

Issue NO. 04 Aug/Sept 2022

Revealed

Standing for Marriage Restoration

WHAT DID YOU
PLANT WITH YOUR
WORDS?

*Planting on
Purpose*

HEART

Roots

ROOTBOUND

WORDS
MADE ME
A PRODIGAL

**THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS
A PERFECT STANDER**

MARRIAGE REVEALED MINISTRIES INC.



Revealed

Standing for Marriage Restoration

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

CONTRIBUTE

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

SUBMISSIONS

admin@
marriagerevealedministries.com

SPOTLIGHT -RESTORED TESTIMONY

KIM KITTEL

26



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

MarriageRevealedMinistries.com
Issue No. 04 Aug/Sept 2022

INSPIRATION

You Speak What You Believe	05
Sheila Hollinger	
I Stand For My Marriage	06
Aaron Klooster	
The Root Of Pornography	10
Sheila Hollinger	
Narnia or Logic?	12
Genevieve Joyner	
Rootbound	15
Sheila Hollinger	

HOPE

There is No Such Thing As a Perfect Stander	16
Jennipher Ringer	

ENLIGHTENMENT

What Did You Plant With Your Words?	20
Heather Griffin	

BIBLE STUDY

Lessons Learned Through the Storm-Part 3	25
Lynda Castleberry	

PERSPECTIVE

Words Made Me a Prodigal	33
Don Griffin	

PRAISE

Talking to God and Praying the Word	36
Heather Griffin	
Planting on Purpose	41
Bren Vinesett	
Training of the Untrained Power of Words	44
Auggie	
Sticks and Stones	48
Sheila Hollinger	



Revealed

Standing for Marriage Restoration

ISSUE NO. 04
AUG/SEPT 2022

EDITORIAL
Sheila Hollinger
Editor-In-Chief

Brandi Roark
Editorial Manager



~CONTRIBUTORS~

Auggie
Bren Vinesett
Avis Sasha Bullard
Linda Castleberry
Don Griffin
Heather Griffin

WEBSITE: marriagerevealedministries.com

EMAIL: admin@marriagerevealedministries.com

Many Thanks to our GUEST WRITERS!



EDITOR'S NOTE
Sheila Hollinger

Revealed 



COPYRIGHT

© REVEALED Standing for Marriage Restoration Magazine 2022, Sheila Hollinger, Marriage Revealed Ministries Inc. This magazine and the articles within may not be shared, uploaded for download for distribution. No part of this magazine may be reproduced in any written, electronic, recording, or photocopying without the written permission of the publisher or author.

Photographs

Provided by contributors, published with permission. All other photographs ©via Canva

None of the articles are written by Licensed professional counselors unless otherwise noted.

MARRIAGE REVEALED MINISTRIES INC.

Hello Standers,

Thank you for joining me as together we sow our time, prayers, heart, and passion into our lost spouses, family and marriages.

This issue was, again, another blessing to work through and not as you might think. As I tried to work on this issue, I came upon some areas of struggle in my heart toward being committed to it, as well as some other things. We want the fruit, but preparing the soil is not the fun part. We want the good harvest but will give up before we ever get there, simply because the work it takes sometimes discourages us to the point where we feel the harvest is not even worth it.

Is it worth it?

Yes, I went through a lot of pain, but as I see my husband seeking God while home where he needs to be, where he was created to be, raising his children, and leading his family, the pain I went through is worth it, not only for him but for the changes that it produced in me. Keep Standing!

Isaiah 40:31-But those who wait upon the LORD will renew their strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint.

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

“YOU SPEAK WHAT YOU BELIEVE!”

WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN WILL COME FORTH OUT OF YOUR MOUTH.

Sheila Hollinger

Anyone that has created a post and ‘vented’, to a group of Standers, has most likely gotten the correction (hopefully in a loving way) to speak life, not death, over their spouse. For some, speaking from a place of little hope, fear, anger, blame, shaming, and even resentment repeatedly seems to be a real struggle. Why is that?

If you’re always struggling to speak positive things and “life” over you and your circumstances, it’s not because you are a negative person, but most likely because you have not yet had your mind or beliefs changed by Someone that fills you with hope and brings your expectations centered on what is capable of providing for you. When we speak out of fear, worry, or unbelief, it comes out as negative and sounds as though we are speaking against God. If you speak IN unbelief, it might be because you have not yet experienced God in such a way as to change your confidence, trust, and belief in Him, or you are being blocked from accepting Him for who He says He is, by an interfering belief system rooted in you - like shame, guilt, unworthiness, rejection or condemnation. All of these create issues with unbelief. This becomes evident by how we speak when we allow our words to flow naturally and don't filter ourselves.

Some find it easy to speak the promises of God and are able to keep themselves encouraged in the Word and truth of God; it's not just because they are self-controlled and disciplined or that it happens naturally. It's also not because they lie and fake it. It's because they BELIEVE GOD! They know and understand it's GOD'S LOVE for them that makes them qualified, not their worthiness.

They have had enough experience in this journey, seen too much, been through too much of His goodness and love, to ever doubt that He is going to keep His Word, prove His promise, be true to His nature and character. Those that find it easy, are those that BELIEVE IN HIM AND KNOW HIS LOVE!

Some of us are just naturally critical and always focused on the bad things. We need to learn how to be thankful, grateful, and intentionally self-reflect on how we might be allowing ourselves to take on a victim mindset, instead of a kingdom mindset. You need to really get to know yourself and who you are - to understand that every child of God is set apart from the world and has a power and authority unique to them, because of WHO they are grafted into and what this new root system provides.

For out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth will speak.

Luke 6:45

SO, HOW DO YOU COME TO THAT PLACE?

It happens when you stop trying to use Him to change your life and circumstances and instead try to get to KNOW Him. This happens when you read the Word, with the focused intent to find out just WHO He is - that He is a God who is LOVE, who doesn't lie and who is FAITHFUL! He is a Parent! Everything He does is for US.. For YOU!!!

As you come to know this, you will fall in love with Him and become SECURE IN HIM and who He is. You will come to know how HE IS FOR YOU and not against you personally; rather, He is against anything that is not good for you, or that leads you away from Him. It's in that sense of security, that the heart speaks forth life and blessings - that security and confidence in Him, changes what we believe. God is worthy to be believed in and He wants to prove that to you.

Focus on changing what you BELIEVE and your mouth will naturally start speaking it! The Word of God is the place to challenge what you believe in. The more time you spend in it, the more your beliefs are transformed to line up with truth. As you start to experience what the Word of God says, it will create strong foundations of unshakeable beliefs that will naturally begin to pour out in your speech.



I STAND *FOR* MY

By Aaron Klooster 

It has been a while since I've written anything formal, for others to read. God has been pushing me to step out of my comfort zone in many areas of my life lately and when I follow His leading, I never regret it. So here we are. I am sharing some of my journey as a Stander for my marriage covenant vowed before the Lord, 16 years ago.

My name is Aaron. I grew up and still live in the Grand Rapids, MI area. My wife and I grew up in Christian reformed homes, met at a Bible study in 2004 and were married in 2006, in IN. I was 26 and she was 24 years old at the time. We have 2 beautiful girls, aged 13 and 12.

When my wife and I met, it was love at first sight, at least in the way I understood love, at that time in my life. It was a passionate love, but very naïve and immature. We both had faith in Jesus, desired to have children and remain faithful to Christ, in our lives and our marriage. There were sins we were ashamed of - before we got married - that we confessed to God and each other. We believed we were both forgiven - even though we did not fully understand what that meant at the time. All in all, we felt we were on the right path, heading into our marriage.

➔ I HAD A SEXUAL ADDICTION - AN IDOL THAT BEGAN WHEN I WAS AROUND 14 YEARS OLD.

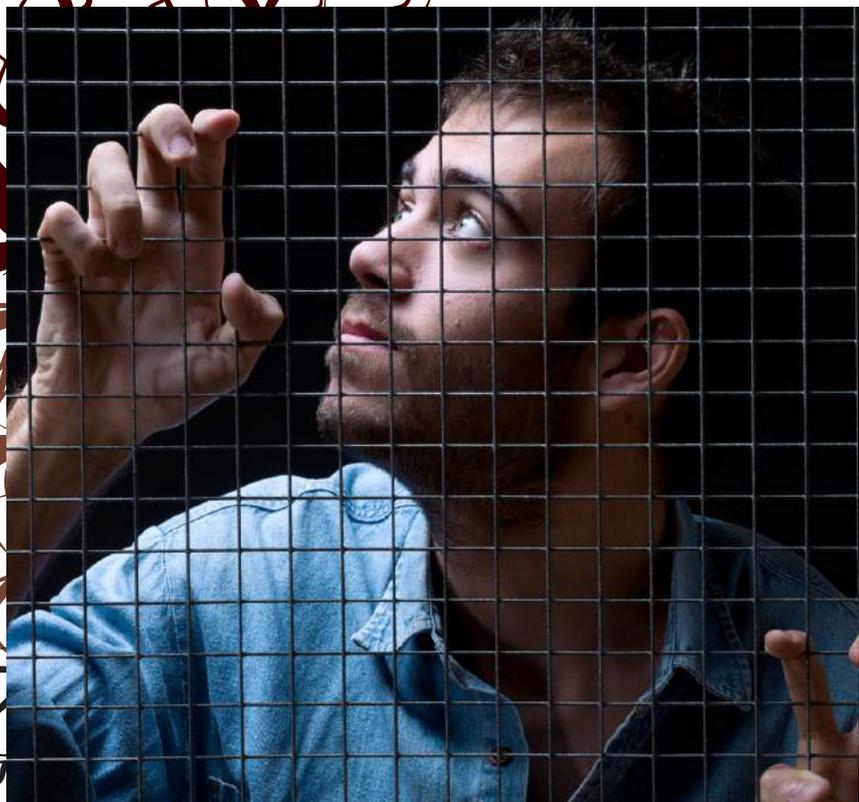
I never imagined that my sin would impact our marriage and life together, in the way that it did. I had a sexual addiction - an idol that began when I was around 14 years old. I saw a magazine at a friend's house, that led me to use pornography and lust as a means for pleasure, comfort, and plain idolization, for many years.

➔ This lifestyle is not one I wanted.

I did not know it then, but I was setting myself up for 30 years of problems, not just in my marriage, but my life as a whole. This lifestyle is not one I wanted. I wanted to have a pure marriage based on God's love, where my wife and I were faithful to each other and raised godly, Christian children. But, I was naive, lazy and selfish, and did not understand how serious this addiction could be, or how much of a slave it could turn me into.

➔ God was always with me...

I sought counseling for years and found momentary freedom every now and then. God was always with me, but I did not pursue a relationship that was deep enough, with Him, where I totally relied on Him daily, for the strength to fight against these sins. I thought that getting married and being able to be intimate with my wife would meet my needs fully, in those areas of my life and it would all just go away. I was making choices daily, not to offer myself as a living sacrifice to the Lord, but to pursue my selfish needs on my own.



➔ THE DISCOVERY

Our marriage entered its worst storm on February 3, 2021, when my wife discovered I was chatting with women online and via texting.

I was committing adultery to the letter, in exactly the way that Jesus spoke about it.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has committed adultery in his heart.” Matthew 5:27-28

I wasn't just looking at women lustfully...I was indulging in sexual conversations and even exchanged pictures. I also sent money to different women as gifts and in one instance, ended up being blackmailed out of \$1,000 as payment to one of the women, not to show my wife the pictures we had been exchanging. This discovery - combined with the years of pornography use, other chatting, lying, deceiving, and manipulating - led to my wife asking me to leave the house for a while. We separated.

I was devastated. And terrified. This was no longer something I could manage or control anymore. I was just a heaping mess and so was my wife. Our life together - that we had been working hard to build, was now, for all purposes, destroyed.

Remember how I said before that God had never left me? Wow, was that true! Thus began my journey as a Stander, though I would not formally call it that for the first six months or so at that point.

➔ I was done with my sin

Through faithful followers of Christ in my life and the Lord's leading, I was convicted and convinced to enter a 90-day intensive recovery program called Redemption House, in Minneapolis. I was done with my sin and the accompanying lifestyle, but I needed guidance to help me learn how to fully address that.

At the Redemption House, I was brought back to the Lord in a deeply passionate way that I had never known before. In Sheila's videos, she speaks about how she was finally able to tell God that she loved Him after six years in her stand. There, I was able to do exactly the same. I finally saw what it felt like to be so loved by God when all the junk was removed from my life. I had no means to pursue my sins there, as I had before - no phone, no internet, with constant accountability in constant brotherly love, acceptance, and with deep, rich, targeted counseling.

Hebrews 12:5-8

"And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: 'My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline and do not lose heart when He rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those He loves, and He punishes everyone He accepts as His son.'"

I was now living the way it is written:

verse 10-11

"but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in His holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are NOT disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons."

I was being disciplined by the Lord, but in a loving, gentle way. I was becoming more and more aware of how BIG God is and how small I was. I was learning that God is patient and kind, but He wants to make us holy, because He is holy and that is what's best for us.

➔ NOT DESTROYED



The devil offered me so many ways to try to fulfill my needs that were not best for me, that was destroying me; but I was not destroyed because God picked me up and cleaned me up.

I spoke in my intro about how I was a stander for my covenant marriage and described my journey back to God. Even though God eternally saved me when I was 16, He kept saving me throughout my life and has now done a marvelous work in me, so that I am free from addiction.

➔ My wife is on a new journey

My wife is on a new journey now. She filed and we have been divorced since Feb 1, 2022. I say to other Standers and some close friends, that she divorced me in the eyes of the world and the States of Indiana and Michigan. I cannot say that to her.

She is God's child, and I believe that wholeheartedly. I pray for her daily and have had many moments where I thought that because of what I'd done, I had no right to want my marriage restored. As I was told I needed to move on or let go, I struggled with God through prayer and His Word, to find where He had released my wife from our covenant marriage, and where His word told me I had to learn to let go.

Instead, I only found God telling me to stand for my marriage - He called me, not in a loud booming voice, but in a daily relationship, where He showed me who He is and what He stands for. He stood for me, when I barely thought I was worth anything, when I constantly asked Him to take my life, so the world could be rid of me. He kept telling me over and over that He loved me and that I was His child. Have you read what God has in store for His children?

"John 3:1-2 "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when He appears we shall be like Him as He is."

So, after reading many articles on www.marriagerevealedministries.com and other Stander websites and listening to hundreds of videos by Sheila and others, I am on the standing path. It's a narrow gate and a narrow road.



Matthew 7:13-14

"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."

I wrote down a list called "I STAND FOR MY MARRIAGE" (which aptly explains the title of my story):

1. Firmly – not wavering.
2. Humbly – without expectation or pride, but on my knees in prayer.
3. Quietly - with a listening and forgiving demeanor.
4. To be a good father – setting an example to my children of how highly I hold my vows.
5. With constant remembrance and acknowledgment - of the huge role I played, that led to the state my marriage is in today.
6. Keeping no record of wrongs – forgiveness constantly.
7. With my eyes pointed vertically toward God and His heart and what He can do.....NOT horizontally at my earthly circumstances.
8. Because I made vows to God and my wife that said, "for better or worse, until death do us part."
9. Because God said what He joined together, let no one separate.
10. Because my wife stood for our marriage for 15 years.
11. Because I unconditionally love my wife and because she is my family.

I encourage all Standers to make many lists like this. Don't just do it once - it can morph and change as God directs your path.

I hope my story helps inspire others who struggle with deep, strangling sin, to understand that God is not done with you....He is with you... He is right there....Just call out to Him!

I also hope my story can show others that God is calling you to stand for your covenant marriage. That is His heart!





