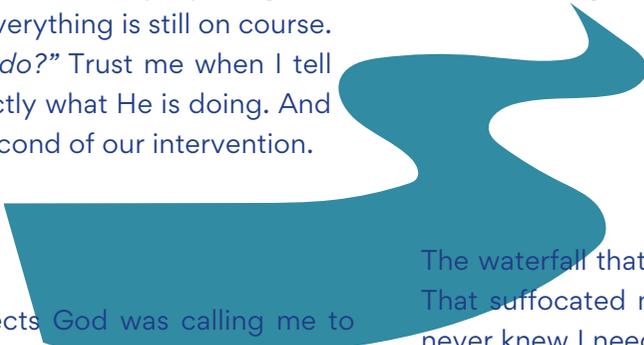
Genesis 50:20 “You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.”

God rejoices when we arrive in those faith-filled positions. He wants us to keep believing that our rain will come, no matter how small the cloud is, in our sky.

He wants us to prepare our fields and plant the seeds for the harvest. When I gave up the story I wrote for myself; When I went out to the field and prepared the land for the Lord’s work. That is when he sent the rain. That is when I was fulfilled in Christ. And that is when the ground became fertile again.

While God was working on me individually, He was also working on Matt intimately. And the hardest thing to believe is that God is taking care of our husband or wife, while we are walking through that storm. We feel like we have to keep opening the door and asking God if everything is still on course. *“Is there anything I can do?”* Trust me when I tell you that God knows exactly what He is doing. And He does not need one second of our intervention.

I did not want to be caught in this waterfall of emotion anymore. I felt like I was drowning in the thoughts that the enemy was embedding in my mind. But what the enemy intended for evil, God intended for good.



I often felt like the projects God was calling me to do, were just not working. I felt like a Koi fish trying to climb a tree. Or an owl trying to swim the ocean riptides. I felt out of place. I felt like I was not doing what I was created to do. The purpose did not exist.

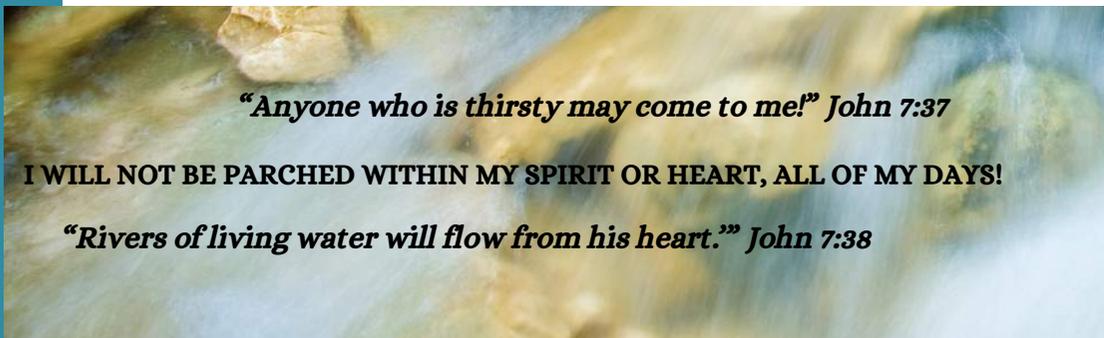
The waterfall that poured its crushing power over me. That suffocated me. It was the cleansing flood that I never knew I needed. And just like a rushing river over a menagerie of the sharpest rocks... God began to smooth out all of my rough edges. Through this pain I found my purpose. I felt like I was re-baptized in my lake of tears. God knows that our tears are not wasted. He collects them in a bottle.



Psalm 56:8 “You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book.”

Through this journey, I found Jesus. Through the rejection, I rejoiced. And through the pain, I found purpose. I was no longer that fish out of water - gasping for air, believing I was close to death. I was now swimming freely in the well where Jesus came to meet me - the well where I first rejected Him, where my focus was on my husband.

So now I know that no matter what happens in my life... When the storm forms its weapons around me; when the winds rage war on my soul ; I will not be leveled to my fragile frame. I do not drink from the well of human acceptance. I have tasted the water that quenches all physical and spiritual thirst!



“Anyone who is thirsty may come to me!” John 7:37

I WILL NOT BE PARCHED WITHIN MY SPIRIT OR HEART, ALL OF MY DAYS!

“Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.” John 7:38

When we give another human being the power to wound us, we will be destroyed. But when we give Jesus the power, no harm can overtake us. When we try to fix situations in our own power, it is comparable to a massive ocean wave towering over us and swallowing us whole. It tosses us so violently that we can't find our way to the surface to take a breath. It feels like we're continuously drowning because we're powerless.

Oftentimes when we feel like we are in the middle of the storm, we perceive it as some bad omen. We cannot believe that God would send a storm to level our lives when He is a loving Father. But in actuality, He will send those ground-leveling storms to clear our path to Him. And, just like He did in Job's life...He will rebuild, once we give everything back to Him. He uses those waterfalls to cleanse us of our impurities. He will once again fill our well and we will find ourselves fulfilled, only when we stay at the feet of Jesus - He is our stream in the desert.

I am thankful that I have the true living water, where I will never thirst again.



John 4:14 “But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.”

FROM DESPAIR TO PRAISE

Twelve Years Ago, I was the Prodigal.

I am being led by the Holy Spirit to write an encouragement to all of you. I had a long-term relationship outside of my marriage and was let go from my executive-level position after it was disclosed. I lost a 20-year career due to my pride, selfishness, and arrogance. I justified many times what I was doing was only affecting myself and not my family. Only until my life was threatened, did I wake up from this nightmare of horrific decision-making.

In the beginning, my husband was so encouraging. God provided me with grace and mercy to deal with this painful situation. And my husband and our daughter, stood by me and we tried very hard to work on our marriage. My husband said that he would leave no stone unturned to heal our marriage. I went to many Christian programs on weekends and started to fall in love with God, and, also myself. It all seemed to be going well until my husband met another woman and he left. He is currently in his 3rd relationship. My husband's heart became hardened and unforgiveness crept in. He also told me that I became too Godly for him.

My relationship with my daughter is amazing and such an incredible gift from God. She knows my story and has witnessed the testimony of transformation. I want to break this generational curse that runs in our family for our daughter. My daughter and I pray every morning and evening for my husband and her father that God would convict him of a heart and mind transformation. That he would be saved and turn back to God. During many sleepless nights, I would just continue to pray. It really got me through my dark times.

After many years of praying and believing my husband came back home in October of 2017. At this time, it just did not feel right. He was not home consistently and was always going out. I continued to pray, and July of 2019, he told me that he did not want to be married, he was no longer attracted to me and was very unhappy. I know that this is a spiritual battle and I continue to fast and pray that he comes home.

In October of 2019, he packed up and left our family home again. In April of 2021, he divorced me. I realize as painful as this has been, I have witnessed many miracles. There were many things going on that God wanted to reveal to me. And they have been revealed.

At this time, I started a new career that I enjoy, and it has given me many opportunities to pray into people's lives and marriages. During the pandemic, I started a Friday night prayer group for women struggling with their prodigal and writing daily devotionals that I text each morning to a group of Standers.

I have believed that God did it for me and he can do it for my husband. I hold onto those words and continue to pray. I know God keeps His word from my personal testimony and journey. I am now having a love affair with God, and I am praying for my husband's salvation and to break the strongholds for our daughter.

Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved you and your household.

Acts 16:31

I can do all this through God who gives me strength.

Philippians

4:13



Do not fret ... the wicked will wither but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land.

Psalms 37:9



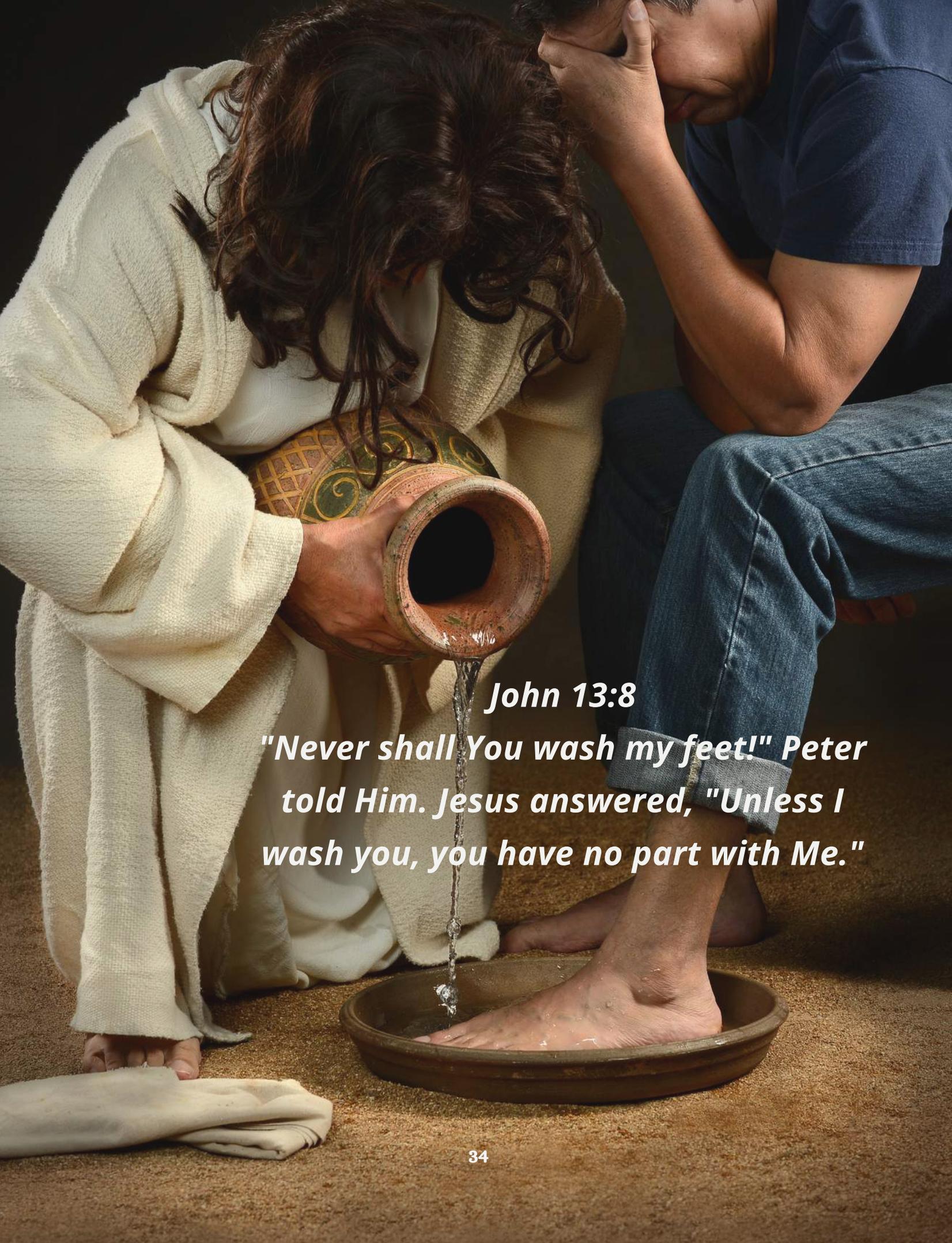
To bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

Isaiah 61



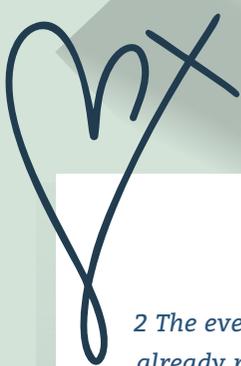
Marianne in Maryland





John 13:8

"Never shall You wash my feet!" Peter told Him. Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with Me."