The Root Of Pornography by Sheila Hollinger



Most people believe that pornography is rooted in sexual desire. That can't be furthest from the truth. When you understand roots, they are just an instrument used to seek out something-nourishment to sustain life. And that is all pornography is. Something a hungry root comes upon in its search for sustenance and finds a very temporary counterfeit.

God has DNA'd every man with the need to be looked up to, respected, needed, and validated as a man. He created them to lead their family, yet many men are not taught how to do this, especially if they have a wife that has not learned her role of helpmeet and how this role is to compliment her husband, not take over where he is falling short.

Men escape into pornography and become rooted and grounded into something which becomes an EASY food source instead of being rooted in the right Source~God! This is very typical of satan to produce a counterfeit that not only acts very close to the real thing, but offers even more hooks and snares to engage the senses and make one feel more pleasure than what was intended.

God intended a man to feel fulfilled and content in places that would build him spiritually as a child of God, as well as a headship over his home. Counterfeit sources that roots tap into provide not only temporary content that brings pleasure with the lust of the eyes and flesh but HUGE snares of the enemy to keep a person bound. These snares make a man feel helpless, which works the opposite effect; instead of building, it tears them down. This increases their need to feel better about themselves, so they engage MORE in the sin.

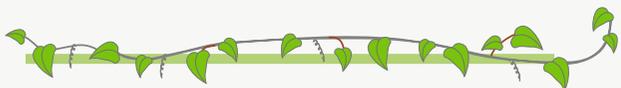
When you understand a tree and how it was created to send out its first set of roots to support the young tree. These are tap roots. They spread out to create stability and absorb nutrients to help anchor that new tree. They are meant to be temporary and REPLACED by the other roots that come along to bring REAL growth, real stability to the tree.

After the taproots come the lateral roots. These roots are there to grow outwards right under the soil surface. They absorb a lot of water and nutrients as well as anchoring the tree. These are the roots we can usually see as they hover at the surface. The roots we don't see, but are the most important are the **HEART ROOTS! Heart roots are a mixture of other important roots to create a core, ball, and center HEART system!**

These are the roots that God talks about in His Word. The roots that are meant to go DEEP and find Him as their source of everything needed to sustain them. Read what happens when roots find the RIGHT SOURCE!

When we are created in such a way to bear fruit, and we are not, our roots will go searching for things to help us. Hungry roots are known to destroy foundations as nothing stops them from finding water. In the last Revealed Magazine, we talked about how a soul can be hunger bitten from lack of spiritual nutrition, so hungry that it will come upon the bitter honeycomb and not care that it's going to lead them to destruction. As long as they are getting their needs met, they will take it. And again, what are those needs? Validation as a man that they are important, respected, needed, valuable and looked up to. All these things can be created in the fantasy of pornography. And that is why the snare is created and takes them captive.

Jesus says in **John 15, 1**"I am the true vine, and My Father is the keeper of the vineyard. **2**He cuts off every branch in Me that bears no fruit, and every branch that does bear fruit, He prunes to make it even more fruitful. **3**You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. **4**Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. Just as no branch can bear fruit by itself unless it remains in the vine, neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me. **5**I am the vine and you are the branches. The one who remains in Me, and I in him, will bear much fruit. For apart from Me you can do nothing.



16 May He grant you out of the riches of His glory, to be strengthened and spiritually energized with power through His Spirit in your inner self, [indwelling your innermost being and personality], **17**so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through your faith. And may you, having been [deeply] ROOTED and [securely] grounded in love, **18** be fully capable of comprehending with all the saints (God's people) the width and length and height and depth of His love [fully experiencing that amazing, endless love]; **19** and [that you may come] to know [practically, through personal experience] the love of Christ which far surpasses [mere] knowledge [without experience], that you may be filled up [throughout your being] to all the fullness of God [so that you may have the richest experience of God's presence in your lives, completely filled and flooded with God Himself]. **EPH 3:16-20 AMP**

Throughout the Word, God uses the word ROOTS in reference to not only trees, which He likens to people, but to the roots of our heart. KJV Bible has the word root in 19 books over 43 verses. That is a lot of references to roots for a reason. That doesn't even include pruning, sowing, harvesting, or the words planting, branches, or uprooting!

Many illnesses and problems with trees begin at the roots, the same with people. Roots have more complex jobs than we realize. In addition to providing water and nutrients to the tree, they also transport hormones throughout the tree, store carbohydrates, and produce compounds that regulate tree growth. The roots stabilize and anchor the tree. I found it interesting that roots also produce chemicals that alter the surrounding soil. Is that why bitterness in a person can be felt by all who come in contact with them?

The health and well-being of the tree depend all on the placement. God always places us to have access to good soil, so our roots can grow deep and find HIM, our source of living water. He doesn't hide Himself from us.

I had planted you like a choice vine from the very best seed. How could you turn yourself before Me into a rotten, wild vine? Jeremiah 2:21

He also provided us with roots, just like a tree that can go through blockades. That's right, roots can push right through obstacles that block their path in search of water. They have been known to break into pipes and destroy foundations. Roots have power to push through obstacles to get what is needed!

Just like a tree, the kind of nutrients a tree's roots tap into will reflect in the overall health and well-being as well as determine the fruit that is produced.

A heart full of sinful desires will send out roots to tap into things that feed the flesh. These are the things that God has to work on uprooting in us, as well as changing what our hearts love and desire, so He can teach us to trust in Him. This trust creates a confidence that TRANSPLANTS us.

Let's look at what God's Word says in Jeremiah 17.

1 "Judah's sin is engraved with an iron tool, inscribed with a flint point, on the tablets of their hearts. 5 This is what the Lord says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who draws strength from mere flesh and whose heart turns away from the Lord. 6 That person will be like a bush in the wastelands; they will not see prosperity when it comes. They will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives.



The Heart Root



FACT: Tree's carry hereditary, generational traits from the parent trees!

7 "But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. 8 **They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream.** It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." 9 The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? 10 "I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve."

A better understanding of this word PLANTED-(shathal) is TRANSPLANTED. Blessed is the one that trusts in the Lord because God will uproot and transplant them near a stream where they can send out roots to tap into Him. To never fear, never lack, never worry, wither and always, always bear fruit. I believe there is another scripture that talks about this very thing that says it will also provide shelter and shade to life around them.

Just like trees, we go searching deep for life-sustaining sustenance, and we go wide to anchor and bring stability. And what we find to draw from will alter the 'soil' around us as well as bring good or bad fruit that is shared with others.

Jesus explained in Luke 8, just how people that appeared to be following Him with JOY were easily led astray and fell away through temptation. He said if was for lack of FIRM ROOTS.

Those on the rocky soil are the ones who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and yet these do not have a firm root; they believe for a while, and in a time of temptation they fall away.

Luke 8:13

If you are not firmly planted in God, to where you are fully assured, confident, trusting and relying on Him, then at the first sign of trouble, the first offendable offence, the first personal pain, you will produce fruit out of the abundance of what you really are rooted in. If it's self, then fear, pride, and emotions will lead you.

What are you rooted in?

SHEILA



I've always loved C.S. Lewis' The Chronicles of Narnia. It's a cute story with adorable and relatable characters, set in a world with beautiful scenery and powerful Christian themes. I actually haven't watched the movie in years, but thoughts of its storyline came to mind, while driving to work this morning.

It's been another one of those emotional rollercoaster kinds of weeks with my lost spouse - the back and forth, coming and going, being affectionate and sweet...then pulling away again, which can leave you drained and weary. Family members and close friends see the pain I'm in and can't resist making statements like, "maybe God has someone else in mind for you," or "maybe it's time for you to move on and focus on yourself."

So there I am, driving to work, with my mind running through all the possible scenarios, with the heartfelt statements from my loved ones playing in the background, like calming elevator music. I realized I have two options - I can follow the logical advice given to me by so many, or choose to walk the path that currently looks like a long winding road, through treacherous terrain that could very well end at a cliff, because I can't see the end from where I'm standing.

That's the scary part, right...not knowing the ending?

I'm the kind of person that deliberately reads the last chapter of books because I can't handle the suspense or who searches for spoilers online for television shows I'm watching because I just HAVE to know how it ends.

Making the choice to go down the scary winding path, with no assurance of how it will end, causes me a lot of fear and anxiety...and maybe that's the point.

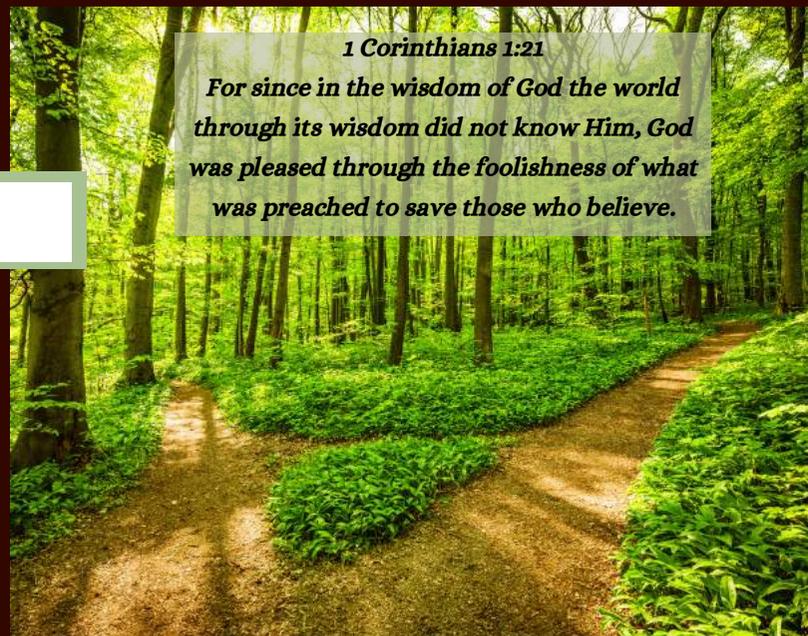
As I pondered my options, I was reminded of the concept of having "childlike" faith. That's when The Chronicles of Narnia came to mind, and particularly cute little Lucy, the youngest sibling.

Lucy was the first one to find Narnia and she was in love with this new world she had discovered. When she tried to tell her older siblings about it, they ridiculed her and laughed at her, even going so far as to say she was making it up. Lucy angrily told them she was not a liar and that Narnia was real! Not once did Lucy allow her siblings to convince her that what she experienced was not real, nor did she start to wonder if maybe it was all in her head, or just a weird dream. She knew what she saw and what she felt, and she was not going to let anyone, even those closest to her, tell her otherwise.

Now that's "childlike faith!"



But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 1 Corinthians 1:27



So now I'm back to contemplating which path to take - do I follow the advice of well-meaning friends and family, who just want to see me healing and happy again and who see my lost spouse as someone who may never change, but will continue to cause me pain? Or, do I go back to that feeling I had, that still small voice I heard, that stirring of my spirit, that peace in knowing?

Logic tells you to let go, move on - they will never change. Logic tells you to look to the world and worldly views, to help you make the best decision for yourself. It also makes you question if you really heard God, or if it was all in your head. Lucy's siblings tried to change her mind using logic too. Logic suggests Narnia was just a dream, or a result of her young, creative mind, imagining it all in a daydream. Without having experienced Narnia themselves, it was just too difficult for her siblings to believe that what she saw, heard and felt, was real.

FOLLOW GOD *not* LOGIC!

*Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe?
Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not
God made foolish the wisdom of the world?*

1 Corinthians 1:20

© REVEALED Standing for Marriage Restoration Magazine 2022

Like Lucy, we may have to choose to ignore the suggestions, ridicule and doubt from loved ones, because we know what we've experienced. The road ahead may look crazy and sometimes seem so impossible. We're tired, weary and have no idea how our story will end; but we do have one certainty, that God is with us every step of the way. I often repeat to myself the assurance God gave me, that He will never leave me, nor forsake me. No matter where I am, or how scary it seems, I know that He is right there beside me.

Genevieve



So let's choose to follow God, not logic. Let's choose to believe in the supernatural, rather than just what we can see in the natural. Think about it this way - what if Lucy had listened to her siblings? What if she concluded that maybe they were right, and it was all a figment of her imagination? She would have missed out on an amazing adventure with Aslan (According to the author, Aslan represents Jesus Christ) and the destiny he had for her. Worse still, if she had eventually come to the conclusion that Narnia and Aslan were not real and that it was all in her head, she would have missed out on that amazing relationship with someone who loved her immensely and had a great and wonderful plan for her. Not only did Lucy choose to believe what she saw, she was instrumental in leading her siblings to the same place.

On the day I meet Jesus face to face, I hope He will tell me that I too fulfilled my God-ordained destiny and hopefully brought a few people along with me!



16 I pray that from His glorious, unlimited resources He will empower you with inner strength through His Spirit. 17 Then Christ will make His home in your **hearts** as you trust in Him. Your **ROOTS** will grow down into God's **LOVE** and keep you **STRONG**. 18 And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His **LOVE** is. 19 May you experience the **LOVE** of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made **COMPLETE** with all the **fullness of life** and power that comes from God. Ephesians 3

ROOTBOUND

The term, "going around the same mountain over and over," is one many of us are familiar with. Mountains represent opportunity to climb and get to the top for a victory. While it's normal to do laps, it's not normal to be going around the same mountain year after year and never experiencing that victory stance we get to do when we make it to the top.

Part of the journey is getting to look back and see how far we have come, how much change, and progress we have made. But if you look back and see a well worn path that you have walked over and over, with no growth, change, or progress, the opposite effect can happen.

Instead of being encouraged, you can become defeated and have your hopes dashed. Instead of looking ahead with optimism, you can look forward with fear, dread, and the all-familiar "Why bother? I'm never going to get the hang of this and change."

Going around the same mountain means we are missing out on progression, maybe repeating a bad cycle, stuck in a bondage that keeps us looping around. We are not maturing, we are like a rootbound plant, stuck and confined by our 'stronghold.'

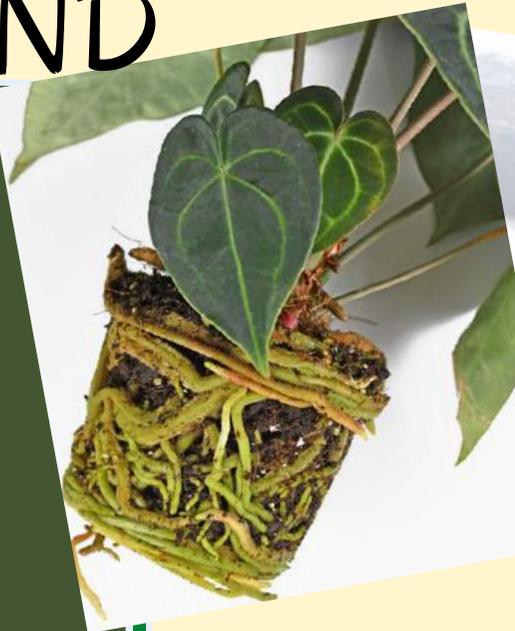
What is a rootbound plant and why is it so dangerous if left stuck in its current state?

A potted plant that becomes rootbound will have learned how to become accustomed to circling. It will learn this cycle is normal, KEEP CIRCLING, growing into itself, so when it's placed into a bigger container, or the garden, it won't spread out. Instead, this going around and around will hinder growth, choke itself, stop being nourished, and cause the plant to die.

To save the plant, a pruning of roots that believe it's normal to circle is needed to help force that plant to break out of the "cycle of circle" and spread out into fertile soil so it can grow and thrive.

People can do the very same thing. They can learn to be comfortable in sin, lack, and poverty. When they get blessed with more room to spread their roots, they can become very uncomfortable because they are not used to being valued and cherished. It makes them very uncomfortable to be given so much of the goodness of God.

This is where God's pruning comes in. And He doesn't just prune away what doesn't produce fruit. He will prune everything because He wants us to produce ABUNDANCE, as this will bring MORE glory to the Kingdom of God!



He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. John 15:2

Pruning is painful but necessary. The alternative is to self-destruct or to settle for living with much less than we are CAPABLE of producing. God knows and sees our potential.

He is not satisfied nor afraid of the pain that pruning brings. We, however, ARE afraid and very anti-suffering. This is why we are happy with the glass half empty when it could be overflowing! Embrace the pruning!

7 But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! 8 When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father. 9 "I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. John 15

Sheila Hollinger



There is no such thing as a

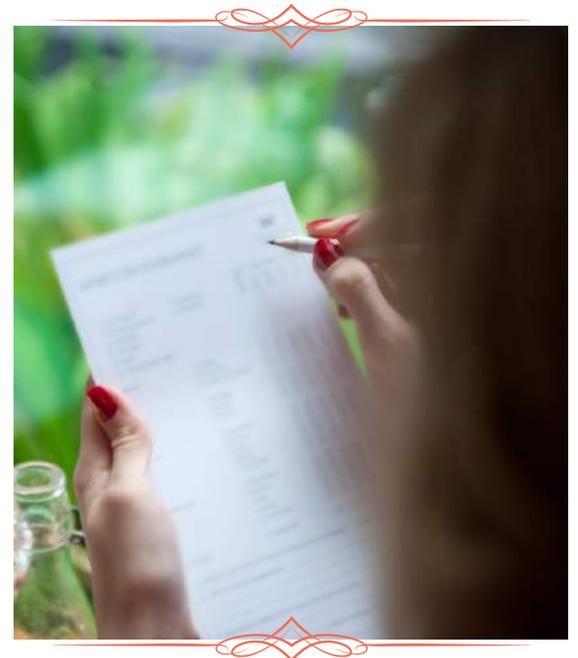


"We can't do it. We cannot expect ourselves to never react. We cannot beat ourselves up when we have emotions. Take the pressure off yourself." --Jennipher

I am a checkbox type of person. I make lists (physically and mentally) of tasks, then check them off. I had turned standing into a task...that became an obsession - an obsession to be perfect, so God would see how badly I wanted my husband home and my life turned back to normal or better. I understood the part of "having your own relationship with God," as the key. Once you got that, it was gonna happen! That was the key to unlock the devil's snare on my husband. But I kept reading from others that some still waited years after they "got good" for their spouse. So it must not be something to check off.

The daily tasks I HAD to complete were praying until I cried (because otherwise my heart must've been hard), reading ALL the devotionals and scriptures posted before getting out of bed, and walking on eggshells in my marriage. If I didn't check these off daily, I was failing, I expected God to take His hand off of me - I expected discipline or conditional love.

My prayers were honest. I would tell God I didn't want to pray, then I would still do it. Sometimes I didn't "feel it" but I felt it still needed to be done, to please God. Sometimes I would just read out loud from my spiritual warfare book (like a robot) and call it good. If I went to sleep without doing that.... Whoa. I had to come back in humble repentance the minute I woke up and beg for mercy.



Pray without ceasing

God knows our hearts, our minds. He tells us to pray without ceasing. What does that look like? I believe it is to humble your heart and just talk to God throughout the day. Don't just pray for your spouse and marriage. Pray about everything. I chastised myself because I couldn't stay on my knees for hours praying down the list I made in my mind. I felt like I couldn't go to God for menial things, unless I checked off another set of boxes. I was believing the lies and eventually I got tired and just stopped. If my prayers didn't bring out crazy emotions, tears, etc, they weren't honest or good enough - another lie I fell for.

Reading everything I could find in the morning was task number 2. I am on several mailing lists and prayer apps that will send things to my phone before my alarm goes off. I HAVE to read them daily, to check that box. Some are very long and I'd have to break it up throughout the day. No big deal. If I skip a day, my inbox piles up and I'm lacking teaching or wisdom gained. That must mean, I think I know it all, or my heart is hard for some reason and I reject God.....Just more lies.

Oh, the eggshells of a broken marriage... I hate them.



This is where I strived for the most perfection. I had a 'works based' faith in my heart. I know the scripture (my mind) that it's *"through faith and not works by which we are saved."* But my heart....that deceitful yet beautiful piece, we all struggle with. I had the most checkboxes in this area. Don't seem desperate by sending texts first. Don't get angry when you know he's with the OW and doesn't hide it. Don't show your pain when he leaves you to go see her, then

DON'T FEEL EMOTIONS. NEVER CRY AROUND THEM

comes back the next day. Don't say anything when he ghosts you and won't respond for several hours, until he's done with her for the week. Just take it. Don't feel emotions. You must smile when you see him. You must talk and act like you don't know what he was just doing. Never cry around him because then you manipulate. Never text him your feelings. Just be numb. Never feel the pain, otherwise you aren't being like Jesus.

This is a blatant lie! Jesus had emotions and felt them. He showed us righteous anger, sorrow, pain and heartache. He showed love. He felt things.

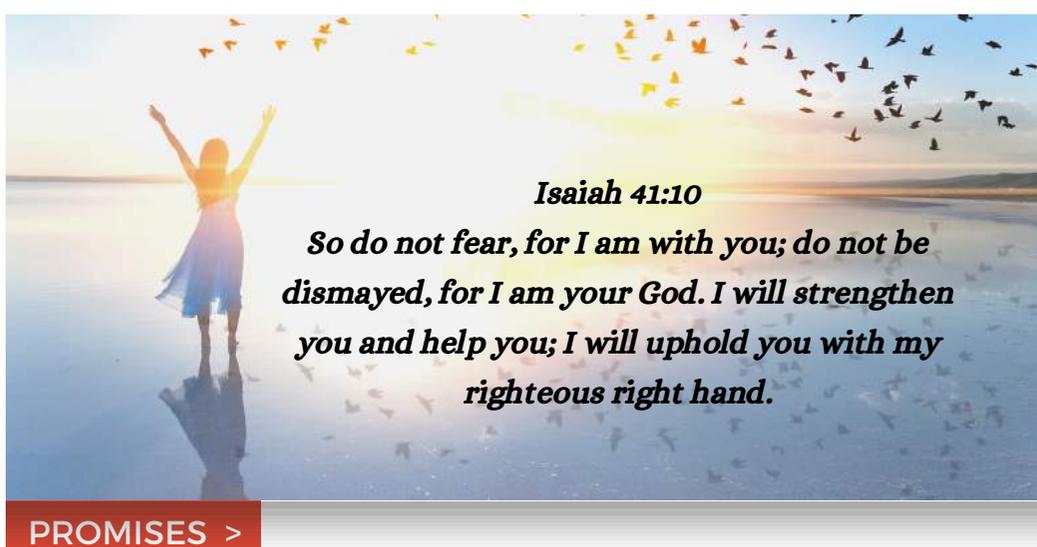
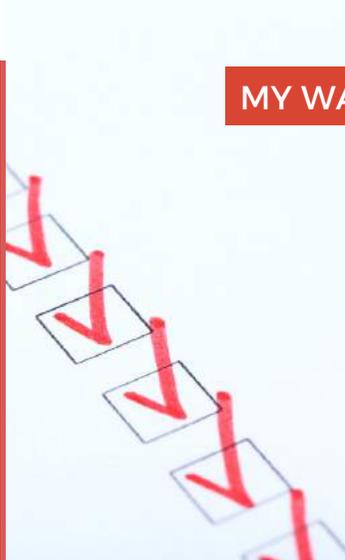
Why do we think we can't? I'm not saying blast all your feelings in a text to your spouse and unload all emotions. I'm not saying you should always have a comment, or look of anger and disapproval of your spouse when they come back around, after you know what they were just doing. What I am saying (and still learning) is that we're human with emotions. We must feel them to heal. We must go through the pain and anger to make it through victoriously.

The Bible says we WILL go through these hard places, but He will be with us. Some days I could check off the boxes easily and other days I would fail horribly and hate myself. I would get so depressed thinking there is no way I can do this. I was right - I CAN'T do this, but my GOD CAN!

MY WAY >

I TOOK A BREAK FROM RESTORATION TASKS.

I told God I couldn't continue this way anymore...my way. This lasted 2 weeks. I tried a different approach and thought process. The thoughts of whatever I do doesn't matter for my husband's sake. God's will won't change because of something I do or don't do. So I stopped reading everything the day it hit my inbox. I stopped reciting other people's prayers. I stopped walking on eggshells around my husband. I tried not to care. Boy, was Satan ready though. He sent another man speaking words I hadn't heard in years. He suddenly had all the women at work in my business. He had my husband meaner and more heartless than ever toward me. It was easy not to care anymore.



Isaiah 41:10

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

PROMISES >

THE THOUGHT OF MOVING ON WAS NOW CONSTANT

Then my emotions came up around our anniversary, and I remembered how much I care. I manipulated my husband's relationship with the OW. I texted her and ultimately made her leave him. Whether it was permanent or temporary, I didn't know. I just know he came home that night, which I didn't want, and they haven't talked since then. I was ready to print off his divorce papers and sign. I was ready to date the new distraction. I was ready to finally smile and not cry anymore.

*But one thing I
couldn't escape...
God's promise to me of
restoration.* 

TRUTH >

GOD DOES NOT LIE

I know in my mind, heart, and soul that our marriage will be restored someday. God does not lie. He finishes what He starts. I knew that whatever I did at this moment would be temporary. It would probably bring more pain to work through. More pain and lessons are the last thing I want to deal with.



Jennipher



God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it? Numbers 23:19

During a life coaching session, I was sharing the reasons I haven't been able to fully surrender control of my marriage to God. This question has been asked for 6 months and I've never had an answer until this day. It was fear. Yes, I was terrified! I was fearful that God was conditional with His love because that's all I've known in this life. I've had a fear that I'll never be perfect and measure up enough for God to do what He said He'd do. For the first time, though, I could feel the softness of grace. It was like God, Himself came and hugged me with the most gentle love possible. I didn't fear being chastised. It was more of a word to my heart saying, "it's ok that you've failed because I'm perfect, and I haven't." Suddenly the pressure was off. My heart felt light. I felt in my heart and soul that God was going to continue loving me, even though I will fail time and again in my flesh. My coach said she was getting a vision of how God wants to lead me. She likened me to a small child with her daddy. Daddy wants to dance with his daughter - she stands on daddy's shoes and lets him lead, while she just enjoys dancing. Full control is in daddy's hands and He holds on to His daughter. Finally, I feel like I can rest because God has got me.



© REVEALED Standing for Marriage Restoration Magazine 2022

CONSTANT >

I CAN'T BE PERFECT

I will never do all the right things, all the time. Standing is messy and looks different for everyone. The only constant is God. Let Him lead you. Take the pressure off yourself. Just be! I know how hard it is to get that in your head and heart. I've been trying to surrender for several months and just couldn't fully let go, no matter what I prayed or did. Just follow God's lead and He will get you there!

The only constant is God!





Hebrews 10:2

WHAT DID YOU PLANT WITH YOUR WORDS TODAY? ”

Heather Sloan Griffin

“For assuredly I say to you, whoever SAYS to this mountain, ‘Be removed and cast into the sea’, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he SAYS come to pass, he will have whatever he SAYS – Mark 11:23.



Growing up, I remember my dad was big about us not saying negative things. He always brought up Proverbs 18:21, which says, “Death and Life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.” If anyone said anything negative, he would immediately come back with the opposite, saying, “Well, I believe that IS NOT GOING TO HAPPEN” or “I do not agree with that”. Speaking the right words and negating the wrong ones was as serious to him, as not playing with poisonous snakes. There was no playing around with words!

To this day, I am the same way. When my kids pick on each other as siblings do, I am pretty strict and call them out if they say something negative, even though they are joking. Words are just too serious to me to let that happen.

God spoke everything we see into existence and gave us the ability to speak when He created us. He placed that same power in us to prophesy over our own life. Look at Ezekiel 37. (This is one of my most favorite chapters in the Bible). More than once in this passage, the Lord tells Ezekiel to prophesy and what to prophesy. He prophesies “as he was commanded.” When he prophesied in obedience to the Lord, things began to happen! Those slain lived. The dry, dead bones came to life.

What we see means nothing, as hard as that is to comprehend when things look so bad, but what we SAY means everything! This passage clearly shows us that what we say is greater than what we see.

Look at Luke 1 where Zechariah and Elizabeth are told by the angel Gabriel that they would have John the Baptist. Zechariah had a hard time believing it because he and his wife were old. Because of his response, the angel Gabriel told him he would be silenced until the baby was born. I can't help but wonder, was he silenced so he couldn't speak out any unbelief and doubt into the situation? Were his words stopped for the entire pregnancy because he couldn't be trusted with his words?

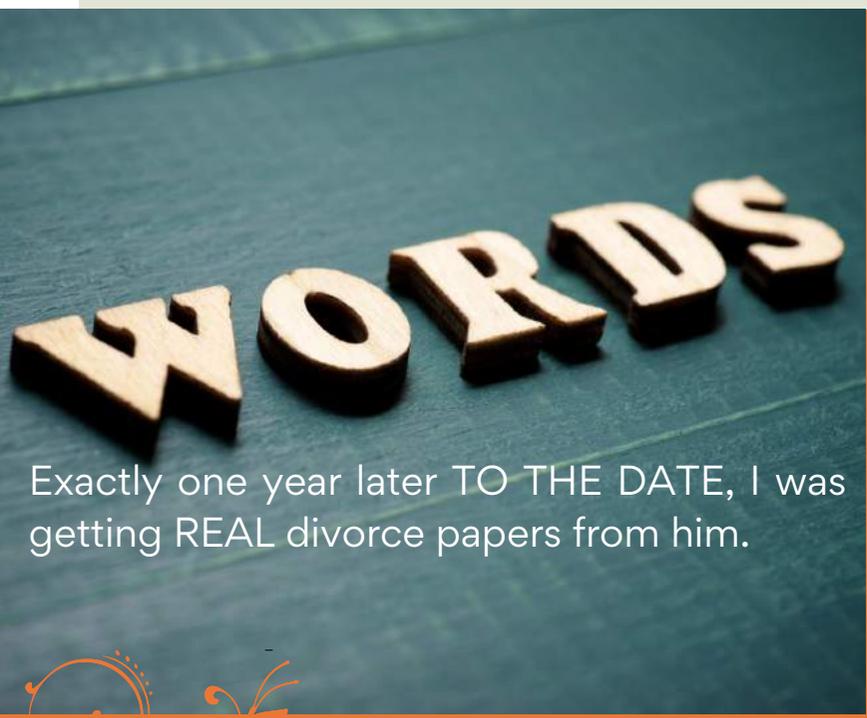
Again, words are powerful and potent.

When I began my stand in 2018, I went straight from Prodigal to Stander. This is no exaggeration. When I had my awakening and got right with God, immediately my heart was changed and I wanted my marriage back. I went to a counselor and a doctor for help, leaving with no hope. I knew I would need divine intervention and for God to step in, so I began to get people to pray. Thank God for them, because I had no confidence in my own prayers, let alone really knowing what to pray, or how to pray.

Being a prodigal for almost 10 years meant I hadn't prayed very much, or at all, that whole time. I hadn't even cracked my Bible open. It sat on a shelf neglected for years. My friend told me to listen to Rejoice Marriage Ministries. I came across the part where Charlene talks about the power of praying the Word and putting your spouse's name in the scripture. What could be more powerful than praying scripture? My first scripture was James 4:7, “Don submits to God and resists the devil and the devil flees from him.” This was the beginning of learning to pray effectively.

Even though I grew up in church and had even attended church the first 10 years of marriage, I don't remember hearing about praying the Word. Maybe I wasn't paying attention, or I didn't understand fully. People would say things like, “I'm standing on the Word” or “I'm standing on God's promises”. I didn't think too hard about what that meant. Prayer to me was trying to think of things to say to God and sending my requests up, hoping they would “stick”, like someone throwing pizza dough in the air and seeing if it would stick to the ceiling (I've seen that somewhere on tv).