John 13 BSB

PRAYER

2 The evening meal was underway ,and the devil had already put into the heart of Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus.

3 Jesus knew that the Father had delivered all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was returning to God. 4 So He got up from the supper, laid aside His outer garments, and wrapped a towel around His waist. 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel that was around Him.

6 He came to Simon Peter, who asked Him, "Lord, are You going to wash my feet?"

7 Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

8 "Never shall You wash my feet!" Peter told Him. Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with Me." 9 "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not only my feet, but my hands and my head as well!"

10 Jesus told him, "Whoever has already bathed needs only to wash his feet, and he will be completely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." 11 For He knew who would betray Him. That is why He said, "Not all of you are clean."

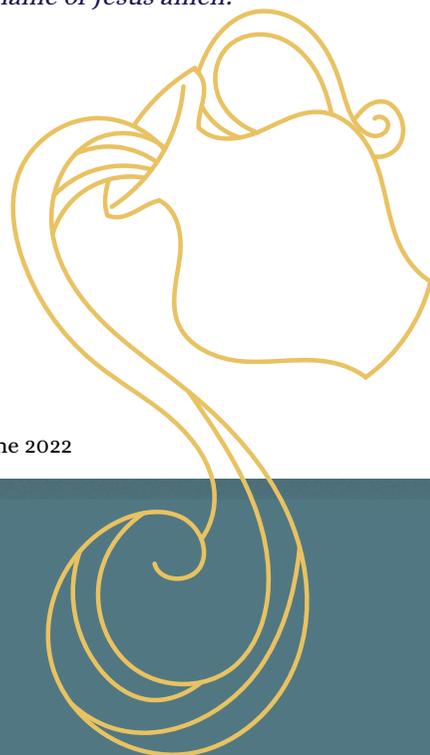
12 When Jesus had washed their feet and put on His outer garments, He reclined with them again and asked, "Do you know what I have done for you? 13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and rightly so, because I am.

14 So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example so that you should do as I have done for you. 16 Truly, truly, I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 If you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

Lord Jesus, I come before You recognizing and acknowledging what You taught us by washing the feet of Your disciples. We see and understand that washing another's feet is a place of decision to put yourself in a posture of humility and service. You showed us by example that we are not to pick and choose who we deem worthy as You said not all are clean, but that we are to follow the example You set and place ourselves humbly at the feet of our betrayers and wash the feet of those we don't believe are worthy of our devotion, love, and kindness. We pray that we can come deeper into the knowledge of Who You are as we humble ourselves.

The struggle that Peter showed is one that many of us also struggle with Lord, one that we ask You to help us with because we struggle with unworthiness, shame, guilt, and many other things that would keep us from allowing You near. Help us to welcome You always, never fear You and how You want to love and bless us.

*Help us embrace the way You approach all sinners and heal our hearts so we don't resent You washing the feet of those that hurt and betrayed us.
In the name of Jesus amen.*



Scripture

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FROM TOXIC WELLS TO FREEDOM IN JESUS

~by Solomon Marks 

What happens to us men when we seek the living water that Jesus promises, but we try to draw it from broken wells?

Research shows that broken and damaged wells are at risk of toxicity and contamination. When people continue to draw water for their use from these wells, they put themselves at risk of toxic exposure and becoming sick. These illnesses can leave us weak and unable to fulfill our daily needs and responsibilities to ourselves and others.

Just as drawing water from a compromised well can make us physically sick, looking to fulfill our spiritual needs from the wrong well, a broken spiritual well, can make us spiritually sick, weak, and unfulfilled in our souls. I worked for many years to try and satisfy that thirst within me, by drawing from places that were not the well that is Jesus. This started when I strayed from my marriage, in search of “happiness” in someone else. The brokenness, guilt and shame that ensued, opened a door for the enemy to torment me, through the spirits of Ahab and Jezebel.



15 Drink water from your own cistern, and fresh water from your own well. 16 Should your springs flow outside, or streams of water in the street? 17 They should be for you alone and not for strangers who are with you. 18 Let your fountain be blessed and enjoy the wife of your youth.

19 Like a loving deer, a beautiful doe, let her breasts satisfy you all the time. Be constantly intoxicated by her love.

20 Why should you be intoxicated by an adulteress, my son, and embrace the bosom of a foreign woman? 21 Indeed, what a man does is always in the LORD's presence, and he weighs all his paths. 22 The wicked person's iniquities will capture him, and he will be held with the cords of his sin. 23 He will die for lack of discipline, and he goes astray because of his great folly. Proverbs 5



If you are not familiar with this, Ahab was a king that became passive and essentially intimidated by his wife Jezebel and handed his authority over to her, which she used, to carry out evil among people. (1 and 2 Kings)

The Spirit of Ahab is a spirit that brings passivity and leniency in confrontation with others, for the sake of other people's feelings and to try and keep the present moment peaceful. Those entrapped by this spirit sacrifice themselves, their emotions, value, and self-worth, even wrongfully taking the blame for others' wrongful actions, in order to avoid confrontation.

Note from Editor: These spirits are not gender specific, but there are many men and women that fit this description in exactly this way. The author of this article shares his perspective, which mirror so many men out there.

Men who are in chains by this spirit often find themselves getting involved, even marrying women that have the Jezebel Spirit as this spirit is co-dependant and needs each other to fully thrive. Men find themselves getting trampled in psychological and verbal abuse, and in submission to a woman who uses the power of deception and manipulation to keep them "in check" and get what she wants.

This happened to me, I bought into the lies of the enemy that God hated me for what I had done, and my value no longer existed. As someone who hated loneliness, I was convinced if I married this woman, who seemed nice, and filled her needs by helping with her children and her difficult financial situation, I may be able to "earn" good grace with the One true God, who I had angered for my infidelity.

THIS IS A LIE! We know this is a lie, because God's word says so.

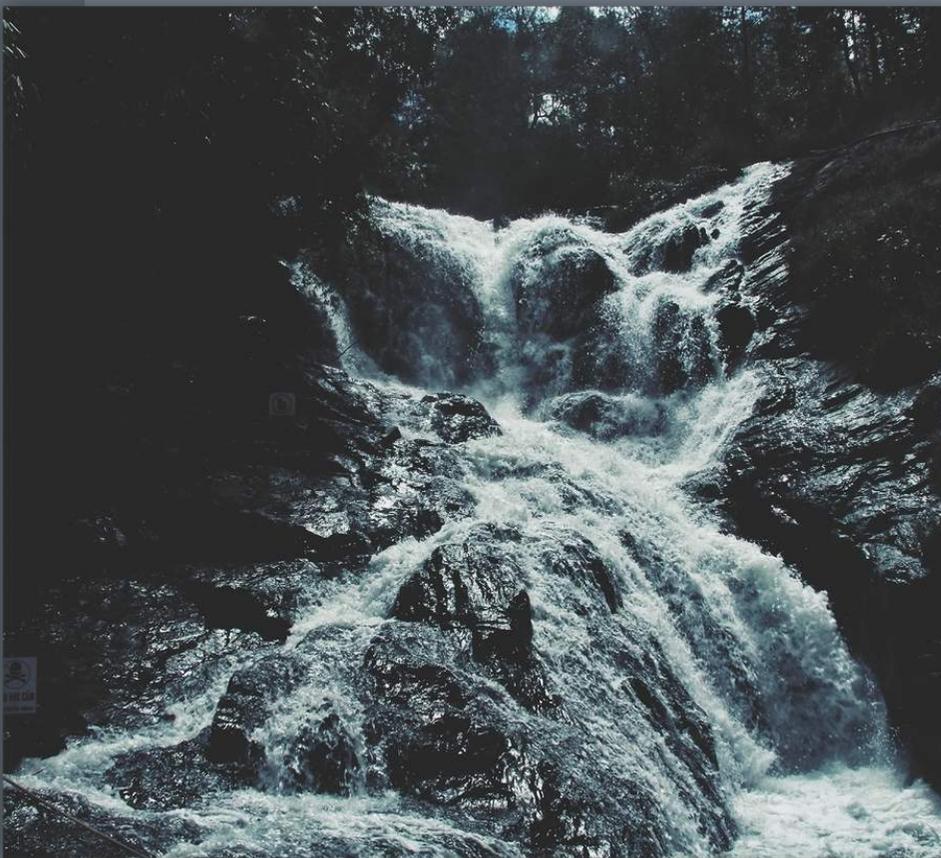
In 1 John 1:9, we are reminded that If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

While this may be a foreign concept to you, as it was to me, because we live in a dark and graceless world, God is faithful and knows your heart. God also tells us that His grace is sufficient for each one of us in 2 Corinthians 12:9.

Finally, God tells us we cannot "earn" our way to Him, that it is a gift He freely offers us.

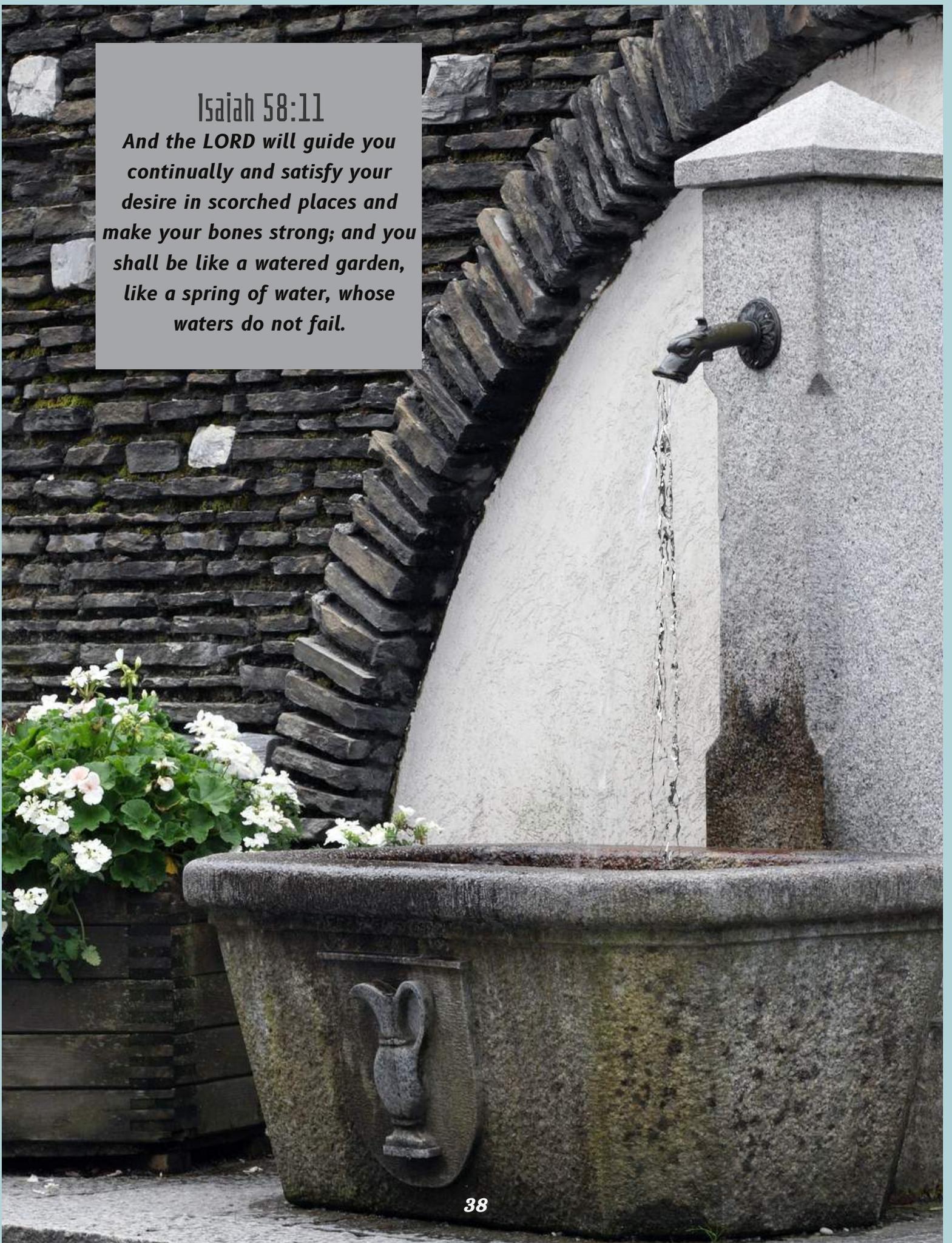
Ephesians 2: 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—

God forgave me for my sins when I repented from the heart long ago. PERIOD. I didn't have to earn anything and neither do you. You just have to be sincere in your repentance from your sin and God will shower you with His grace and mercy, and forgive you completely.