The first few months of marriage, Don would have us get up and say “our confessions” together, with our notecards of scriptures. I honestly didn't realize what we were doing. It was just a religious act to me, trying to be more spiritual, while inwardly annoyed that he made me get up so early in the morning, when I could've been sleeping an extra hour before work.



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

When I finally went back to church, shortly after my awakening and starting my stand, my Pastor seemed to be teaching a lot on prayer that year, which was what I desperately needed to learn and hear. He emphasized the importance of finding scripture for your situation and praying that out. This was a huge revelation to me. I bought all the CD's from church each Sunday and listened to them all week on the way to work and really let the teaching sink down in my heart. I had to start praying the Word! The power of words plus the power of The Word - how could something not happen?

Index cards with scripture on them became my life. I searched the scriptures, wrote them all down and diligently began praying them daily. Eventually I bought a spiral bound little book of notecards that I could easily flip through. All cards were filled with scripture front and back! Every day on my short break at work, I would go to the bathroom, lock the door, get on my knees and whisper my scriptures.

Isaiah 55:11- So shall my Word be that goes out from my mouth, it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and I shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Though I found it extremely comforting to write out, read, and pray scriptures, I was not seeing ANYTHING happen in the natural realm except for things that seemed to get worse. I began to question: "was this even working?"

Hebrews 4:12- For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of the soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

On my second meeting with my Pastor and his wife, as I stepped into his office, they greeted me and he just stood there quietly for a second with his hands folded in front of him. He said, "Holy Spirit says your prayers are working. They are anointed. Don't stop." I was completely shocked to hear this! Things looked so bad on the outside. Honestly, it was a little hard to believe and I wanted to say "Are you sure?", but I knew he definitely hears from God and could trust what he said. That word gave me the motivation to keep going.

Months of praying went by, but things got worse and it was getting harder to believe for my marriage and continue to stand. My husband still insisted he wasn't coming home, he did not love me, we were getting a divorce...then I found out he was dating, then lawyers got involved and a custody agreement was put in place. It was not as simple as praying and then living my life every day. When I was not praying, I was in a boxing match with my emotions, fears and worries - constantly trying to fight them off. It was an all out war to stay in faith and believe that restoration was possible.

Honestly, I was very discouraged. I had done what Kenneth Hagin preached about and found 3-5 scriptures in the Bible that were about my situation and stood on them. I had done what my Pastor's wife had said and confessed many times, "Nothing shall separate me from my husband, not even Don himself." I had done what my Pastor and Charlene Steinkamp said and prayed scriptures. I did what Karen Wheaton did when her daughter was a prodigal and stood on my porch, yelling out "Don! Come home!" (It felt so foolish and stupid at the time). All my scriptures were taped up in my bathroom and in my car.



What was I doing wrong?

While I still believed in the power of words, what I was seeing and feeling in the natural, was starting to overpower me. At the beginning of 2019, my husband said he wanted to work things out! Finally! A breakthrough to my prayers. My breakthrough only lasted a weekend and he decided we were not getting back together by Sunday evening. That was when I threw in the towel. I was no longer going to direct my words and scriptures at our restoration anymore. The false start had hurt way too bad and I couldn't do that again. I made plans to get divorced and just go on with my life. I assumed God had been telling me no and I had been in denial about restoration. As you can see, my feelings, emotions, and reasoning left me in a world of confusion and overpowered me by this point.

One night at our Church's Wednesday night C-group meeting in a friend's home, my friend brought up Psalm 103:20-21, "Bless the Lord, O you His angels, you mighty ones who do His Word, obeying the voice of His Word! Praise the Lord, all his heavenly hosts, you His servants who do His will." This hit me hard! I remembered someone saying to me that the angels were standing before us with hands cupped, ready to take the words we speak out and do them. This became an even deeper revelation to me about the power of words. A boost and a reminder. I was ready to get my scriptures back out and fire away...in all areas except for my marriage.

My church had a list of scriptures they pray out about different areas, such as our children, salvation, finances, worship, etc...I had those papers stapled together and added my own scriptures to the back of them. One list was about finding a godly husband, not Don of course, because I was done with him. (Did I mention I was not a good stander?) I had a list of scriptures for health, moving on, another list for my children, anxiety, and supplying needs. I began speaking those on the way to work and would not eat breakfast until that was done first. I also began prophesying things over Don. That his ungodly relationship was destroyed. That anything in his life not of God was destroyed (because this was hurting the kids). I spoke it and spoke it and spoke it. I mentally envisioned the words coming out of my mouth and going out to happen. I spoke it until I believed it and felt it kick me in the stomach. Not just speaking aimlessly. Speaking on purpose. Who knew that a few months later, my husband would come home and repent. Truly repent. All the prayers from the beginning I saw answered. All the things I spoke out, I saw done. (Yes, that relationship was destroyed! And all the other ungodly friends were removed out of his life, all alcohol and smoking terminated, all wrong belief systems destroyed as well). If you speak the Word, don't be surprised when you see it happen.

Psalm 103:20-21, "Bless the Lord, O you His angels, you mighty ones who do His Word, obeying the voice of His Word!"

God's Word doesn't quit even if we do! All the scriptures I spoke out about a godly husband, I now see in my husband!

The most important thing to remember is that words are seeds. Seeds are first planted under the soil where we can't see them and it seems like day after day there are no results, even though we have been watering them diligently. Seeds stay in a dark place for a while. Then storms pop up and even take away the sun for a period - but one day a tiny sprout appears. Soon there are blooms and beauty - everything that was planted becomes visible!

Envision every word you speak as a seed. If you don't want to grow it, don't sow it! If you do want to grow it, then sow it! Speak those words, water it with the Word, and you will see it manifest at some point. "Believe it with your heart; say it with your mouth. That is the principal of faith. You can have what you say." - Kenneth E. Hagin

Heather

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

“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

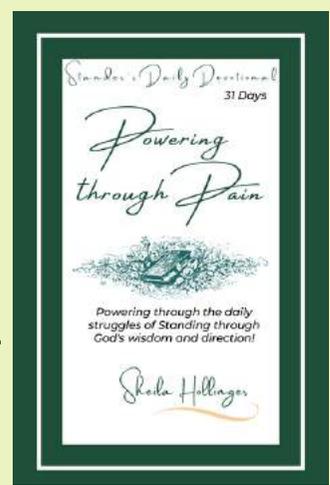
NO.....
 it's not too late
 you're not too old
 and it's not too
 impossible!
 God always finds a way
 ~always!

“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!
 Joe, NC

Ebooks!

marriagerevealedministries.com

By Sheila Hollinger



Stander's Daily Devotional

Powering through Pain

Powering through the daily struggles of Standing through God's wisdom and Direction.

Destined to Stand

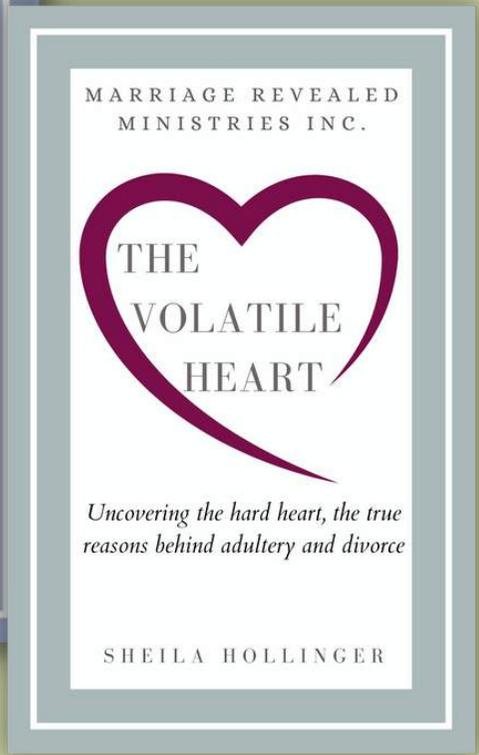
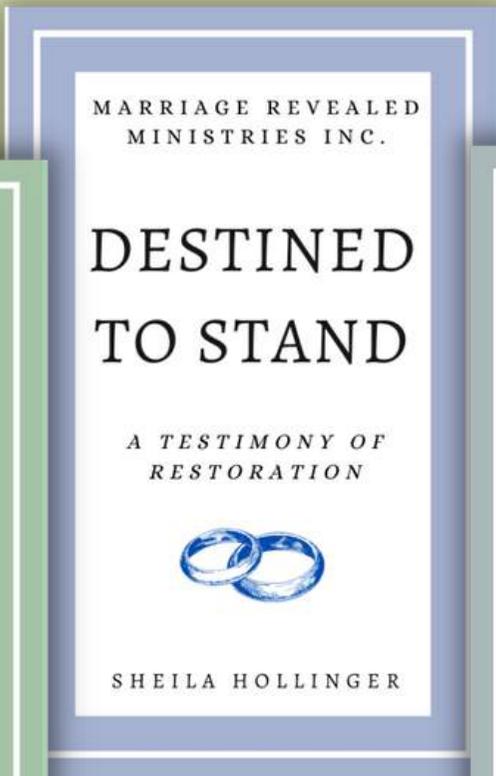
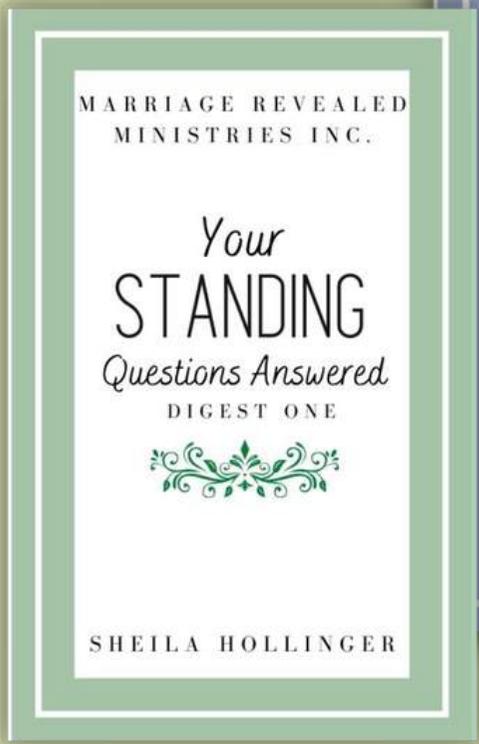
Sheila's personal restoration testimony

Your Standing Questions Answered

Answers to the most asked questions by Stander's.

The Volatile Heart

Uncovering the hard heart, the true reasons behind adultery and divorce.



LESSONS LEARNED THROUGH THE STORM

MY STORY PART THREE- LYNDA CASTLEBERRY



Bible
Study

Every morning when I awoke, my thoughts would go immediately to my situation and I would begin crying. I cried every single day, but in spite of my tears I knew I had to still get up and go to work. After returning home from spending nine weeks with my father I found a job as a baker in a small local bagel shop, which meant that I went to work at 3 AM each morning to get each day's product baked and on the shelves by 6 AM. It also meant that I was alone in the shop until 5 AM with nothing but my own thoughts to keep me company. I have found that most people don't like solitude for long periods of time, but I am one of those who do, and once I learned the mechanics of the job, I fell into a rhythm that let me pray, talk with God, quote my favorite Bible verses aloud and play worship music, singing along. Any time I was alone at home, I would do the same. I felt strengthened by hearing myself verbalize my thoughts and prayers.



Another thing I did was when someone would ask me how things were going, I would tell them it was well and God was bringing my husband home. Most of the time people would look at me like I had lost my mind. I found that most people did not genuinely care about me. They only wanted to bring gossip, something they heard or saw, or what they thought they heard or saw. I learned quickly to tell them thank you for their concern, but I did not want to hear their stories. It amazed me how many people that I hadn't seen in months would just happen to come in to the bagel shop to make sure they could share the latest scoop. Most of that died off when they could not get a response from me. Before you think me some kind of saint, you have to know that this was a process I learned. I had a prayer partner that encouraged, mentored, and supported me. She was a wonderful mature woman of God and a gift from the Lord.

“The Power of the Spoken Word”

Why is speaking out loud so powerful?

When we verbalize thoughts, our vocal cords vibrate to produce sound. The sound travels out and to the ears of a listener. These sounds are processed by our brain. Speaking out loud engages different parts of our brain; the same goes for hearing.

Verbal speech creates energy. Our best example of this energy is in Genesis 1, the creation account. Have you ever really stopped to think about how He did it? We read, “And God said...” over and over. The Bible doesn't say He thought it. He SPOKE it, physical energy! We are created in His image, so why would our physical speech be any different? True, we don't have the unlimited power God has to create life, but speech has the ability to stir us to believe and act on that belief. The more we say or hear the spoken words, the more they sink in.

There is a spiritual side to this also. Hearing causes believing, which then raises our faith. When our faith rises, belief strengthens, when belief strengthens, faith strengthens, and the cycle continues. We begin to align ourselves in the will of God.

Romans 10:17 says, “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”

Encourage yourself and speak your words aloud. Speak those Bible verses that bring you comfort and hope. Speak POSITIVE words when you talk with others. As the song by TobyMac says, “Speak life.”

Verses for Further Study and Contemplation

Genesis 1:3

Romans 10:17

Hebrews 4:12

Proverbs 18:21

Matthew 12:37

Restoration Spotlight Testimony



Curtis & Kim
Kittel 

I was a Stander for 11 ½ years. It is remarkable what God has done in my life during this time. So let me start at the beginning...

My husband is from Illinois originally, and in June 2010, he left our marriage. We only have one daughter within our union and the separation devastated her; it devastated my parents and family, as we had been married for 30 years at the time and it was a shock to everyone.

Around the same time, we were also facing bankruptcy, losing our home, and our business and our lives were turned upside down - the rug had literally been pulled out from under us!

I was at my wits' end and cried out to God, telling Him I could not do this on my own. I was not saved when this happened - I knew of God, but I did not have a relationship with Him. My sister, who is a Christian and had been praying for me all along, introduced me to her friend whose marriage had been restored after 5 years (a fact I wasn't aware of at the time).

She invited me to a church - one I had coincidentally thought of visiting, as I passed by it. We met at church the following Sunday and when I sat down in the sanctuary, I felt at home. Through the years, I had been searching for something and now I was looking for answers on whether to leave my husband, or stand for my marriage. While in church, I just got this feeling like I was being told not to do anything rash. Four weeks after my husband left, I felt like I was being told the marriage was not over and he would return. I got this overwhelming excitement in my heart, not really understanding what this meant and I went into denial that restoration would be a possibility.

***I can do all things
through Christ who
gives me strength.***

Philippians 4:13



Starting my walk with the Lord helped me realize I needed to be healed, first and foremost. At that time, I attended a "celebrate recovery" meeting at church. I also sought a Christian counselor, which began my real walk with the Lord. As I was beginning the transformation within, the friends I was hanging out with began to go to church with me, and some even got saved! All of this change did not seem acceptable to my mother. For three years, she did not speak to me. During this time, I knew that the Lord would fix all of this and that many more people would end up being saved.

I had abandonment issues, but while participating in the biblically based, 12-step program of "Celebrate Recovery," God began to peel back the layers as I began to find out where my issues started. I discovered that I had unconsciously gravitated towards marrying someone who had a personality like my mother, even though, most often, women tend to be attracted to men who resemble their father.



We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy, ~Colossians 1:11

In 2011, while standing for my marriage, my husband returned in January that year to help when my daughter's car broke down. He stayed with me and worked on her car. I thought this was the start of restoration, but it was a false start.

During this time, she lost her job and wasn't getting along with her roommate. She applied for a job in Illinois and got an offer, so she decided to move back to Illinois with my husband.

March 1, as I watched my husband and daughter pull out of the driveway and leave, I remember saying, "Lord, you have some work to do - not only in me but also in him."



During this time, my mother-in-law and I stayed connected and she had been praying for us, as a “silent supporter.”

My daughter leaving was difficult, as I had no family with me, except my sister, who supported me 100% in my stand. She told me if I believed God had spoken to me, then I should "stand my ground". I learned through the years, in my walk with God, first, that you must know His Word, trust Him, and have faith. Secondly, I had to accept God's will - if He decided not to bring my husband back and it was only me and God, then that is the relationship God is looking for. It took me a long time to let go and let God. In my walk of faith, as my trust in God increased, I never initiated any conversation and I did not pursue my husband; I just let it go unless the Holy Spirit lead me to take a step forward.

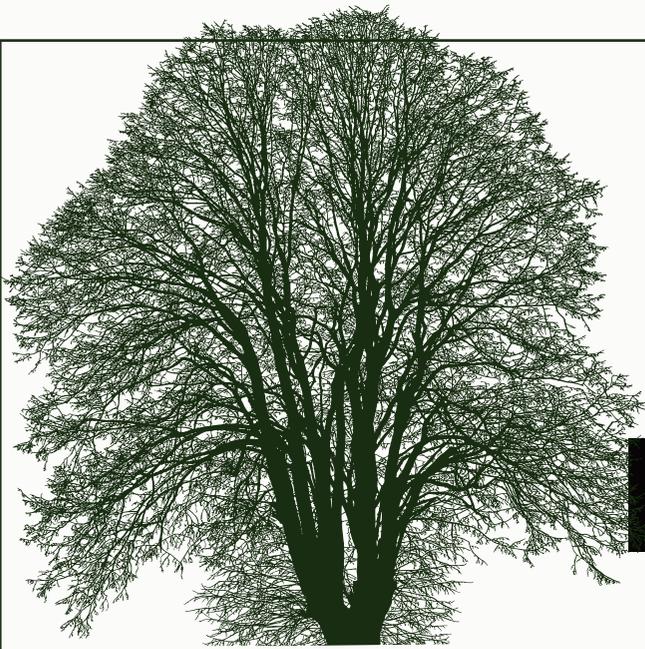


Three years later, in December 2014, God moved on my mother's heart. My sister asked if I would meet up with my mom, and the very next day, my mom and I met, we talked, I humbled myself, and we made amends. In January, my mom started going to church with me and enjoyed it. She went to a women's retreat with me and gave her life to Jesus. In April of 2015, my mother found her own church to attend, and then the Lord took her home in November. I learned that we are ultimately just a piece of the bigger puzzle, and we do not know what else is involved in God's plan.

In 2014, my daughter came for a visit during school break. She was so very sad and broken due to some trouble she was in at nursing school, and was facing the disciplinary board upon return. She was scared and I invited her to go to church with me. The Lord spoke to her heart and in gratitude, she gave her life to the Lord while she was out visiting. She went home with a better mind and heart. The Lord watched over her and she was placed on probation. She grew in the Lord and graduated with an offer of employment at a great hospital in her area.

In 2016, during my daughter's wedding, I came face to face with the "other person" and that was hard. However, when my husband and I were putting up decorations for our daughter's wedding, it felt like "a glove that fit" and we realized we worked well as a team. Through this period, my husband never divorced me - he even kept his car on my insurance, and we shared a joint account.





I had a roommate at that time, and she stated that she was sitting in her room studying and reading when she too “felt a shift” and heard it was time to “move out” and said, “he is coming home to you.” In April, my roommate moved out, and I felt like I needed to get the room ready, so I picked out everything, a bed, and dresser, and used my husband's favorite colors. In June, my husband began calling more often. I surprisingly got my first gift from him, but I did not pursue him.

Then it was quiet for two months.

I journaled daily and wrote my prayers down for the things I wanted. The word of God says, “*come to Me boldly,*” so I did. When I had my pity parties, I would cry and stomp up and down, wondering, “when will it be my time for my marriage to be restored?” I realized it is always in the Lord's timing, not in my time, so I had to learn to accept it.

Moving forward in 2021, I sold our other house, and I was able to buy my current home. In a place I always wanted to live in - a 55+ mobile home park. When I moved into this home, I knew that my husband would like it too because it was something we both wanted.

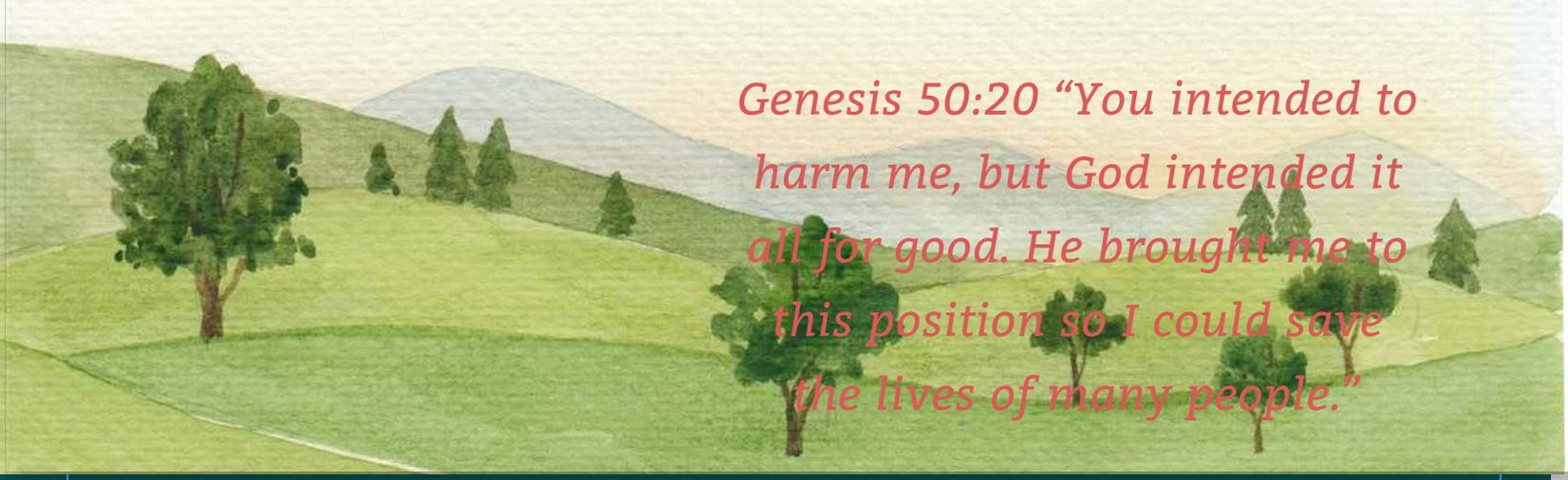
On New Year's Day, 2022, my husband called, which was unusual. We talked for a long time. He pointed out that I was the first one to wish him a Happy New Year, and I was surprised. I have been careful to never ask any questions except enquire about his work. He would usually call and ask if he owed me money since I was paying the car insurance. Two weeks later, he called again, and the conversation got a little longer.

I had to go to Illinois to visit my second grandchild, as COVID kept me from meeting her when she was born. I decided to visit at Christmas. My daughter wanted me to take a bus from the airport to her city but didn't realize the bus did not run that route any longer. She suggested I take a taxi from one airport to the other airport, and my son-in-law would pick me up there. While waiting for his arrival, I decided to call my husband. He had moved back in with his mom during the summer to be a full-time caregiver as her dementia progressed. During this time - as he was caring for his mom during the day and spending his evenings moving his things out of the garage of the other woman's house, where he had lived previously - he was barely getting any sleep and was exhausted.

In fear, my daughter had mentioned earlier that it looked like my husband was also “losing his mind”. She wanted me to sell my home and move to Illinois to take care of my mother-in-law so that my husband could move into her home. I believed, as his wife, I should be the one taking care of him. I reassured her we would all sit down and figure it out when I was there. I enquired with my husband about his memory and he mentioned being exhausted, because he had been unable to get a good night's sleep in 3 weeks - it was a big mess. He had asked if I would be coming by, but I said I would not be able to, until we returned from the ski trip my daughter had planned.



A few days later, as I was walking through my house, I felt a shift in my spirit, and I heard “get ready.”



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."

My son-in-law finally picked me up at the airport. It was great to see my grandchildren. The next thing that happened was that my daughter called screaming, asking me "what did you say to daddy?" She said that her dad had called her and was very angry that she was accusing him of "being crazy." She was very upset with me and had my son-in-law take me directly to my mother-in-law's house, to help care for her, while she was on the ski trip. I had barely seen my grandchildren, but she felt that now her dad would ignore her calls and wanted to be sure her grandma was cared for properly. I ended up staying with my husband and mother-in-law.

We got through Christmas Eve and on Christmas Day, my MIL, in a rare moment of clarity, recognized me and was happy to see me. A few days later, while helping to care for her, we talked about her being placed in a care facility so she could get the best care. I told my husband that he was welcome to come to California and we just kept talking about that idea.

However, I am careful to navigate and understand his mindset, as it is often said that when our husbands or wives come home, they will be broken, and they will not be the same. I have asked my husband why he didn't divorce me and he said he didn't want to - he didn't want to be tied down, but didn't want to let go either.

The next day he said "Yes," and said that he wanted to reconcile.

My husband left with me the following Friday, January 9th, after we settled his mom into a care facility. As we flew home together, he said to me, "you do not know how much you saved me; you saved my life!" I reminded him that it was God who saved his life. It is a blessing that he was willing to go to church, to get a better understanding of his walk with God. Unfortunately, our daughter has been unsupportive, estranged, and resentful. I know God will fix this. I know she will eventually come around to accepting her bad behavior and understanding its impact.

Who would have known things would have turned out this way. I had only gone to Illinois to babysit and it led to the restoration of our marriage, because of what turned out to be our daughter's hardened heart. I feel the best thing people can do is get support with someone who encourages your stand, or another Stander, because this journey gets lonely. I had a friend from church who supported me through this journey. Yes, God is there and you are not alone, but the truth is you do get lonely, because you are used to going places and doing things with other people. I learned to take myself to the movies, or sit at a restaurant and eat by myself and I always made it a point to celebrate our anniversary.

11 ½ years later...here we are - my husband wears his ring and has stated he will never leave the marriage again.

In the end, I learned how to live life; I learned to accept it, if it was what God wanted me to do. Through this entire period I never went "without"; God always provided. His Word states that the shepherd leaves the ninety-nine sheep to go after the one. Know that God will pursue!

Kim

Psalm 119:105

*“Your **WORD** is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”*

Proverbs 15:4

*“Gentle **WORDS** bring life and health; a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.”*

Proverbs 16:24

*“Kind **WORDS** are like honey – sweet to the soul and healthy for the body.”*

Proverbs 18:21

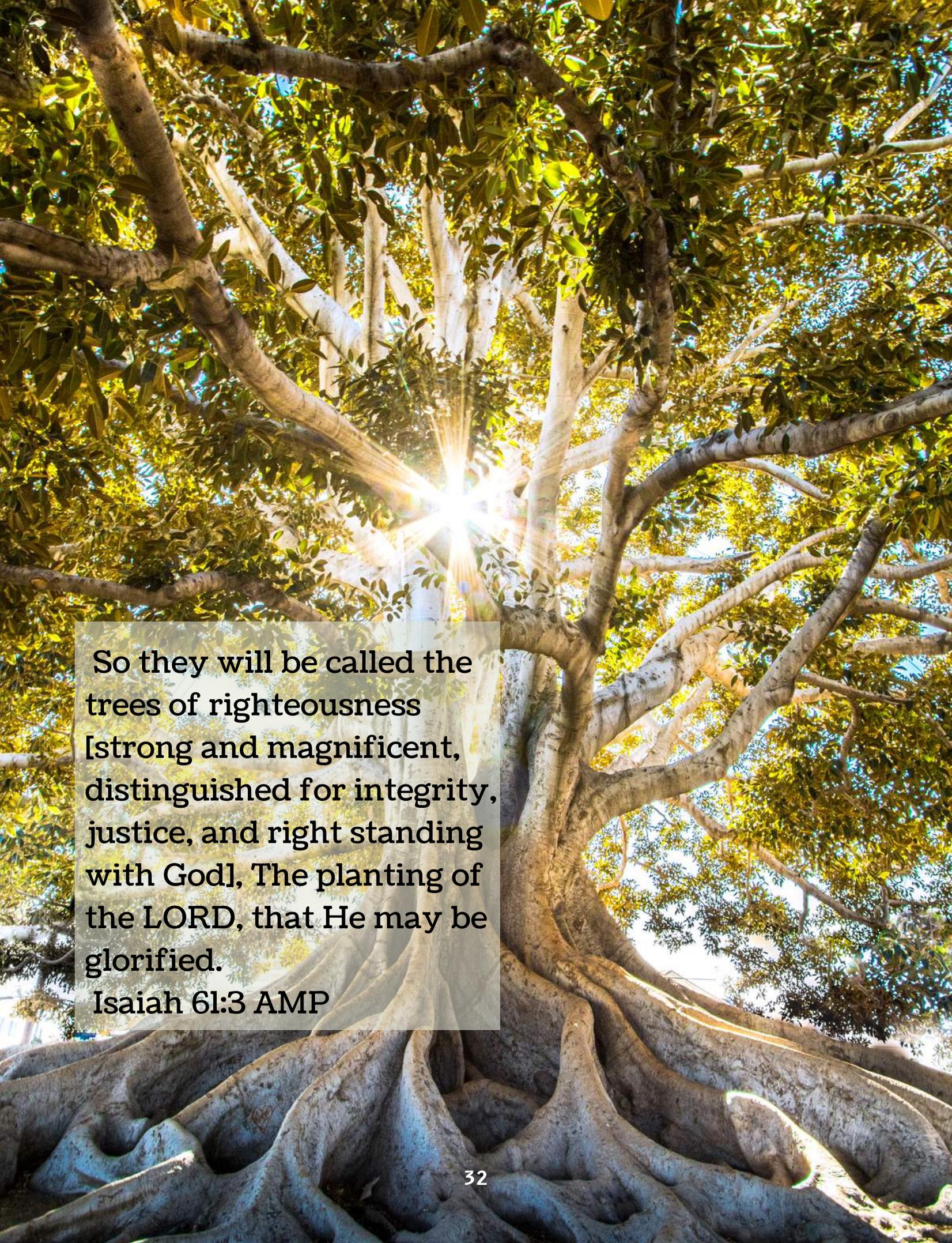
*“Death and life are in the power of the **TONGUE**, and those who love it will eat its fruit.”*

Proverbs 18:4

*“A person’s **WORDS** can be life-giving water; words of true wisdom are as refreshing as a bubbling brook.”*

Proverbs 12:18

*“There is one who speaks rashly like he thrusts of a sword, but the **TONGUE** of the wise brings healing.”*



So they will be called the trees of righteousness [strong and magnificent, distinguished for integrity, justice, and right standing with God], The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

Isaiah 61:3 AMP



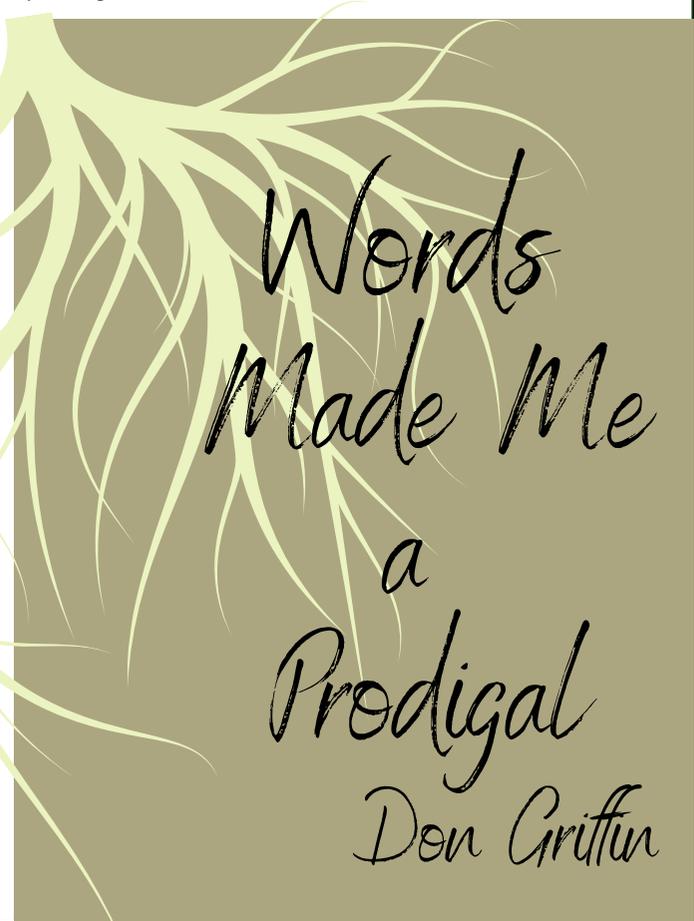
The same way the Word of God will build us up, the word of this world, the whispers of doubt, unbelief and words of bitterness and anger, will also lead one away from the Gospel, from Christ and ultimately can lead to a state of prodigal living. In this place of prodigal living, marriages and families are destroyed. This is what happened to me and what led me into prodigal living. I allowed the voice of this world, the words spoken over me as a child, the words of doubt and unbelief to swallow me up and lead me away from the Word of God and from the faith. It is the Word of God that builds up our faith, that strengthens us in our walk with Christ and that holds our families and marriages together. Once we stray from His Word, neglect feeding upon His Word daily, then the foundation of our lives will start to crumble a little bit at a time.