Isaiah 58:11

And the LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.



Until recently, I had lived a life as a doormat, succumbing to the ways of a woman who spoke, thought and moved under the power of the Jezebel spirit. God has been actively moving in my life to break these curses and move me into a position of leadership and authority that is rightfully mine in my home. As he continues to move, the Ahab spirit will be gone and any power the Jezebel spirit has, weakens and eventually goes away. I would have liked to tell you this happens instantaneously, but it is a process that falls under the guidance of “praying without ceasing”, until you can clearly see the Spirit of Ahab is gone. When the weights are lifted, the fog clears, the manipulation and deception weakens and goes away, you will be able to see God’s clear call on your life, to rise up and lead for the glory of God, and you will be free from the chains that have held you captive for so long.



God’s plans and direction are for the authority within a home, to fall under the leadership of men. And us men are to take this God-given role and responsibility seriously! If you find yourself living in a situation like what is described in this article, you are not alone. Many men are not only trapped in these situations, but are embarrassed about it and begging for freedom. God wants these chains lifted and for you to take your rightful place as a leader.

Drawing the spiritual living water that Jesus promises, will quench the thirst we all have, being satisfied in a way that only God can provide. If you are drawing from the wrong well - that broken well that is poisoning you spiritually, in a toxic way - run from that well.

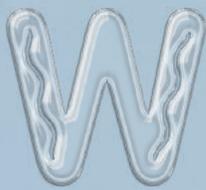
Jesus never leaves you, nor forsakes you, and is always available to you. His offer of living water to the woman at the well, is available to each and every one of us. Accept the Lord’s offer, break free from the effects of the toxic well, and run to Jesus. His living water is all your soul needs!

~Solomon



Solomon
Marks

22 years ago I made the mistake that changed the course of my life, and lead me down a path of a significant loss in my personal life. I was deceived during a difficult, challenging, and confusing time in my life that resulted in my choice of stepping outside the boundaries of marriage and entering the world of adultery. As a result, I lived in a constant state of regret, anxiety, and depression, all the result of condemnation that came from extreme guilt and shame. The deep-rooted belief system I was raised in forced me to close the doors of opportunity to reconcile with my wife. As a result, I experienced extreme loss, a severely broken heart, and 22 years of psychological and emotional chains that confined me into a state of pain and suffering at the hands of the enemy, with virtually no window of hope that God could ever forgive a wretched soul like me. Until He showed me He wanted me all along.



hat I initially thought would be weeks of standing for my marriage turned into years. I began to feel as if I was losing life. Life lost with my husband, life lost as a family, and life lost with myself.

LIFE LOST CAN ALSO BE LIFE GAINED

By Auggie



was living the words spoken by Job when he said,

"What I feared has come upon me; what I dreaded has happened to me. I have no peace, no quietness; I have no rest, but only turmoil". Job 3:25

You see, God had warned me in my dreams time and time again that my marriage was in danger of divorce. The dreams were never about the sins of my husband, though he was not sinless. No, the dreams were about the sins I struggled with. Rage, bitterness, pornography, disrespect, violence, etc. God was warning me that I needed to be delivered from these sins or else my marriage would end in divorce. I would wake up crying in terror of these dreams, of what I felt was to come.

However, I continued to struggle and still continued to do things predominantly my way rather than doing it all God's way.

Within 2 months of my last warning dream in 2018, my husband informed me he was filing for divorce. The words of Job 3:25, *"What I feared has come upon me;..."*, became truth for me.

Days turned to weeks, weeks turned to months, and months turned to years. September 9, 2022 will be three years since my divorce became final.

And during these years God has graciously and mercifully set me free from every stronghold and sin I struggled with. Glory be to God!

I can honestly say that I have experienced joy, peace, and happiness in a way I have never experienced before; Not before I was married or while I was married. No, it has not been easy. But God! As time has passed, it hasn't been as hard either.

The words of the Apostle Paul in Colossians 1:24,

"I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ...",

have become words that I can honestly speak as true for me. I am truly thankful to God that He has allowed me the privilege to suffer for my husband's deliverance from sin. But more than that, I am so humbled at the honor to participate in the suffering of Christ Jesus.

In agreement with Romans 12:12, I will continue to be "joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer."

I thought that I had lost life because of my suffering. However, it is through my suffering that I have gained life. Instead of continuing to live a lifestyle that is out of alignment and in opposition to God's will, eating up like locusts, the years of life I have left; I am living the words in

Job 42.12, "So the Lord blessed Job in the second half of his life even more than in the beginning."

Though it is true that I have lost much, it is equally true that I have gained much. I have gained a personal intimate relationship and true life in and with Christ Jesus!

Yes. Life lost Can also be life gained!



*Standing with you,
Auggie*

THE LONG WALK TO THE WELL *By Sheila Hollinger*

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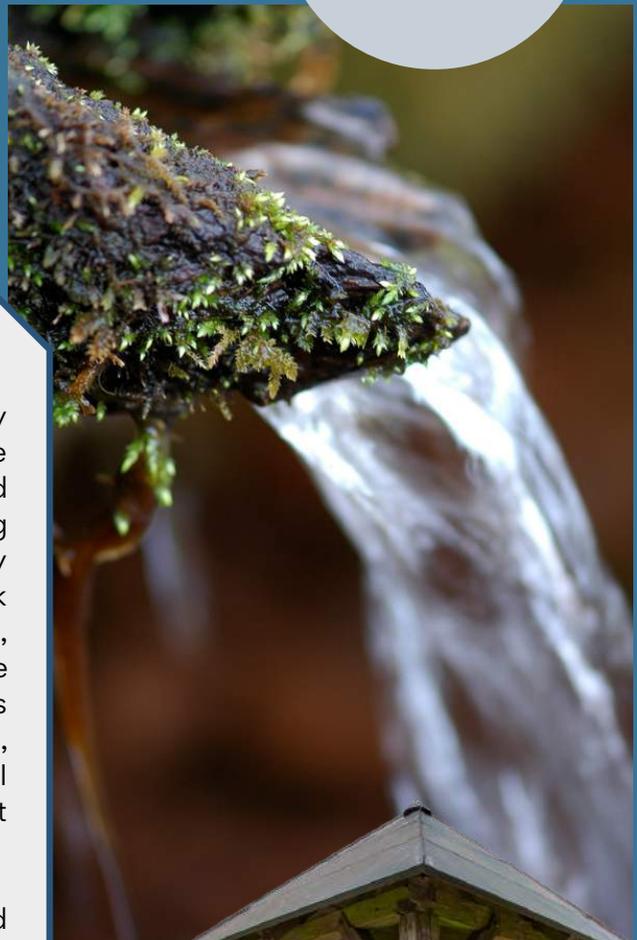
I'm going to share a very important message, but first I need to paint a picture so you will understand the POINT of my message. So, stick with me.

I was a yo-yo dieter, who would try to clean up my unhealthy eating lifestyle by going healthy with clean and pure, whole foods. Each time I started a regime of clean eating and detoxing from all the junk in my body, something amazing would happen. I started to HEAR clear signals from my body asking for specific types of food that I had never heard it ask for before. I was puzzled at the requests for Brussel sprouts, eggs, spinach, certain fruits, and vegetables. And the cravings were loud, clear, precise, and demanding! But as soon as I stopped eating pure, wholesome, healthy foods, and started transitioning, my body stopped asking, or so I thought. I found out later, that it was not the asking that stopped, but my ability to HEAR.

Our bodies are created this way, to know what it needs and to ask in such a way that we hear clearly. To keep asking so we don't ignore and get it what it needs.

And most importantly, it naturally knows exactly where to get its needs met from what it was created to survive on.

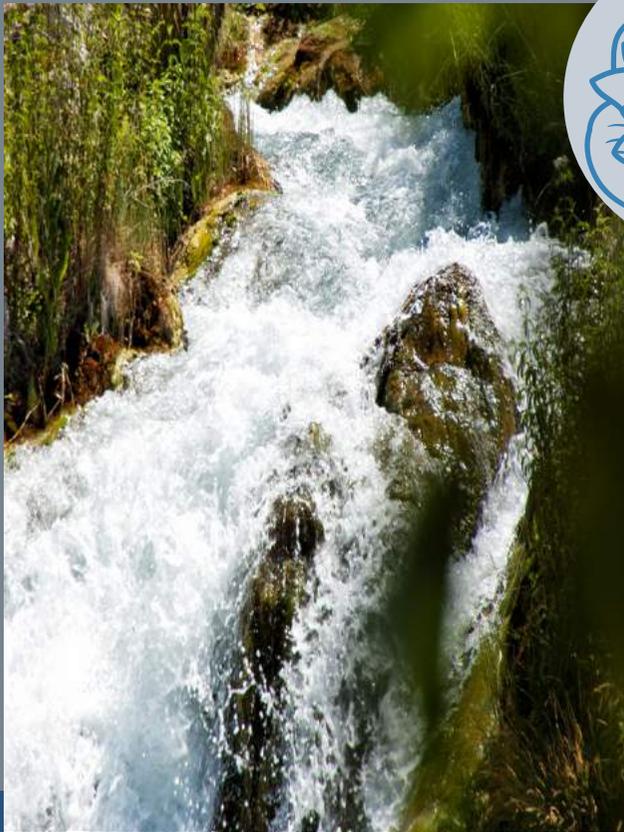
Our bodies don't naturally crave unhealthy things.....until we introduce them to it and those unhealthy things create something within that start to demand the desire for more. That is not our bodies asking, it's the food chemicals and how they react to our bodies that are creating the demand.



This creates competing demands. Your natural, God-created signals are always there, asking for pure, wholesome, nutritious ingredients. And then when you eat unhealthy junk, chemically altered, that also starts to create signals. Sadly, the chemically altered signals are louder. And they are more appealing to your eyes and other senses, I believe these chemically altered foods, also created addictions. I know when I detoxed off sugar, it was one of the worst battles of my life!