A prodigal is often bound up in the words of the enemy. Their past speaks over them, often their own spouses, who are hurt, have spoken false images and identity over them. They listen to the words of doubt and unbelief, to the words of anger, hurt, bitterness, and the voice that whispers to them that life is a terrible travesty to have happened to them. It is words that speak to them that it's too late, they have gone too far, that there is no way back. They are words of the enemy and are lies. It is also the Word of the Gospel of Christ that will lead them out of the prodigal land.

Words are powerful, in that they are the language of the Spirit. They are the articulation of the imaginations of the heart. Words also form the imaginations and thoughts of the heart. Think about what a word is. It is an idea, an image, or a concept. Words communicate life or death. Words are what form our identity and shape us from the womb.

The words our parents spoke over us growing up, often follow us into adulthood and whisper incessantly within our conscience and in the subconscious mind. There are damning words my dad spoke of me as a small boy, that still ring within me now as a 45-year-old man. If a parent speaks negatively over a child, tells them they are worthless, no good, will never amount to anything, that is the image a child will take for themselves into adulthood and may spend a lifetime breaking that image and identity off of them. Some never break its hold and unfortunately become what was spoken over them.

The words that we speak, the words that we receive from others, the words we meditate on, will ultimately define who we are. Words are tied up into our identities and form the very fabric of our being. This is why it is so important, as Christians, that we come to know God's Word and what His ideas, image and concepts of us are. His Word supersedes the words this world has spoken over us. We are made in His image, if we are born of God in Christ Jesus. We must grow into the image of Christ and that is done by meditating in His Word, choosing to believe His Word over the words of doubt, unbelief, and the words that your parents or spouse have spoken over you. We must form a new imagination of the heart, as to who we are.



The Word of God talks about the imaginations that exalt themselves above the knowledge of God (2 Cor 10:5). The imaginations are formed by words, and they will become strongholds if they are entertained in your mind. When you meditate on these words of evil imaginations that whisper the doubt, unbelief, the anger and hurt, then a stronghold is formed.

A root of bitterness often rises up and cuts the life of God off in a person's life. The words become a prison woven out of darkness and confusion. This is what happened with me, and the process of this type of fall and bondage is usually a gradual falling away, and it all starts with words that ferment in the mind and then manifest into reality, that bring in destruction in all areas of one's life. The stronghold builds up in your mind and then you become its prisoner. It warps your identity and torments you relentlessly day and night. It is often why people run off with another person, or fall into drinking, drugs, or become consumed with their work. They are trying to escape the stronghold of pain that is built by those words.

It is words that build the strongholds and words that tear strongholds down. It is words that build up a false identity and words that build up an identity in Christ. It is words that lead us to forgiveness, to submission to God, reveal the glorious gospel to us, and open our eyes to truth and set us free. We need to pray the Word of God over our spouses, over our children and over ourselves. We need to meditate on His Word, and know who we are in Christ. We need to know that we are free from sin, that we are loved and that God has a purpose and plan for our lives. We need to pray that God would send laborers across the path of our prodigals that can speak the word of the gospel over their lives and into their hearts.

Be mindful of words. Take care of the words you speak, the words you think upon. Do not receive the words of this world, or the negative words that have been spoken over you, that try to drag you down and make you feel worthless. Trust in the Word of God above all other words! --Don Griffin



37 "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest." Matthew 9:37-38

"Evil words destroy one's friends; wise discernment rescues the godly. Proverbs 11:9

Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or turn away from them. Proverbs 4:5



ROOTS

Ezekiel 17

22 "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will take a branch from the top of a tall cedar, and I will plant it on the top of Israel's highest mountain. 23 It will become a majestic cedar, sending forth its branches and producing seed. Birds of every sort will nest in it, finding shelter in the shade of its branches. 24 And all the trees will know that it is I, the LORD, who cuts the tall tree down and makes the short tree grow tall. It is I who makes the green tree wither and gives the dead tree new life. I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do what I said!"

Matthew 13:32

Although it is the smallest of all seeds, yet it grows into the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches."

Mark 4:32

But after it is planted, it grows to be the largest of all garden plants and puts forth great branches, so that the birds of the air nest in its shade."

Luke 13:19

It is like a mustard seed that a man tossed into his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches."

Psalm 80:8

You uprooted a vine from Egypt; You drove out the nations and transplanted it.

Psalm 92:12

The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You for exposing the roots of anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness in my heart. Thank You that You didn't allow me to keep watering these places in my heart but that with a gentle, firm hand, You pulled these out by the roots, making room for Your love to be rooted and grounded in my heart.

Lord, just as You have done for me, thank You that You will do the same for my spouse. I give You all praise that they, too will be rooted and grounded in Your love.

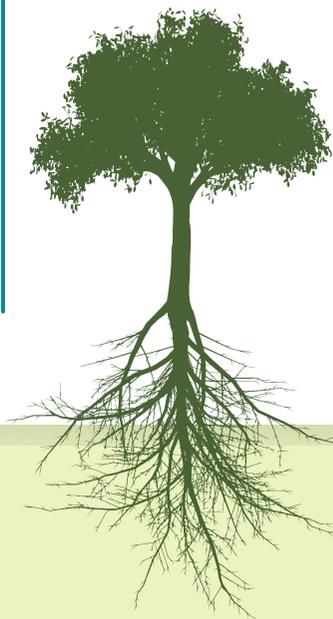
Over the years, many seeds have been planted in my spouse's heart that have caused anger, hate, discouragement, unforgiveness, and condemnation to take root in their heart. These have tried to suffocate Your truth, Your love, and forgiveness. Thank You, Lord, for Your firm and gentle hand that will uproot all these that cause Your truth to be covered up. Breathe life into the heart of my spouse.

Thank You, Jesus, for Your roots of love in both my spouse and I.

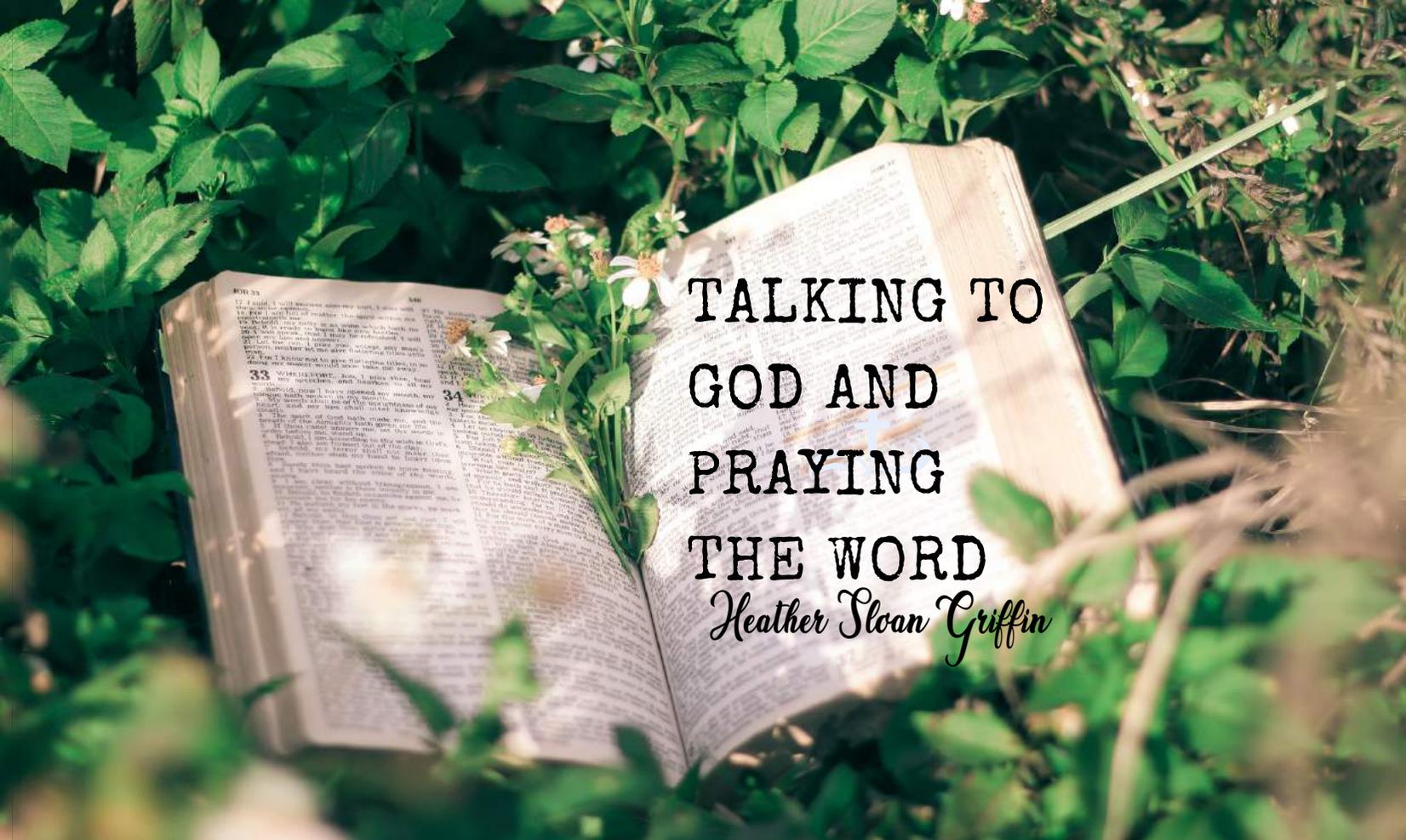
All praise to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than I can think, ask, or imagine.

In the name of Jesus, amen.

Brandi Roark



Scripture



TALKING TO GOD AND PRAYING THE WORD

Heather Sloan Griffin

Friday nights for me at the age of 17, were a bit different from the others my age. My husband and I were dating at the time and instead of going to the movies or out to dinner on a typical Friday night date, we were going to the weekly prayer meeting at our church, where we met. I remember walking through the doors of the sanctuary and picking a place to sit, in the sea of peach-colored chairs. There were only a handful of people there.

Though I loved going to church and being a part of it, I was not really excited about prayer meetings. Why? Because I didn't know what to pray, let alone how to pray. This is really quite shocking for someone who grew up in church, their entire life. Maybe I wasn't listening, maybe I wasn't really paying attention, or had just always let others do the praying for me. I did know that all prayers were in the name of Jesus and I knew how to agree with someone who was praying. That was pretty easy.

The prayer meeting was only one hour. Once I had prayed for each family member, there were still 55 minutes left to go. The minutes seem to tick by ever so slow. Barely able to keep my eyes open, because of boredom and being tired, I soon felt shame associated with these meetings. Worst of all, at the end of the meeting, we went around the room and shared what God spoke to us. This seemed absolutely impossible to me and every single time I had nothing to share. Double shame!

Deep down, I believe I didn't have that personal relationship with God. In addition, I had pretty bad self-esteem issues and felt unworthy to even approach Him. Yes, I was saved and loved Him, but I didn't know how to talk to Him. Also, up to that point in my life, nothing really bad had happened to me. I hate to say it, but sometimes it takes something really bad to wake you up and you wholeheartedly start seeking God as never before.

This is what happened to me. After years of being a prodigal and being separated from my husband, I found myself in the pit. There was no medicine or counseling that was going to get me out...it could only be God alone, reaching down to help me.

From the bottom of my lonely, dark pit I cried out for help. Truly cried out with the deepest sincerity. In this place I became real with God. I was not putting on a show. I presented to Him the good, bad and very ugly side of my life (which, of course, He already knew about). As He pulled me out of the pit, I got to really know Him. He proved Himself to me and spoke to me. He cleaned me up, comforted me, and truly I began to look to Him to be my husband and care for me. All religious fronts were gone.

I finally had that relationship with Him. I knew I could just talk to Him. Not trying to think of things to say. He had wanted me to talk to Him, not come up with a shallow speech or small talk.



MAKE IT

Personal!

During my stand, I really learned to pray and to pray the Word. What does this mean? Searching through scripture, I found ones that pertained to my situation. Then I made them personal.

For example, Psalm 37:4 says **“Take delight in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.”** To make it personal, I add my name or the person’s name I’m praying for.

“Heather takes delight in the Lord and He gives her the desires of her heart.” It’s really that simple.

Making lists of scriptures is one of the easiest ways to get this organized. The areas I pray for are my children, marriage, supplying needs and health. Really, The Word has everything in it that you are looking for. Look at The Word as your prayer manual. Especially when you don’t know what to pray. People have asked what scriptures I prayed during my stand, so here are a few of my favorites:

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.



1) 2 Cor. 7:10- Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

"I thank You Lord that there is godly sorrow all over my spouse that brings them to repentance and they have no regrets."

2) Luke 15:24- For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found. So they began to celebrate.

"I thank You Lord that my spouse is now alive again. My spouse is found."

3) Proverbs 16:9- A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.

"I thank You Lord that You direct my spouse's steps."

4) Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, and rescues them.

"I thank You Lord that my spouse fears You and is near to Your salvation and that You rescue them."

5) Matthew 3:8- Do those things that will show that you have turned from your sins.

"I thank You Lord that my spouse does those things that show they have turned from their sins."

6) Psalm 128:1- How blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways.

"I thank You Lord that my spouse is blessed because they fear You and walk in Your ways."

7) Ephesians 5:14- Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead and Christ will give you light."

"Thank You Lord that my spouse is awake and no longer sleeping, they arise from the dead and Christ has given them light."

8) James 4:7-8- Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands you sinners and purify your hearts you double-minded.

"I thank You Lord that my spouse submits to God and resists the devil. My spouse draws near to God, cleanses their hands, and purifies their hearts."

9) Acts 9:18- Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once, and he arose and was baptized.

"Thank You Lord that the scales fall from my spouse's eyes and they receive their sight and are baptized."

10) John 8:32- And you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.

"I thank You Lord that my spouse knows the truth and the truth has set them free."

11) Ezekiel 36:26- I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

"I thank You Lord for giving my spouse a new heart and a new spirit. That You have removed the heart of stone and given them a heart of flesh."

12) Ezekial 37:10- So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.

"I thank You Lord that breath has come into my family, they live and stand on their feet, an exceedingly great army."

Pray The Word, sit back and visualize each and every thing you say coming to pass no matter how impossible it seems. The Word will make it possible. Don't forget to sit quietly, listening for the still small voice of God to speak to you too. Sometimes it's even helpful to write out your prayers and unload all those feelings and emotions, releasing them to God. Let prayer be your therapy session. Say what you need to say, let the tears flow and let Him love you.

Shallow Roots

Sheila Hollinger

Jesus Teaches the Parable of the Sower in Luke 8

"The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road and it was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the sky ate it up. And some seed fell on [shallow soil covering] the rocks, and as soon as it sprouted, it withered away, because it had no moisture. Other seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out. And some fell into good soil, and grew up and produced a crop a hundred times as great." As He said these things, He called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear and heed My words." Now His disciples began asking Him what this parable meant. And He said, "To you [who have been chosen] it has been granted to know and recognize the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is in parables, so that though SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND.

"Now [the meaning of] the parable is this: The seed is the word of God [concerning eternal salvation]. Those beside the road are the people who have heard; then the devil comes and takes the message [of God] away from their hearts, so that they will not believe [in Me as the Messiah] and be saved. Those on the rocky soil are the people who, when they hear, receive and welcome the word with joy; but these have no firmly grounded root. They believe for a while, and in time of trial and temptation they fall away [from Me and abandon their faith]. The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, but as they go on their way they are suffocated with the anxieties and riches and pleasures of this life, and they bring no fruit to maturity. But as for that seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word with a good and noble heart, and hold on to it tightly, and bear fruit with patience.

When I look at this passage of scripture, I can see that I started out as that person BESIDE the road. Then I became that person ON the rocky soil. Before my storm came, I was the woman AMONG the thorns that continued to go my own way. It was not until my storm raged about me, that I became the soil IN which the seed could take hold.

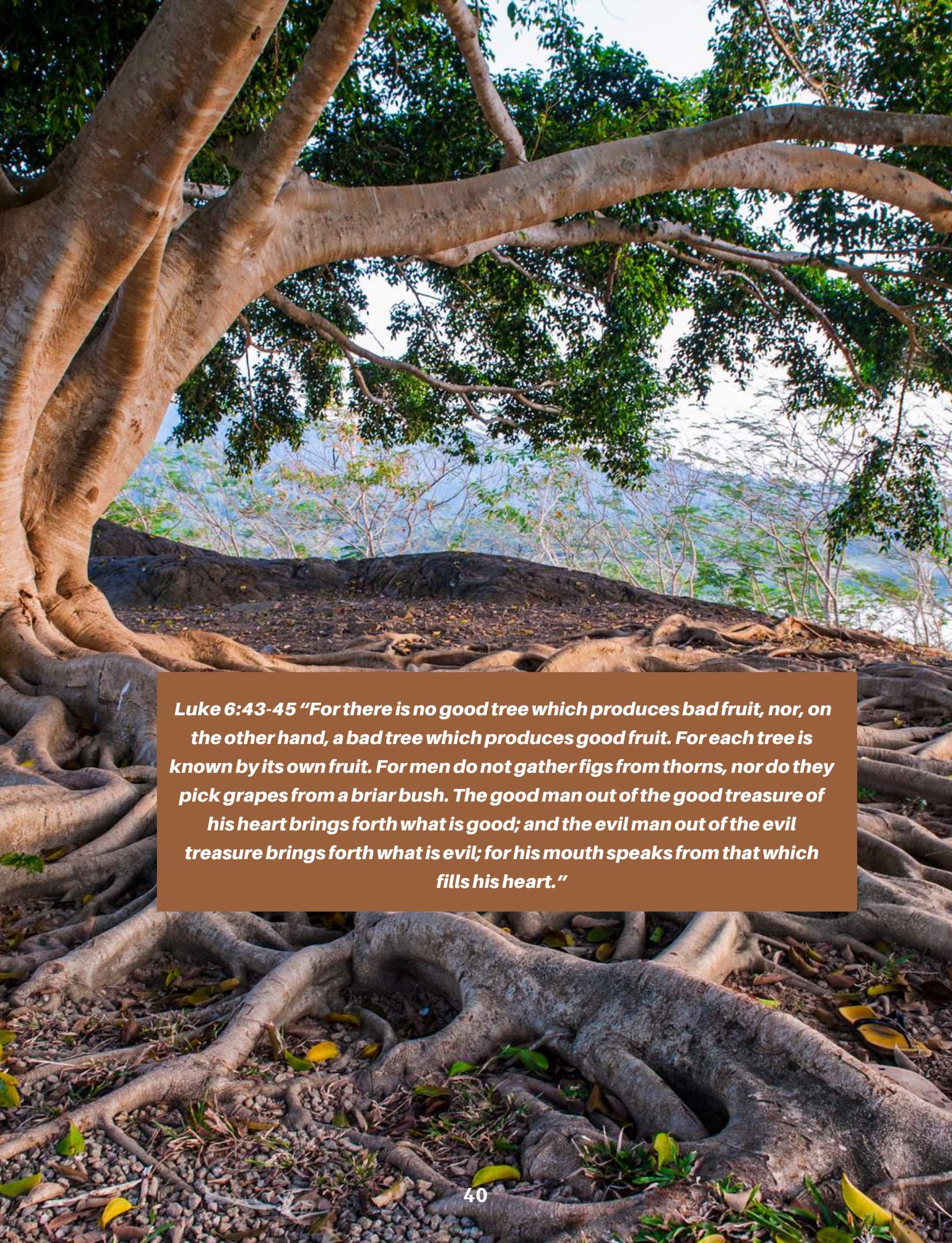
While this parable teaches about the many types of people, it can also teach about the many stages in ONE person's life as they start out beside the road and God continues to work on their hearts so they can become that GOOD SOIL that welcomes the seed and has no hardness of heart, no thorns or weeds to choke it out.

In Him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of Him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will, Eph 1:11

Predestined and chosen, standing beside the road. Predestined and chosen with a stony hard heart. Predestined and chosen while full of thorns and weeds. Predestined and chosen, loved patiently and worked on by God, Who tended to the garden of my heart and changed and transformed me so that He could bring the seed that would take root in the soil that He prepared.

Some of the things that interfere with our Stands the most is lack of understanding which creates impatience OR understanding, but lack of respect for the time it takes God to prepare the soil so it will be GOOD and able to nurture the seed when planted. When we are selfish, it produces an *"I don't care that you are working to prepare the soil, I just want MY life, MY pain, MY happiness, MY peace to come first because I am tired of waiting"* attitude. So while God is preparing the soil in our spouses, He is also working that selfish, "me first" attitude out of our hearts and teaching us to RESPECT HIM! OUCH!

Learn to recognize when your heart is in need of some tending and invite Him to continue to keep working the soil of your heart so that you may produce a GOOD attitude as you wait for your spouse to come to a right relationship with the Father! Standing with you, Sheila.



Luke 6:43-45 "For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit, nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush. The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart."



By Bren Vinesett



PLANTING ~ON~ PURPOSE

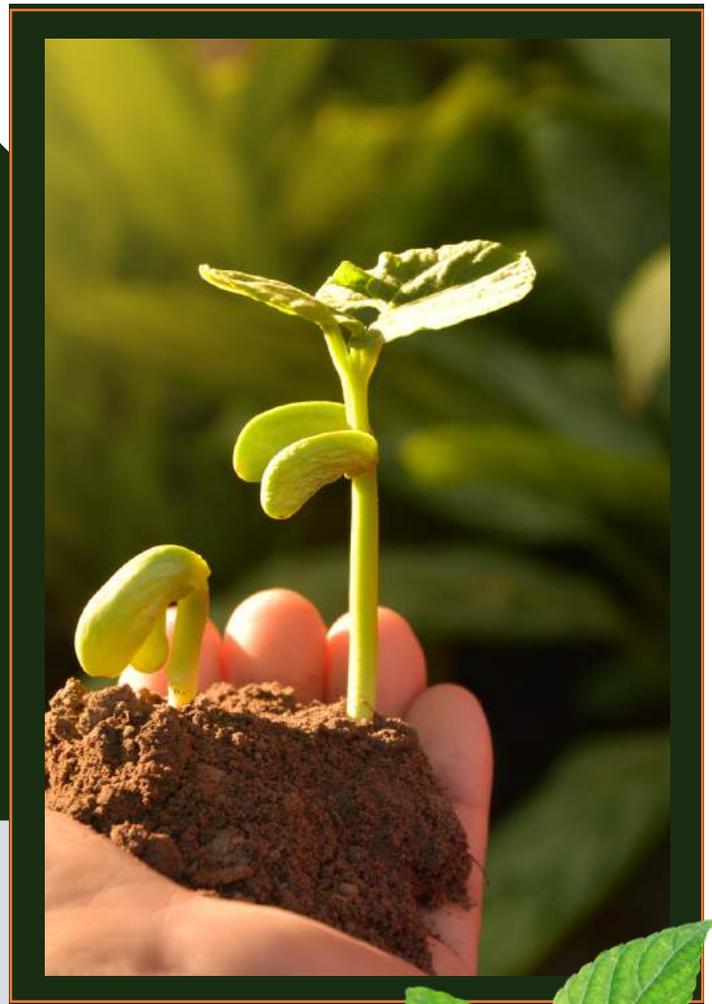
© REVEALED Standing for Marriage Restoration Magazine 2022

Lately I feel like I've been pulling up roots from my past. These roots were established from seeds that I took no part in planting, yet they have encompassed my life and strangled my worth, my growth and my hope.

We rarely think about the repercussions of our actions....the seeds we plant. Or the future generations that will either benefit, or suffer, from the sowing. In order for a root to embed itself, a seed needs to be planted. I believe if we are more intentional about the seeds we sow, our lives would be less worrisome and the lives of others would flourish.

If you allow weeds to take root in your garden, they will suffocate the roots of the fruit. If you don't control the growth of weeds, your roses will be overtaken. Some roots can be quickly removed, but it becomes a tedious task if you allow it to become overgrown.

However, most roots grow silently underground. The seed is planted so stealthily and inconspicuously, that no one is aware of the havoc that it is wreaking underneath the topsoil. By the time it breaks the surface, it has entwined its tentacles far below and has no intention of loosening its grip. This is the hold that sin has on our thoughts, emotions and actions. The enemy brings a relatively harmless seed into our lives and we pay no attention to it. It is dispersed so easily by one blow from his lips. It takes flight into the air and lands exactly where he wants it to. Before we know it, small roots have begun to strangle the grace that we have received and the love that we long to give.



It has become very apparent to me, that the seeds of sin, anger, rebellion and lawlessness, seem to scatter like wildfire. Those kinds of roots multiply quickly and they forge a deep path within. I know from experience that if you do not pull that weed out by the roots and burn it, it will continue to grow and suffocate the breath right out of you. It will poison the once fertile area where the Lord began His work....and in a short amount of time, the enemy turns it into a wasteland. The enemy loves nothing more than to watch a once thriving orchard die, as it is cut off at its base - strangled from the unseen battle that has attacked us from within .



It begins with a word...or an action. Those small insignificant seeds begin to be planted one drop at a time and we only begin to take notice when it is too late. We may not be able to control what seeds are planted, or when they sprout, but we can take responsibility for pulling them out, when we realize they are not fruit bearing. The Bible warns that we will reap what we sow. If we sow bad seeds that ultimately root into weeds, we will reap an unpleasant harvest.

But if we plant wisely in fertile soil with a steady supply of water from the spring, we will thrive.



PARABLE OF THE FARMER SCATTERING SEED

24 “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a farmer who planted good seed in his field. **25** But that night as the workers slept, his enemy came and planted weeds among the wheat, then slipped away. **26** When the crop began to grow and produce grain, the weeds also grew. **27** “The farmer’s workers went to him and said, ‘Sir, the field where you planted that good seed is full of weeds! Where did they come from?’

28 “‘An enemy has done this!’ the farmer exclaimed. “‘Should we pull out the weeds?’ they asked.

29 “‘No,’ he replied, ‘you’ll uproot the wheat if you do. **30** Let both grow together until the harvest. Then I will tell the harvesters to sort out the weeds, tie them into bundles, and burn them, and to put the wheat in the barn.’”

Matthew 13



The parables in Matthew 13 outline how important it is to bear fruit and guard your harvest. You want your life to be firmly planted in fertile ground. You cultivate your life to be full of wheat - not weeds to be bound and burned. God often allows our harvest to be poor, to teach us to be more intentional about the seeds we sow - for our children and in our marriages, within our circle of influence and even within our own minds.

The seeds of worthlessness and doubt will seem to triumph over our faith and the knowledge of what Christ did for us on the cross. This will impact our witness as we scatter seed among the thorns and rocks.

Speaking truth and being aware of the enemy's tactics, will eliminate any source of stagnancy in our lives.

When we begin to weed our heart and mind, we make room for God to plant healthy thoughts and actions towards healing for ourselves, our marriages and our families. Your hands will be calloused. Your nails will be filled with fresh dirt. But your mind will be clear and your heart will be pure.

Plant wisely and weed regularly!

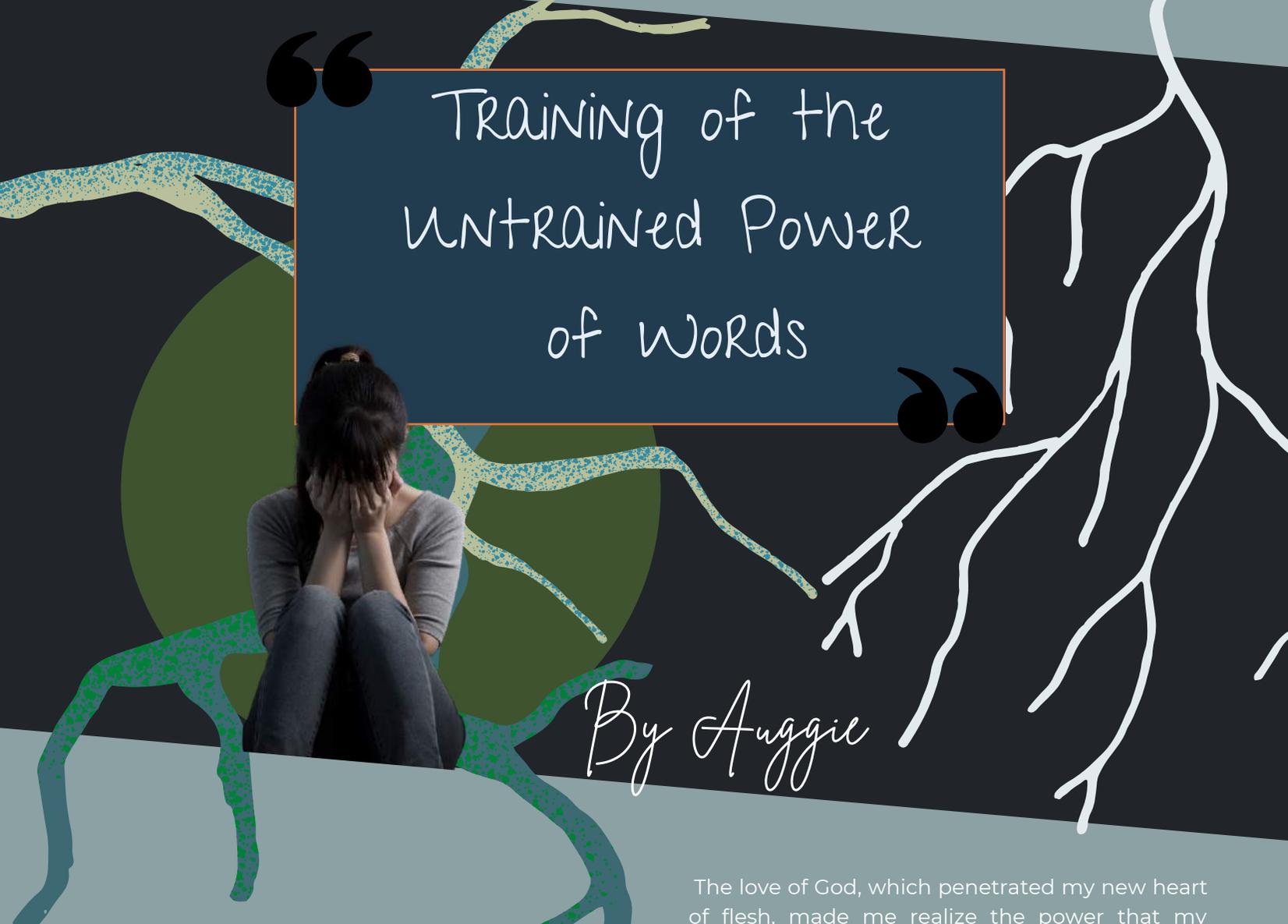


Bren

“ 43 No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. 44 For each tree is known by its own fruit. Indeed, figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor grapes from brambles ”

Luke 6:44





“ TRAINING of the
UNTRAINED POWER
of WORDS ”

By *Auggie*

"You broke me."