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When I was under the influence of processed, unhealthy foods, I would physically become full, but because I wasn't meeting the needs of what my body required and was created to have, being full meant nothing so it continued to call out. Many times I found myself standing in front of the fridge, physically full, not understanding why I was standing there. I was hearing a need from the depths of my body crying out for something, but I could not hear clearly, nor discern what it was asking for, so many times I made the wrong choices and gave it what my eyes thought looked good. I did the same exact thing with water. I am a water drinker anyway, but during those times when my diet was full of high sugar and carbs, my body would start to ask for sugary drinks and water just didn't sound good.



MY POINT TO THIS WHOLE EXPLANATION

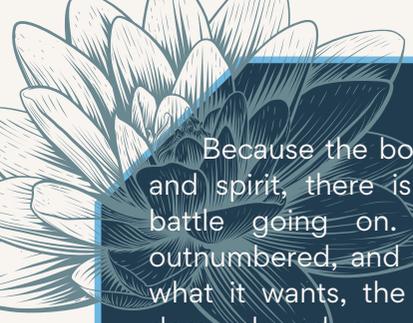
Just as God created our physical bodies to naturally know and seek what it needs, He created our spirits this way too. To seek out Who it was created to be unified with. Our spirits, which is $\frac{1}{3}$ of our design was created, for one thing, to be infused with its Creator.

But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. 1 Corinthians 6:17

God's ways are good, and meant for our good and not to harm us. But when we ignore His warnings, don't take Him seriously, and trust in why He tells us not to do certain things, we allow the world and the enemy to entice us into believing that we "surely won't die if we eat the fruit" (Genesis 3:4) we become open and vulnerable now to that 'second' voice. Just like when we allow unhealthy food into our life which created another demand, we get lured and snared into a trap of pleasing the flesh, instead of doing what is pleasing and right for our health. The flesh doesn't care about the health of our body or spirit, it only cares about pleasing itself. Even if that means starving to death spiritually.



"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled" (Matt. 5:6).



Because the body is made up of flesh, soul, and spirit, there is usually a two against one battle going on. Even when the spirit is outnumbered, and the soul and flesh is getting what it wants, the spirit won't rest. It will still demand and cry out to be unified with its Creator. This will cause the soul to double it's efforts to find what is missing that is creating this void.

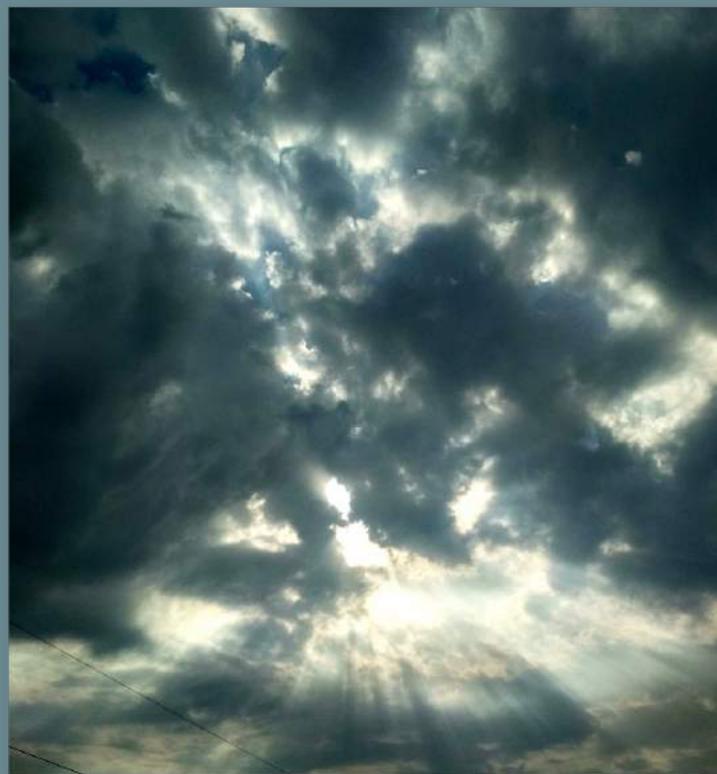
The spirit's need is pure and won't be satisfied with anything less than the real thing. But just like physical hunger, when we have an array of more appealing counterfeits being offered, and we have two other parts that have a say, the flesh, and the soul are going to choose what is more pleasurable. It takes great self-discipline to say no to what our flesh and soul wants, especially when it's being promised everything it's always wanted and felt it was missing out on. Only those that have experienced what giving in brings, will be able to say NO because they learned their lesson!

Two against One? Is There Hope?

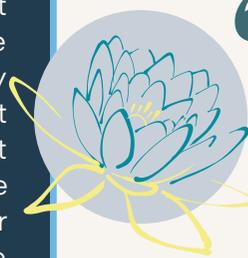
Think of the physical body that has to make that long trip to the well, day after day, carrying those heavy jugs to be filled, only to find the next day they are empty. The body doesn't want to do it anymore, but the thirst won't be denied, so it must go. And the BODY, because it's tired of the toil to fill those needy jugs that are never satisfied, will be the one that leaps for joy at the words "Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. 14 But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. John 4:13-14 " because it will never have to make that journey again.

Many of you wonder, "How will God ever get through to my spouse? They seem so happy. And life seems to be going so great for them."

Think about the toil and the hardship that comes to a person that day in and day out has a spirit crying out to be reunited with its Creator and to shut it up, they are always having to do things in the flesh, things that bring fleeting appeasement, only to wake up the next day, see those jugs are empty and know, again, they have to make that long tiring journey to the well to fill them.



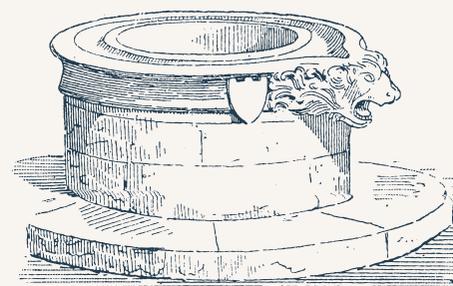
There is something about sin, being distanced from God that is like that long journey to the well, that is tiring and exhausting. And God's Word tells us that sin wears a person out!



“ Jeremiah 9:5 They have taught their tongues to lie; they wear themselves out sinning.

Will they jump at the offer of living water if it means never having to deal with the monotonous physical toil of collecting water for a never-ending thirst? The woman at the well did. She didn't even hear Jesus say eternal life, all she cared about was not having to make that journey every day to the well.

John 4:15 The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”



When the spirit is crying out to be united with its Creator and that lack creates a void of restlessness, discontent, and unrest, the body and soul may scramble to try and find the answers. But because of the vast array of things pleasing and tempting to choose from, and because we always go for the easy, avoid the hard and things that make us suffer, it will choose wrong.

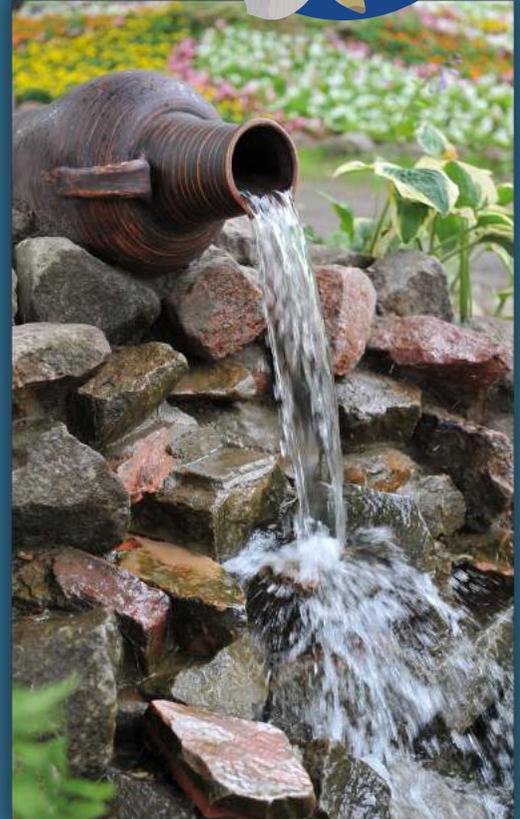
And that is God's safety net! The very thing He counts on to help ensure that we will wear ourselves out chasing after false things. So when we hear an offer of living water, that we will have our needs met, and not have to toil anymore, we become very interested and attracted to the offer. It's not until later that the true meaning of what is being offered becomes very real. That living water means so much more than just rest for our weary souls that have come to despise those empty water jugs that brought us so much displeasure because we were never able to find the thing to keep them full and satisfied. Or we were using cracked cisterns that were providing us with much less than we were created to have.

If we could fully grasp and understand how God created us in such a way to hate and despise that trip to the well, and with the spirit's voice constantly reminding them "it's not meant to be this way," they will eventually come to a place of being ready for change.

We were never created to go looking for a well replacement but created to connect with the One that will be a spring of water within us. The part the woman at the well missed was Jesus saying "Instead, the water that I will give to him will become in him a spring of water, welling up into eternal life." But even as she missed it, she still wanted it, was still drawn to desire it because without the spirit being unified with God, the soul and flesh become weary.

Jesus knows where to find the lost

Jesus knew exactly where and what time the woman at the well was going to be there. He knows each of us so well, that He knows where to find us when we are ready to accept that drink of Living Water He has been waiting to offer to us.



**You, God, are my God,
earnestly I seek you;
I thirst for you, my whole
being longs for you,
in a dry and parched land
where there is no water.**

Psalm 63:1

**With joy you will drink deeply
from the fountain of salvation!**

Isaiah 12:3

**For with you is the fountain of
life: in your light shall we see
light. Psalm 36:9**

**For the Lamb in the center of
the throne will be their
shepherd. 'He will lead them to
springs of living water,' and
'God will wipe away every tear
from their eyes.'"**

Revelation 7:17



DIVINE

SET-UPS

There are moments, often described in just one or two sentences, where God orchestrates a negative situation to gain a positive outcome. It's the ultimate in divine set-up.

Kelly Ribeiro Murphy

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Truth be told God's divine setups make me cringe. I want to believe that God would never purposely place me in harm's way or orchestrate a very unpleasant experience for his children. I want good experiences to come from God and bad experiences blamed on the enemy. But that is short sighted on my part, as NOTHING happens without God's knowledge, and the enemy is never running renegade over God's Kingdom.

God orchestrates logistics, thoughts, and circumstances in divine set-ups more often than I ever gave him credit for, to achieve the greater good, with an ultimate goal of heart transformation, in us and those around us.

In Exodus 14, God's chosen people were camping for the night in a place specifically chosen by God. Suddenly, they see the Egyptian forces closing in on them and they cry out to God and their leader, Moses, *"What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Isn't this what we told you in Egypt: Leave us alone so that we may serve the Egyptians? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness."*

They went from thinking God was bringing them out of bondage to focusing their eyes exclusively on the fast-approaching doom and despair in front of them.

Their **perspective** shifted from God's provision to the circumstances. It didn't matter that God had divinely orchestrated the Egyptians handing over a tremendous amount of gold, silver and provisions before they left on the journey. It didn't matter that God had divinely orchestrated a pillar of cloud to lead them by day and fire to light their way by night. Their eyes were focused on what was in front of them and only saw the impending doom of the enemy coming at them. Their ears only listened to the sounds of chariots and horses pounding across the land. They were completely unaware God had orchestrated all that they would experience.

We, today, read of this story with the gift of **hindsight**, to recognize God's divine set-up in the situation. But even then, we often skip to the miracle of the sea parting and totally miss God's orchestrations in the beginning of Exodus 14.

“THEN THE LORD SPOKE TO MOSES, ‘TELL THE ISRAELITES TO TURN BACK AND CAMP IN FRONT OF PI-HAHIROTH, BETWEEN MIDGOL (WHICH MEANS FORTRESS/CITADEL) AND THE SEA; YOU MUST CAMP IN FRONT OF BAAL-ZEPHON, FACING IT BY THE SEA.’”

PERSPECTIVE

Consider how incredibly precise that location was described to Moses, with three distinct physical markers, insuring they were in the exact location for Pharaoh's change of heart and subsequent fierce pursuit. It's like being given the street address or the GPS coordinates of where God wanted them to camp.

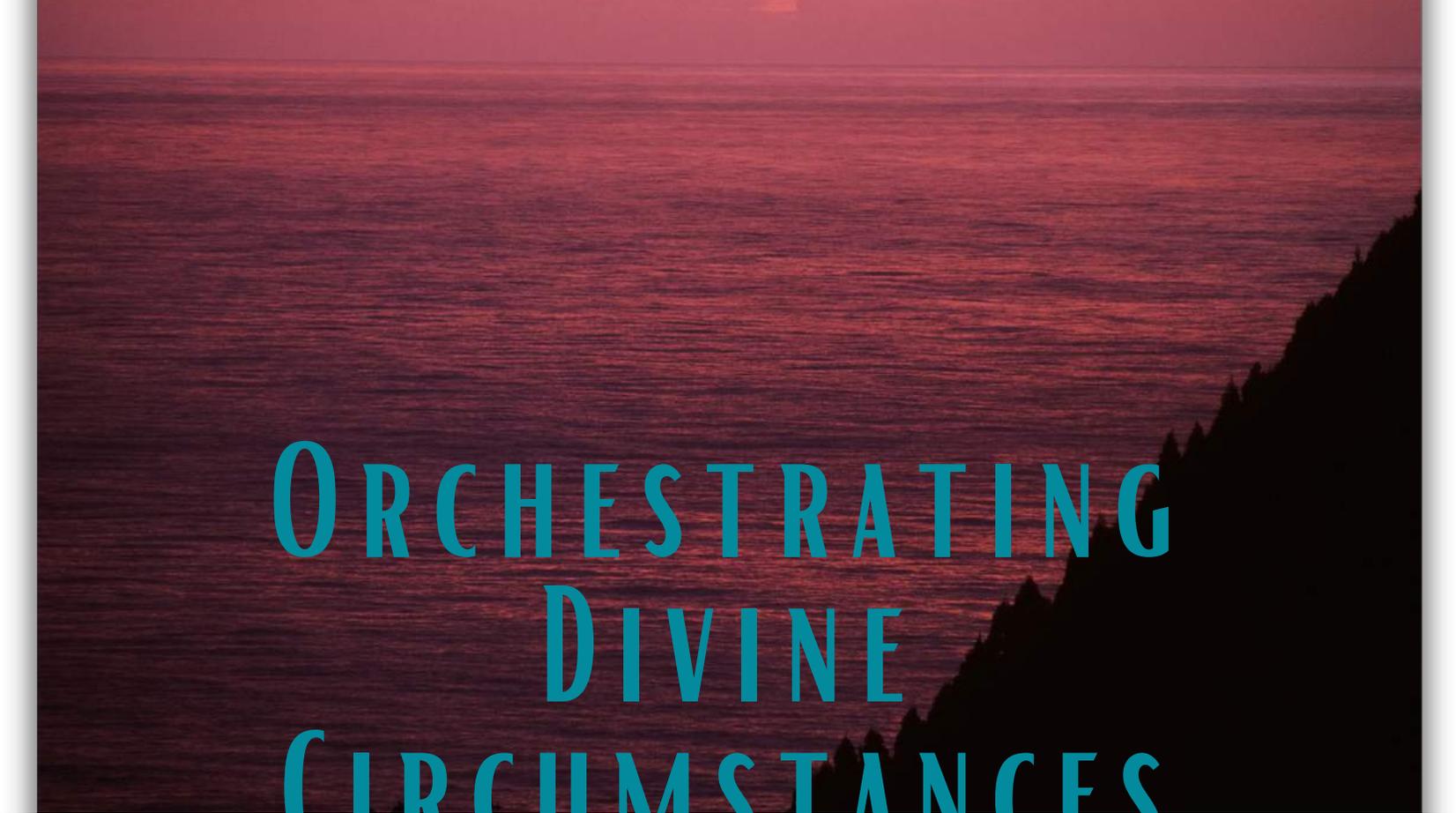
Wait ... does this mean God orchestrated the circumstances that stirred up fear and pain, suffering and uncertainty, doubt and confusion, anger and regret to his own chosen people? Absolutely.

Need another example? Read Job 1. The Bible says on this one particular day, the Lord asked Satan, *“Where have you come from?”* *“From roaming through the earth,”* Satan answered him, *“and walking around on it.”* Then the Lord said to Satan, *“Have you considered my servant Job? No one else on earth is like him, a man of perfect integrity, who fears God and turns away from evil.”*

Wait! WHAAAT?!?!?!?

HINDSIGHT





ORCHESTRATING DIVINE CIRCUMSTANCES

“Satan answered the Lord, “Does Job fear God for nothing? Haven’t you placed a hedge around him, his household, and everything he owns? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and strike everything he owns, and he will surely curse you to your face.” “Very well,” the Lord told Satan, “everything he owns is in your power. However, do not lay a hand on Job himself.” So Satan left the Lord’s presence.”

I imagine Satan smugly sauntering off, thinking he’s about to destroy another believer, filled with an arrogance of power. While all along, God just orchestrated another divine setup.

As we stand with our backs against the wall, scanning the horizon for any sense of relief, overwhelmed by the circumstances and riding a roller coaster of anger, fear, doubt and discouragement, we should consider whether we may have just experienced a divine setup. Is it possible that the “thing” that has us so devastated right now has been allowed by God to happen in our lives for a specific purpose? So then what are we to gain from it? How does God want to transform us within it?

We love to read that God parted the Red Sea. But we don’t want to be backed up into the same uncomfortable, painful corner as the Israelites, even though it

allowed God to move so that they could witness God’s deliverance of their safety, their provision, and their promise.

We love to read that Job’s life was far better in the second half of his years and that he gained far more materially than he had before all the devastation arrived. But none of us want to lose our families, our marriages, our homes, or our lifestyles to gain the transformation and greater blessing God has for us.

In our own moments of tremendous pain and suffering, barriers and oppression, we ask God to show us what we are to learn; how we are to grow through the situation. We look at the dysfunction and lean into the reality that God wouldn’t have us go through it if He wasn’t already in it if He wasn’t already with us every step of the way to make sure we get through it. We must trust in the divine setup because God has provided so much proof that He will always see us through.

This is no small task. Ten years ago, when the Enemy came to shred my home life, my faith wasn’t strong enough in the pain and tears. I turned inward to me, to what would ease my pain. But now you better believe I seek the plan and purpose of God every time; I seek to find the divine setup, and it has made all the difference.

Reading and praying upon the stories of Exodus 14 and Job 1 have produced great lessons in my faith:

1. When we seek him in prayer and fasting, God will direct us to the exact place to stand, or where we are to camp out for a while. But we must not assume that the location will be free from adversity. Often it is a temporary situation, before he moves us through a necessary transition, in order to bring about a greater transformation.
2. Sometimes God hardens the hearts of those around us to gain a greater good that we will not understand or even see coming. Remember Pharaoh wanted the Israelites out of his land, but then it was God (not Satan) who hardened Pharaoh's heart and caused a hateful rejuvenation to enslave the people as servants. Hardening of a heart is not always at the hands of the enemy.
3. God transformed a wet, muddy sea bottom into dry, hard ground for his chosen people to escape upon. Six hundred thousand Israelite men, their families, livestock, wagons, etc moved over a dry sea floor while water stood on either side of them. Our limitations in any situation are irrelevant to a God who delights in defying the impossible.
4. God creates guardrails to just how much influence Satan is allowed in our lives. When God spoke to Satan, he limited the enemy's tactics, thus reinforcing for me that Satan never has free reign in my life, although he likes to pretend as if he does, and I often self-relinquish power to him. That guardrail or boundary means God allows only the precise amount through which will produce endurance, perseverance, and personal growth, to further his rescue mission and transform me to be more like him. What's the precise amount? Well, I can't speak for you, but I often require far more heat to transform my personality, my stubbornness, and my pride. But I always lean into the fact that what Satan aimed to destroy me with, God will use the very same for my benefit and his glory.

Through orchestrating divine circumstances, God allowed the Israelites to think their end was near. God allowed the enemy to wreck Job in the most painful of ways. And, God gained all the glory when the events came to an end. Pastor Tony Evans said it best: "God sometimes allows us to go through painful and even prolonged suffering to give us a fresh vision of him that goes far beyond what we could have otherwise experienced. So in the midst of your trials, pray for deliverance. But pray also that God would use your circumstance to allow you to see him, understand him, and worship him as never before. "

LESSONS



HEALING IN LAYERS

By Ana

We are complex human beings. Created to love and be loved. God's beautiful intention for His creation. But our bodies and our minds keep the score of deep emotional wounds.

I was a broken little girl in a grown woman's body. Maybe even more broken than I ever really knew. My dad left our family in a very traumatizing way when I was just 5 and I grew up without him. My mother, siblings and I lived a life full of struggle in what felt like a daily fight to survive. The wounding went deep and stayed there, never dealt with, never processed.

Over time, it manifested itself into unhealthy patterns of thinking and behavior that affected every aspect of my life, especially my relationships.

All I knew to do was seek out men for the love, security and protection I desperately yearned for. We all know where that leads. For me, it led to more situations that inflicted even more trauma and wounding. This was something I was so blind to until the day my husband decided he was done and walked away over two and a half years ago.

The hard truth I came to face: I had no business getting married.

I believe God allows us to go our own way knowing where it'll lead. Knowing eventually our brokenness will lead us to Him. Where He has wanted us all along. No matter how put together I was on the outside, I was broken, hurting and lost. All I wanted was someone that was safe. Someone who could promise me they wouldn't hurt me or leave.

Thing is, only One can promise all of that. But we never come to see or believe that until we turn to Him, give Him everything and let Him in. I fought that off for many years. Full of pride, I went my own way, never trusting anyone but myself. I did everything I could to keep myself "safe" when my earthly protector began to fail me. That underlying root of fear (fear of rejection and abandonment) led to more and more control. All because I just needed to FEEL safe. I needed to FEEL love.

Yet, the more we control, the less in control we really are. Our drive to control simply causes more and more chaos. And the ones we love the most pay the price. My husband paid the price. Our children paid the price.

Admitting and surrendering my brokenness is never an excuse for my mistakes or failures. Facing who I've been and why began a journey of healing, of processing deep wounds, and grieving for that little girl left behind so completely devastated. This healing has taken long it seems at times, and I'm okay with that. I've discovered we heal in layers. Like an onion, layer by layer. Some layers more deep and more painful but so necessary to be peeled back and exposed to the healing touch of our Savior.



There's a song I heard recently that has lyrics that touched me deeply; lyrics that have almost become a song I sing from my heart to the heart of my Father. I've had quiet moments often where I just close my eyes and sing these words...

Perfection By: Switch

*"When all I see are the flaws,
you see perfection, perfection.
Looking through this mess of a heart,
you see perfection, perfection.
Show me what's behind your eyes
Don't think I can trust in mine
When all I see are the flaws,
you see perfection, perfection.
I learn slowly, but you're teaching me to
love myself, myself
Starting to believe you want me like nobody else.
I never measure up But you are my enough.
And sometimes I fail
And sometimes I can't do it well.
If they walk away
You don't walk away
You tell me I'm worth it still."*

I imagine myself singing that song to the Lover and Healer of my soul. Doing so has been an experience for me. Like, God You still think I'm worth it? After all this time I've felt worthless and thrown away, You still look at me and love me? You still want me, with all my broken pieces? Even when they walk away?

The answer is yes, every time. No questions asked. Yes. Who isn't absolutely overwhelmed by that kind of love? That kind of love changes everything. It has changed me.

I'm still healing. Some days are dark. But what better way to learn how to trust, then having to trust Him in the dark? He shows up. And He will never stop showing up. That's His promise: Call to me and I will answer you (Jeremiah 33:3). Those moments we just don't know what to do anymore, and I know we all have them, we simply need to remember one thing: we hold tightly to His hand and JUST KEEP STANDING. Like when we put on the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-17); after we've done everything, JUST STAND. This, my friends, is the victory. When the winds blow, the waters rise and the fire rages, JUST KEEP STANDING.

I may not know you, but from one stander to another, I love you.

"It Will Live Again for His Glory."

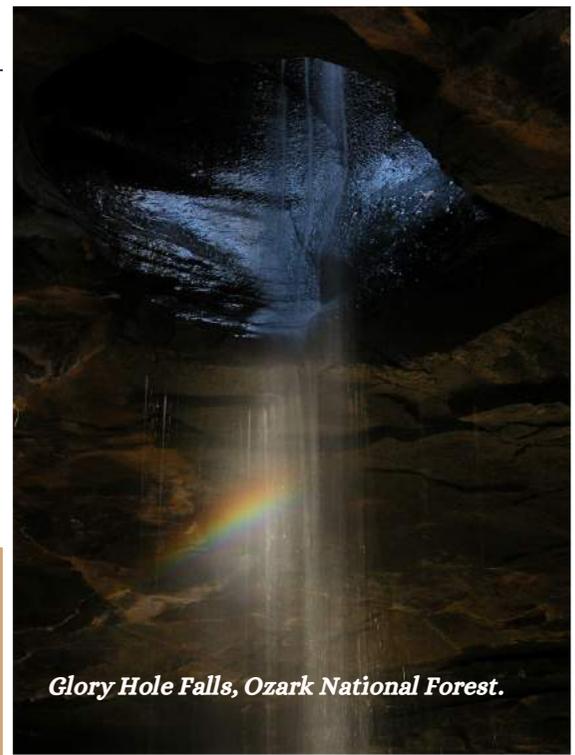
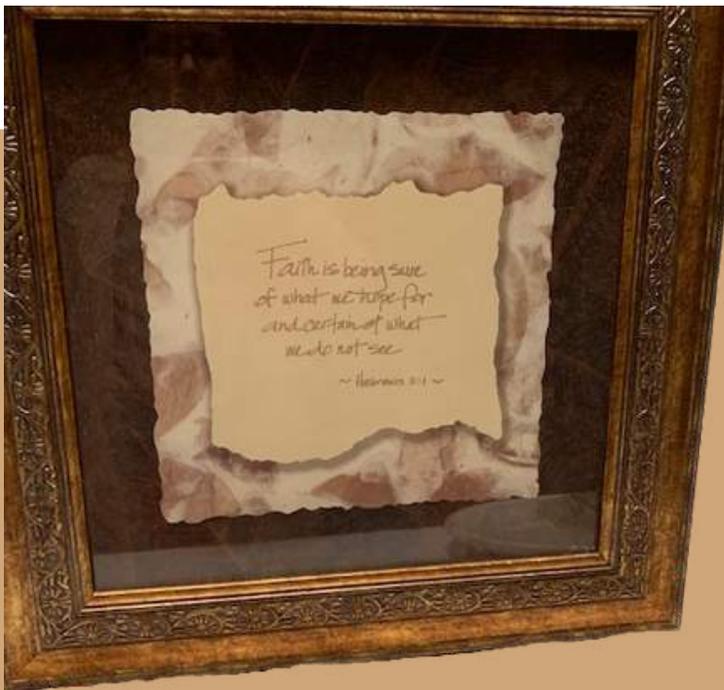
Stacy

On August 19, 2020, at 4:30 am, I felt God wake me up and say "John 10,11," I got up and went into my closet and began reading. My reading began with how God is our Shepherd, we are His sheep and we hear His voice and a stranger's voice we will not listen to. Then I read the story of Lazarus and how his life would not end in death, but he would "live again" and be resurrected for God's greater glory. The word "live again" was in three separate verses and a Rhema word that came to life and quickened my Spirit. I felt as though I was on Holy Ground and trembled!

I received a promise from God by faith for my marriage that, "It will live again for His glory."

In March of 2019, our marriage ended.

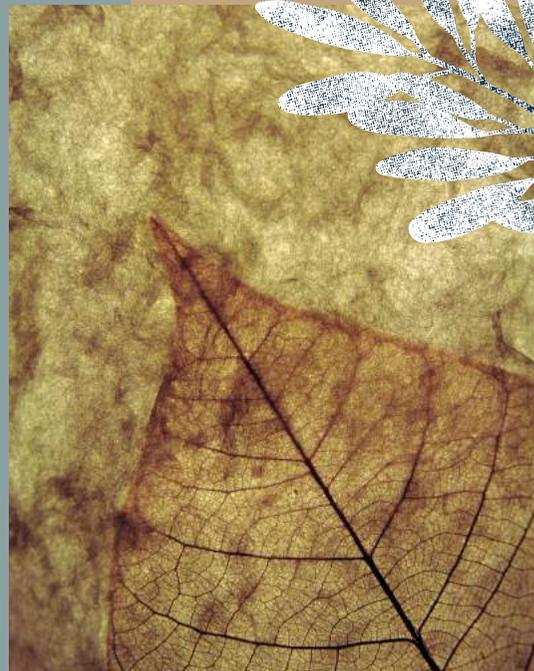
Our relationship ended in March of 2019 and for the 17 months that followed, I continued to hope and pray for restoration, but never really had any assurance or promise from God. On August 18, 2020, I sought the Lord in prayer and asked Him if this relationship was going to "live again" and told Him that if it wasn't, it was okay; all I needed was His perspective and for His will to be done.



Glory Hole Falls, Ozark National Forest.

Then, I received a promise from God regarding my marriage - that "It will live again for His glory." The following night around eleven, I tossed and turned and heard "Road to Damascus" over and over, so I grabbed my bible, went into my closet, and asked, "What about the Road to Damascus, Lord?" Then I felt prompted to read about Saul's conversion to Paul and the commentary that followed. It explained that when a person has a "sudden" insight that radically changes their beliefs, their conversion is dramatic and startling and the response of obedience is immediate.

It is encouraging to know that God can transform anyone he chooses, even the hardest heart, and can do so on His own, through the Holy Spirit, with no help from any human agent. Therefore, I knew the Lord was giving me a promise that "My ex-husband would have a Road-to-Damascus encounter!" This also encouraged me to know what God can do in one moment, could probably equate to 20 years of counseling.



On September 6, 2020

I was in a Goodwill store in Florida, with my dear friend Angie. Feeling devastated, heartbroken, and desperate, I hid in one of the aisles and called my sister Nicole, asking her to pray and stand in agreement with me, on those precious promises that God had given me.

I asked God to speak a word that I felt I desperately needed at that very moment. After my sister and I prayed, we hung up and I desperately looked for an item with scriptures on it, but found nothing, which was odd for Goodwill, because I have usually seen lots of inspirational things in the past.

As Angie and I were about to leave, I glanced towards the back and saw a piece of art hanging on the wall that said....

*Faith is being sure
of what we hope for
and certain of what
we do not see.
~ Hebrews 11:1 ~*

It quickened my spirit and I began to tremble reading this precious reminder God was giving me - a command to be sure of what I hoped for: restoration; that our marriage would live again, my ex-husband will have a road-to-Damascus encounter and that I should not base things on what I was seeing.

Hebrews 11:1



So, I took a picture with my phone to remember and write about it in my journal. We left the store without me buying the wall art because it was ugly, worn, and damaged. When I spoke to my sister later that night, she stated that I should have bought it, since God spoke to me through that artwork and it was special.

After a couple of days, I went back to Goodwill to buy the wall art, but it was gone, so I cherished it as a special moment.

Over the next 18 months, Hebrews 11:1 continued to speak to me, especially during false starts and when I would see the opposite of what I was hoping and praying for.



On Feb 15, 2021, my ex-husband had come to visit me after I had surgery and to drop off a meal. I felt he had not changed in all this time and there was no evidence of anything different. After he left, I called Nicole to inform her of how I was better off without him. About an hour after he left my house, I received a text that said Hebrews 11:1, from an elderly volunteer at the Crisis Pregnancy Center where I worked. God was once again reminding me not to go by what I was seeing, but to be sure of what I was hoping for and what He had promised.

During this period of waiting on His promises, God led me to Sheila Hollinger. Marriage Revealed Ministries became very instrumental in my stand, encouraging me not to give up, to work on myself, to understand how I contributed to the breakup and how I too needed to be transformed.



Moving forward to March 24, 2022, my friend Faith, texted me a picture of different Christian wall art that she had found at the Ross department store and to my surprise, one of the wall art pictures had Heb 11:1.

This led me to believe that perhaps I should find some wall art with that scripture, to hang in my house. So, I googled Heb 11:1 wall art and after scrolling halfway down the page, I jumped when I saw a tiny thumbnail image of **THE WALL ART FROM GOODWILL!**

It was unmistakably the same one.

It was ugly, damaged and nothing I would want to hang on my wall. I thought there is NO WAY God!!! I messaged the seller on and she mentioned that she had purchased a buffet table from Goodwill in her hometown of Kentucky and two men loaded the table for her, so she never had a chance to go through the drawers. On Christmas of 2021, she happened to open one of the drawers and there was the wall art. She did not take it back because she figured it had found its way to her for some reason.

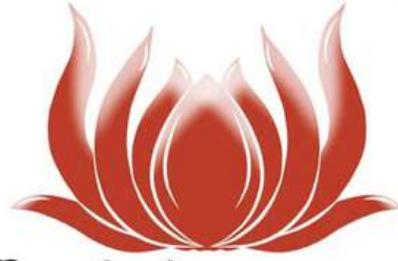


I purchased the wall art from her which ended up being THE EXACT WALL ART THAT GOD SHOWED ME AT MY GOODWILL IN 2020!!! I realized there was only one of its kind, as it was homemade, put together with scrapbooking materials and a backing made up of a brown paper bag with brown tape!!!

I truly pray this blesses and encourages all those who need to know our God speaks, He keeps His promises and He loves to confirm His promises for us, when we need it ! I know it is just a matter of time when I will be writing back with the testimony of the manifestation of what I have hoped for - that "my marriage will live again for God's glory and that my ex-husband will have a Road-to-Damascus encounter and come back a transformed man!"

May we continue to wait on the Lord, for we shall be blessed and will not be disappointed or be put to shame! Thank you so much Sheila and Marriage Revealed Ministries for all your sacrifices that point us to God and His Truth!

Prayers of a Fierce Prayer Warrior



Fiercelyinloveprayerwarriors

Sasha

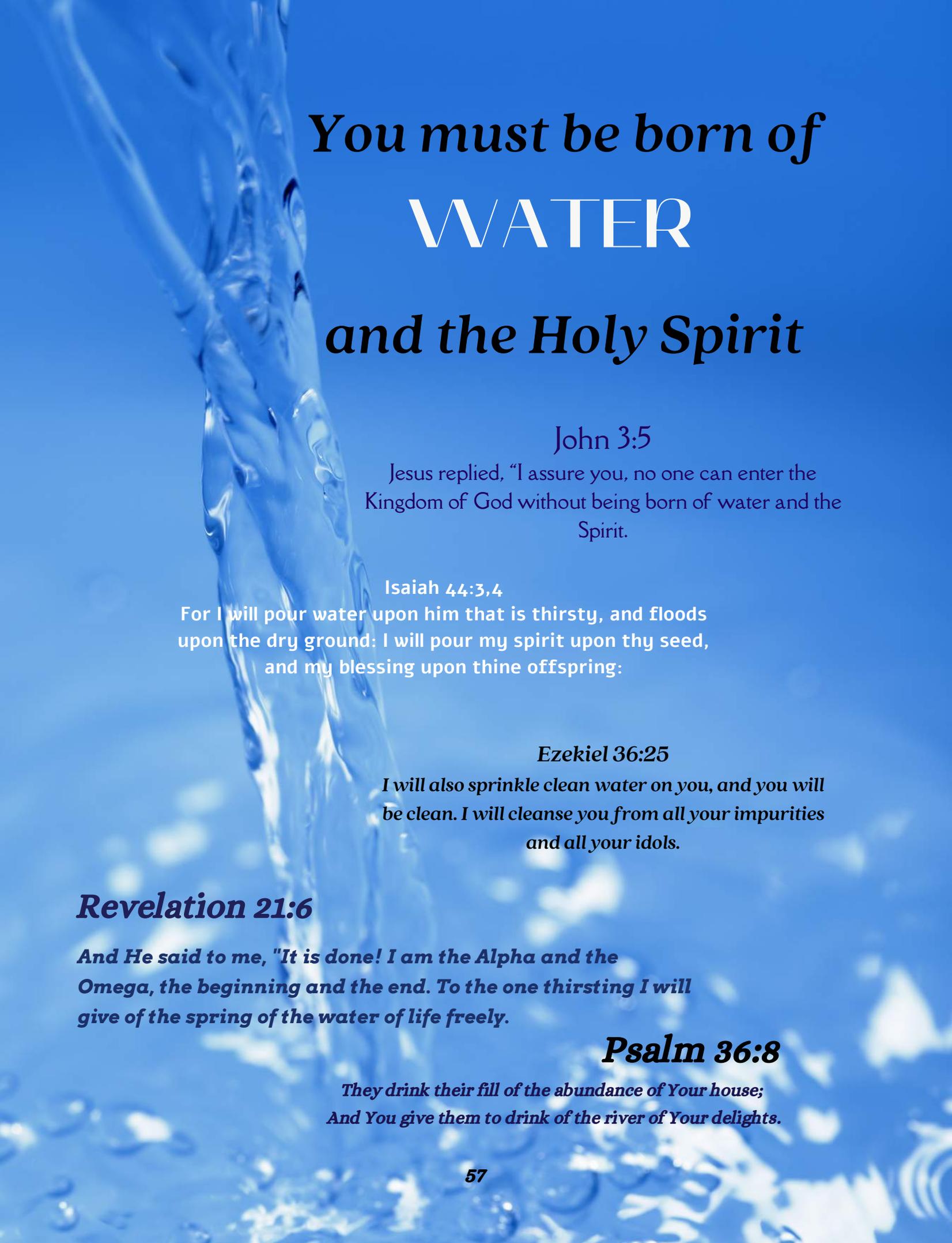
Prayers of a Fierce Prayer Warriors

"Jesus answered, " Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give will never thirst again." John 4:13-14

Father Your word says "they that drink from Your living waters will never thirst again." Heavenly Father we thank You for Your living waters that will never run dry. We thank You Father for meeting us at the well of our circumstances, we thank You for overflowing our cup (our heart) with Your living waters. May we delight in Your Word and watch our cups overflow with Your love, Your grace, and Your promise of salvation. Father teach us Your ways as You meet us at the well, teach us how to dip deeper and deeper into Your Word and to never thirst again.

Father may our spouse, children and family know that You are the God of living waters, that is waiting to meet them at the well of their circumstances to fill their cups with your living water. May they dip, and drink of Your promises of salvation. Heavenly Father today we stand at the well of Your living waters, may we drink from Your waters and be cleansed from our sins, may we be free from our doubts and uncertainties, and filled with Your love and mercy. Father, may we revel in Your Holy presence and never thirst again. In Jesus's name Amen

For more prayers from Sasha, visit her Facebook Page:
[Fiercelyinloveprayerwarriors](https://www.facebook.com/Fiercelyinloveprayerwarriors)



You must be born of **WATER** and the Holy Spirit

John 3:5

Jesus replied, "I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit.

Isaiah 44:3,4

For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

Ezekiel 36:25

I will also sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities and all your idols.

Revelation 21:6

And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the one thirsting I will give of the spring of the water of life freely.

Psalm 36:8

*They drink their fill of the abundance of Your house;
And You give them to drink of the river of Your delights.*



ASK

Sheila



Q. Sheila, God revealed to me that my husband opened a second bank account and has been using that to pay for his sinful affair life. I'm so angry and hurt because I am struggling to make sure all the bills are paid, and they are, praise God, but I don't have any extra money and to see him buying new things for him and the ow is making me bitter and resentful. I have confronted him, but nothing is working. Please advise.

When God brings secrets to the light, I have seen a completely different manifestation of how that truth produced real change, good change, and fruit when it came into the light. God's perfect timing is evident.

The enemy loves to bring things to the light as well, but for different reasons. When he reveals things, it usually brought me so much pain and despair that I rushed to make that stop out of impatience, confronting in my anger and pain. I would be used by the enemy to sow more damage into my already damaged marriage.

Make sure when the truth comes, you go straight to the Lord and WAIT on Him to confront or give you direction.

In everything we do, we show that we are true ministers of God. We patiently endure troubles and hardships and calamities of every kind. 2 Corinthians 6:4

Q. Do you have any help to offer on how to handle bitterness? My biggest struggle is when I become so bitter, that I can't zip my lips and start really bad fights with my wife.

For me, I thought my bitterness would go if the problem left. So I prayed for God to take away the problem. God wanted me to learn how to deal with the problem with love, compassion, mercy, and grace. So the problem remained, and I was the one that had to learn how to sleep in peace in the boat, while the storm was raging.

Q. Sheila, I seem to have lost faith in God and can't help but wonder if God is able to save my husband. My husband has gotten worse over the years, not better, and that has really been a struggle with me in thinking that just maybe God can't save him. In my head, I know that God can do anything, but my heart just won't believe it anymore. I used to believe God could do anything. Where did I lose my faith?

Confidence in the Lord comes when we face those snares, temptations, and bait and know where to go and hide, or how to overcome by choosing what and Who we are going to believe.

**My heart is confident in you, O God; my heart is confident. No wonder I can sing your praises!
Psalm 57:7**

Psalm 57 tells us "I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed." Often times what our spouses do, will grab our attention, our focus, and our thoughts. When we let that captivate us, we spend time magnifying their choices and actions. Instead of hiding ourselves away in God's refuge, His Word, to protect ourselves from being taken captive. When we become captive, we spend too much time thinking about their actions and trying to make sense of it which empowers the captivity. This makes us more confident in their ability to be lost, stubborn, and rebellious than in God's ability in knowing how to break them loose and set them free.

He will not fear bad news; His heart is steadfast, trusting [confidently relying on and believing] in the LORD. Psalm 112:7

Spending more time with God produces more understanding of Who He is which produces more appreciation of the natural laws of sowing and reaping. When we come to understand fully His love for us, this love protects us from fearing bad news. But also helps us become steadfast and confident in God because we BELIEVE In Him.

Q. It seems that as soon as I gain ground and victory over being unforgiving, resentful, hurt, and angry, something happens and I get pulled right back into it. The fact that I can't stay free is making me weary and want to quit. How do I remain free from resentments?

Part of forgiveness is seeing repentance and having hope that they are being set free and won't keep returning to their sins. This is why we are told if they sin and repent, we must forgive.

And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him." Luke 17:4

But what if they don't repent? And worse, what if they tell you they are doing nothing wrong? We know that love is long suffering and kind, but that doesn't mean it's blind. I am a firm believer that knowing the season you are in with your spouse and not expecting them to act according to what you hope and expect is a very powerful way to guard yourself against resentments.

When we ignore or disregard the strength of the snare they are subjected to, we are expecting someone to see clearly as we are, when in fact they are in total darkness and deception. Our snare is expecting a lost, blind, stubborn, and rebellious person that is running away from God to act in a healed, healthy, Christ-like manner. And when they don't, we become angry and hurt that they failed to meet the expectations that we set up for them, expectations that we had no business placing on them in the first place.

Paul handed someone over to satan, Jesus told Peter that satan wanted to sift him as wheat and that He would be praying for him. THEY understood clearly what happens when a person is snared, and because they understand the snare, it helped them refrain from the bitterness that comes when we are expecting a person to act godly when they are clearly not anywhere near that place in their life.

One of the best ways I helped prevent myself from that rabbit hole was to look forward with hope and determination that this was a season and NOT the rest of my life. That this would pass and that it was what it was for now. That I was to learn how to take that hurt and disappointment to God and let Him comfort me, but I was to focus on the future, and what I expected Jesus to do for my husband. And then the next day, I was to pick that back up and keep pressing onward.

Q. "Humble yourself before God." I've heard this a million times, but what exactly does it mean?

My most humbling times were when I would say, *"God I can't even express how much I hate the place we are in, but I am going to say this as a declaration of my love and trust in You. "It is well with my soul.""*

I knew that God was asking me to resist everything in my flesh that I wanted to think, feel, believe, and trust Him to the best of my ability. To submit and let Him do what He knows how to do best, change hearts. There is something very powerful about humility to the person on the receiving end. You are showing them belief in their ability, faith and trust that says "I know You are capable. Far more capable than I am."

Which is the exact opposite of what we are saying to God when we take matters into our own hands and try our best to make the changes we desire the most. Humility recognizes God and trusts that He will keep His Word and do as He has promised to do. So when we act out of fear, pride, anger, or any of the many emotions we are prone to, and not make them submit to God, we are expressing to the Lord that we don't care about Him as we should. Humility is a submission, surrender and making our flesh and will subdue, that that is a beautiful expression of love to show the Father. .

Isaiah 57:15

For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in a high and holy place, and with the oppressed and humble in spirit, to restore the spirit of the lowly and revive the heart of the contrite."



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Your children are watching you, as you stand in faith, for your broken marriage and family to be healed.

They see you in the fire, being tried and coming forth as gold. They witness the authenticity of your faith in God, as you turn to Him in the midst of the tempest, or they observe you flailing about, like the disciples in the boat, on the stormy sea of Galilee, convinced that Jesus would let them drown.

Some days you will thrash about and wail - overwhelmed by the loss and the grief of watching your spouse sinking into a sea of darkness - as your children's little faces are filled with bewilderment and pain, their tender hearts breaking as they are torn from you and from home. Some days your children will see your angry eyes and hear vitriol spew from your lips, when you speak of your spouse and particularly, the imposter, poser, usurper, thief and son of some kind of mother, the despicable "other person". However, if you are like me, most of your days will be victories of overcoming, enduring, persevering and growing in Christlike character, in the midst of an amazing opportunity, for you and your children, to see how God transforms into good, that which was meant for evil.

I am writing to you - the standing parent, not about "how to stand with children". I will tell you about my journey and what I have harvested so far. I invite you to come and glean from my field what you will. ~ By Matthew Szechenyi





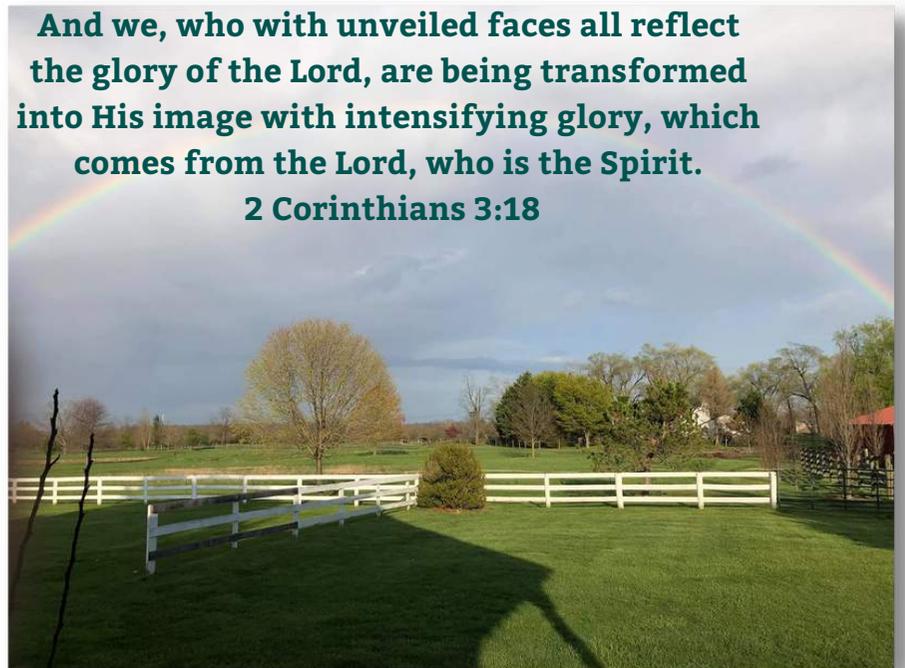
My standing journey has produced a radiant,

conspicuous fruit, a fruit which God desires for us all to bear, as living branches. This fruit is vibrant, with the most powerful force in the universe, for it is the character of God Himself, exhibited for all to see on that cross, where Jesus died in our place. It is full of the same power that resurrected our Savior on the third day, that resident power within, that transforms us into becoming love, a sign and a wonder for our children and our spouse to witness, when they come in contact with the person of the Holy Spirit, breathing through us.

From the dark, excruciating days, that mark the beginning of our journeys, our children travel with us into days of victorious, overcoming love, as God transforms us into people who walk and talk like Jesus - speaking words of faith, hope, life, and healing, as we submit to God and receive the power of His mighty love, to forgive, bless and pray for those who have hurt and offended us the most.

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into His image with intensifying glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:18



When my wife left suddenly in 2016, there had been no warning or preparation for the devastation to come. For my son, it was as if his whole world was suddenly turned upside down - the blissful days of his childhood, shattered in a moment. The rage I felt toward the man, who allowed himself to have an affair with the unlikeliest of people - my beloved wife, who destroyed my family and my child's home and influenced the divorce - a most grievous form of child abuse, threatened to consume me and transform me into a vengeful monster. I thought, for sure, that my heart would rend in two, as I would try to console my son, who was barely 8 years old.

In my moments alone, my house was filled with the most hideous wailing and thrashing about, as I longed to leave my body, wracked with the almost intolerable pain of abandonment, betrayal, and rejection, by my wife of 20 years. In those days I cried uncontrollably and my son was frightened to see Daddy's face contorted with tears. He had always seen a happy daddy and he needed to see my happiness so badly. He felt responsible and worried about me when he was with his mom and would fight and cry when she would come to pick him up.

How did I overcome those horrible days?

While I cried every day for the two years that followed, the answer is that I sought the Lord and cried out to Him day and night. Every night I walked the fields of my farm, looking up to the stars and pouring out my heart to the Father - my refuge and strength.

5 Rest in God alone, O my soul, for my hope comes from Him.

6 He alone is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress; I will not be shaken.

7 My salvation and my honor rest on God, my strong rock; my refuge is in God.

8 Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts before Him.

God is our refuge.~ Psalm 62

I asked the Holy Spirit to give me drugs for the pain - not the kind that destroys and place people in bondage, but the kind that is in the form of His comfort from within - that balm which I can testify, is real and abundantly given, to anyone who is suffering and who believes God enough, to ask for it and walk in it.

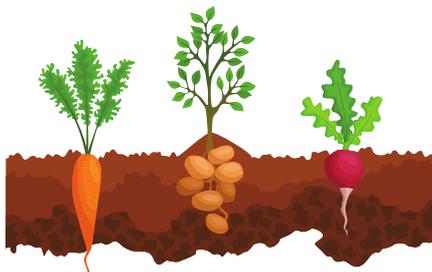


I don't get to be in this place too often.... fishing on the farm pond during a tranquil sunset. But every moment I get to follow Christ to that place within where He fills me completely with His Love For just a moment in His Presence is eternal.. While this fading moment on earth was so beautiful to experience, it will never return but in the memory this photograph preserves. Even in the darkest hour, the Promise of Christ's enduring return rises and shines in me. I hold on to an unfading, brilliant peace and inexpressible, unshakeable joy, my soul in a momentum of restoration as I come to Jesus, who has made His home in me.

I was constantly in the Word of God and put my favorite Psalms up, on the doors and walls in my house. My son saw me turning to God and His Word and he heard my prayers. From the day my wife left, I told him to "trust in God". This became our code, "T.I.G.", which we would use on the phone when he was away.

From the beginning, I told my son the truth - that it was the evil one who was attacking our family - and encouraged him to pray. We would pray all the time and my son learned to sing to God and to turn to the Bible for inspiration and comfort. It was at this time that I taught my son about "prayer language", which he took to, immediately. Now that he is 13, he seems too self-conscious to use his prayer language in front of me, but I know he has felt its power.

Navigating between two houses and dealing with the "stepfather" and two small children, born into this non-covenant marriage, are often insurmountable issues for my son. I engage him in discussion constantly, to help him deal with the psycho-social stress. I am teaching him to be emotionally intelligent, that is, to be aware of his feelings and to be transparent about them, even if they are "ugly" feelings.





My son observes me directly welcoming his mom into our home, even with the two little ones, and showing her kindness. He hears me speak about her with love and also with truth, explaining to him that her ability to love him has been restricted by the hardness of her heart, a condition that resulted from her embracing the ways of sin and hatred (divorce and adultery). I am helping him to understand that his mom needs mercy, because she is ensnared in the darkness of sin and cannot see. Consequently, my son has prayed for God to shine His light of truth upon her. I have been honest with him about how his mom has hurt me, how she has mistreated me, but I am a shining example to him, of forgiveness and unfailing love, because he sees me staying the course, standing for our marriage, praying for her, treating her with love and kindness and refusing to give up, even on the hardest days, when there seems to be no end to the waiting.

My son knows that I will never seek a relationship with another woman, but I openly share with him the loneliness and longing I feel. He also hears me praying for the “stepfather” and knows that I have sat down with him, to have productive conversations regarding my son, even confronting him in a gentle way, to address some of his mistreatment of my son. He knows that it is God who has enabled me to overcome the hatred for this man and that it is the supernatural power of God’s love, in which I have been able to operate. In this way, my son knows that I will step up and defend him, but in a way that leads to peace.

I have been emphatic in teaching my son to be thoughtful to his mom on birthdays and holidays, helping him pick out gifts, and even giving her gifts myself. What an amazing opportunity it is for my son to see his father transformed into someone who loves his enemies and demonstrates Christ’s love consistently, despite there being little, to no return. What an immense opportunity for him to see this love in action, enduring so many obstacles and for such a long time, never failing, always hoping, never giving up, or backing down.

Titus 2:7 Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and wholesome speech that is above reproach

Yes, standing parent, you are empowered by God, to be a witness to His glory and powerfully minister to your children in this time. They are enduring childhood trauma that the evil one desires to use, to destroy their destinies. As they watch you, in your suffering and contending in faith, they will be able to overcome their trauma, through the intimate relationship with God and steadfast faith in Him, that you exhibit. They will learn to defeat evil with good, instead of becoming bitter and hardened in their hearts. They will watch you and learn to find refuge, solace, comfort, healing, and strength in God.

set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

Revelation 22:17

“And The Spirit and The Bride are saying, 'Come', and let him who hears, say, “Come”, and let him who thirsts come and take the water of life without charge.”



I always emphasize God's goodness to my son and help him to focus on being thankful and praising God, especially during the hardest moments. It is so rewarding to hear him, when he takes it to heart and prays in faith, for his mom and for others, as well as when he acknowledges God's kindness and goodness.

As children get older, sometimes their logic gets in the way and they lose sight of God's goodness, holding Him responsible for the evil that has befallen their family, or for the delay in bringing restoration to fruition. Therefore, you must be good and kind to your children, your spouse, and the other person, so that your children will see the reality of who Christ is in you.

You must be a shining example of love in action and you can be, by seeking God, submitting to Him completely and allowing Him to transform you.



Don't put your children in the uncomfortable position of being "investigative reporters", when they return from being with the other parent. Make sure they don't feel responsible for you, or for why the family and marriage breakdown happened. Show them how a disciple of Christ handles tribulation in this world.

Let them see your joy in the midst of suffering and your strength, in continuing to live the abundant life, which Jesus came to give us all.

In the end, if you don't give up, you will reap that harvest, and your children -first-hand witnesses to the power of God- will become unstoppable forces for the Kingdom of God. Your children are in this boat with you and they are looking to you, as you trust in Jesus, instead of frantically bailing in fear. Your steadfast faith will settle their hearts and teach them the realities of being sons and daughters of God, like nothing else will.

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And it shall come to pass, that whoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord has said, among the **remnant** whom the Lord calls. **Joel 2:32**

So, too, at the present time there is a **remnant**, chosen by grace. **Romans 11:5**

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“Sheila, Thank you so much for your book *Destined to Stand*, I have read it three times and plan on reading it again because there is so much revelation packed into this book. You are so right, it's not what I wanted to hear, but what I NEEDED to hear. Carol, TX

NO.....
it's not too late
you're not too old
and it's not too
impossible!
God always finds a way
~always!

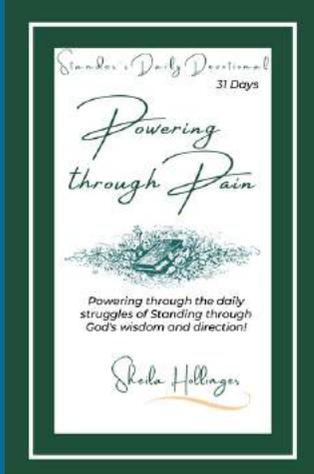
“Sheila, *The Volatile Heart* was exactly what I needed to help me overcome my anger and bitterness. It really explained things in a way that my hardened heart didn't want to hear or accept. Thank you for helping this very lost Stander!
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