As I heard these words spoken to me, they pierced my heart. My husband's words pierced my heart, just as the many hurtful words I had spoken to him over the years pierced his.

My husband was not without guilt. There were many times his painful words would unleash rage inside of me.

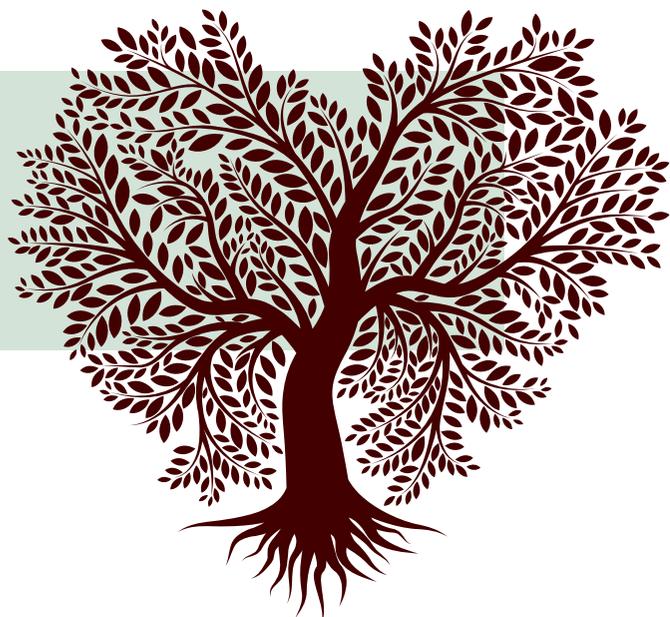
However, a few months after he filed for divorce, this time was different...I was different. In the past, my husband's hurtful words fueled the rage inside of me that was born out of my wounded heart. My heart was wounded as a child and many times since then. But this time, something was different. God had removed my heart of stone and had given me a heart of flesh - a heart flooded with the love of God and filled with an unconditional love for my husband.

The love of God, which penetrated my new heart of flesh, made me realize the power that my words had. I was made aware that the ugly, twisted words I spoke caused ugly, twisted roots to grow deep within me. Those roots blocked and hindered the Fruits of the Spirit from growing within me. The soil of my heart was being cultivated by my flesh rather than the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit led me to evaluate whether my life was being led by the Spirit of God. Did my life show the Fruit produced by the Holy Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control? Did I even love Jesus?

John 14:15, Jesus says, "If you love me, obey my commandments."

I had thought I was already experiencing the worst pain imaginable due to my husband filing for divorce. I was wrong. As the honest realization that the answer to those two questions was "no", I felt a breaking inside of my heart and soul, that was like a death taking place... I was dying to self.



I honestly confessed that my life was empty of joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. I barely had love, the only Fruit of the Spirit evident in my life; I lived a lifestyle of disobedience to Jesus; I didn't respect my husband and my love for him was conditional.

The untrained power of my words not only brought pain and brokenness. It brought deception. My words told myself and others that I was a Christian. However, my life lacked the production of the Fruits of the Spirit and obedience to Jesus that reflected me as a true follower of Christ.

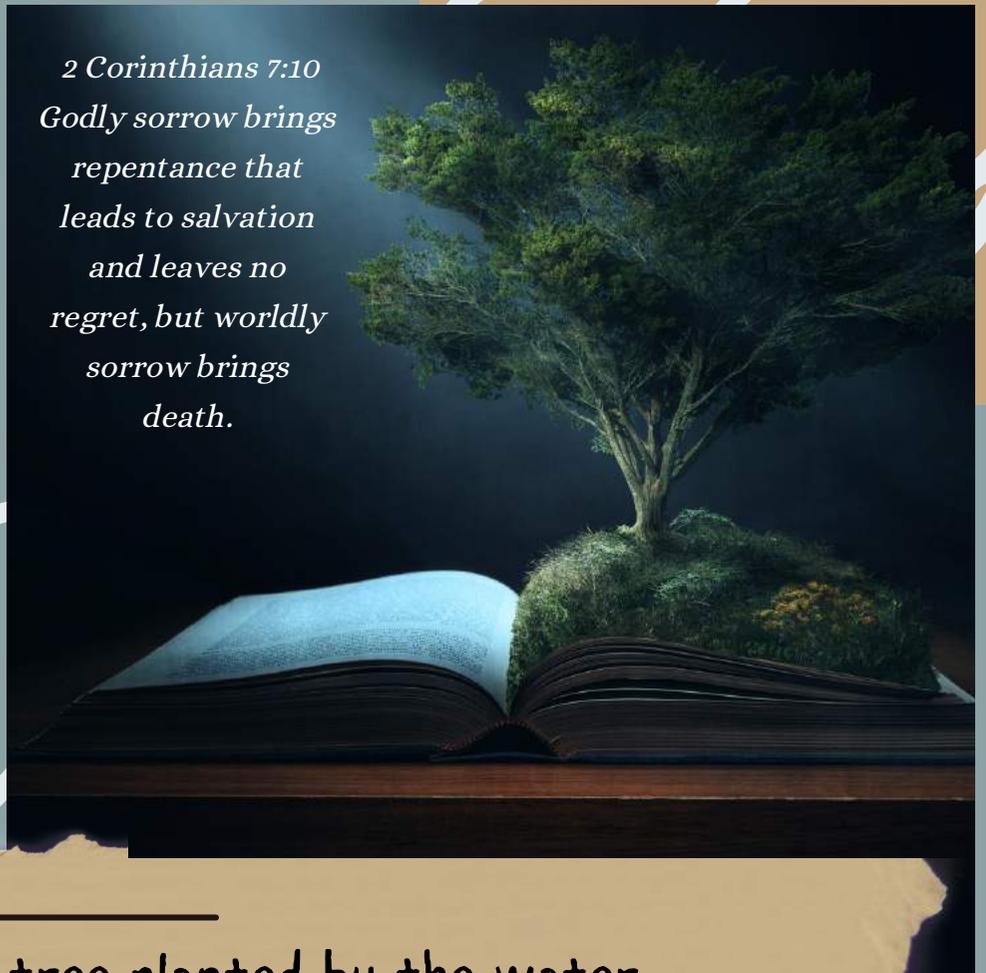
As the weight of my sins against God pressed onto my heart, godly sorrow, brokenness and contrition began to fill it. I began to abhor and hate sin. I hated that my sins grieved the heart of God. In my brokenness, my eyes were opened to the wonders of God's mercy, grace and unconditional love. My desire for sin began to die and within me grew a desire to glorify, honor, obey and please God. I wanted my heart and mind to reflect the heart and mind of Christ Jesus. Jesus loves unconditionally. In time, the desire to love my husband unconditionally grew in my heart.

There was a time when the untrained power of my words caused hurt and brokenness. However, God has been training my heart and mind ever since. Isaiah 50:4 says, "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." I now make a conscious effort to ask God for wisdom and the understanding of His will for me. I want the power of my words to be used to comfort, encourage, build up and edify others.

My words are now persistently and consistently being used in prayers for my husband's heart to be filled with the brokenness of his sins against God, which would lead to his healing.

My words also declare, "no longer will our hearts grow ugly twisted roots." Rather, that the roots of our heart may reflect Jeremiah 17:8

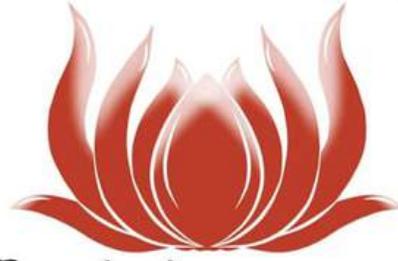
2 Corinthians 7:10
Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.



"be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." Jer 17:8

Auggie

Prayers of a Fierce Prayer Warrior



Fiercelyinloveprayerwarriors
Sasha

Prayers of a Fierce Prayer Warriors

*"He who guards his mouth, and his tongue keeps himself from calamity."
Proverbs 21:23*

Heavenly Father, we pray to have more self-control over our thoughts and our words; knowing that the tongue has the power of life and death. Help us to fill our hearts and minds with powerful, positive words of faith and give us the perseverance and strength to quiet our lips during times of anger. Teach us to cast our cares and concerns into
Your fully capable hands.

Father, we know that one of the enemies' greatest weapons against us is to use the words we speak in doubt, the guilt of mistakes from our past and death to our hope and faith when things don't look like what You have promised. Father, help us to remember to guard our mouth, seek Your guidance, and to remember that Your promises will
never fail.

Father, we ask You to work in our lives according to Your good and perfect will. And teach us to always remember, that the power of life and death is in our tongue, and we should continue to speak life and restoration over our spouse and our marriage.

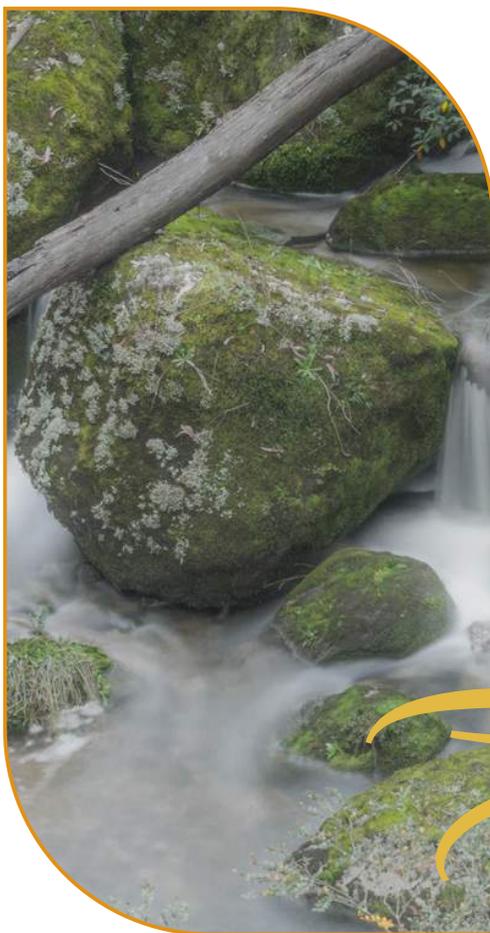
In Jesus name Amen

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

Sheila Hollinger

Sticks and Stones

Whoever said, “Sticks and stones may break your bones, but words will never hurt you,” is an **IDIOT!**



When has a stick, or a stone, ever made you hold a grudge, caused you to struggle with forgiveness or made you book an appointment with a therapist?

A single word - spoken, or written - has the power to bring a wave of hope, or a crushing weight of discouragement. Words can bring fear or security, joy or sadness. Words are powerful, but they ARE limited.

What gives words their power?

Words are not just words - they bring a message. It's the message that words deliver and who they are from, that is key to the power those words can bring. Look at the words and message that is brought forth with “I love you” vs. “I hate you.” Who says it and what they mean to you makes all the difference. So words can't have much power or influence if they are not spoken by someone you know, trust, or hold in high regard.

Another place that words get power, is in our response to them. Words create messages, but these messages have power **ONLY** if they are heard, believed, understood, and obeyed. What if Elijah had shrugged off the message that was sent to him through Jezebel's messenger? He took the message he heard - *“So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow.”* (1 Kings 19:2) - believed it, allowed it to bring fear and in doing so, lost his entire ministry! Sadly, he chose to listen to Jezebel's message over God's message.



This is a message I often repeat to try to remind Standers, over and over again - our spouses, in their lost state of mind, are going to speak many things, believe many things... but things they are saying come from what the hard heart produces. They believe it's true, but we don't have to do the same. Yet, we tend to take what they say to heart, more than any other human being on this planet because there is no other relationship more personal than the one we have with our spouse.

Because of how personally we take the words from a person that we trust, love, and care about so deeply, we can become very distracted and detoured by their words. The only way around it and the only way to find ourselves back on the right path, is to find someone else that we trust more, love more, and hold in higher regard. That will come as we build and develop a relationship with God, so, when He speaks, it will trump the messages we get from our spouses. They may say they don't love us, but when God says they do, they just have a lost and hard heart. We WILL choose to believe God over our spouse. When our spouses say they are never coming back because they are happy, but God says they will be coming home, we WILL be listening and believing God, over our lost spouse.

Matthew 4:4 "But He answered, 'It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

With God speaking truth to us, we will be able to see the words our spouse speaks for what they are - words coming from a mind that is in darkness and rebellion, from a heart that is hard and calloused. The message behind these words can bring great destruction to the one that is desperately seeking signs of hope, looking for some shred of love that is salvageable. Instead, they hear words with a message that invokes a new message - "Give up, move on, this is impossible and not worth fighting for."

What do we do with the message that comes from the hard heart? We go straight to the One and ONLY ONE, that has the power to bring a new message, to squash the one you were presented with. Trust me, when your spouse shares a message with you, it can invoke such pain, fear, hurt and anger, that God... and ONLY GOD, can formulate a new message - one that helps us heal, as well as gain new insight and perspective. The good news - if you are not in a place where you 'hear' God - is that God's nature, His character, WHO He is, speaks loud and clear! His Word speaks words that can dismantle the words spoken by a heart in rebellion.

So, the next time you hear words that start to take root and instill fear or pain, uproot them and replace them with God's Words!

Words
Have
Power

Roots

And the surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again take **ROOT** downward and bear fruit upward. 2 kings 19:30

The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
Psalm 92:12

“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its **ROOTS** by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.” Jeremiah 17:7-8

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, **ROOTED** and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.
Colossians 2:6-7

And they have no **ROOT** in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. Mark 4:17

See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “**ROOT** of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;
Hebrew 12:15

But when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no **ROOT**, they withered away. Matthew 13:6

if the **ROOT** is holy, so are the branches. Romans 11:16

you **SMILE** when you shop
at AmazonSmile

we **SMILE** when AmazonSmile
makes a .05% donation to us
all **SMILE** when we see your
contributions at work!

**Support
Marriage Revealed
Ministries Inc.**

When you shop at smile.amazon.com,
Amazon donates.

[Go to smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)

amazonsmile

What is AmazonSmile?

AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support your favorite charity. Every time you shop, at no cost to you **AmazonSmile will donate 0.5%** of your eligible purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. **Go to smile.amazon.com** for more information and how to choose Marriage Revealed Ministries Inc. as your charity of choice.

Together we can make a difference!



GOOD MOURNING JOY

*A Practical Theology of Joy for the
Everyday Sufferer*

Baron "Elias" Klaif

Sold on Amazon


Remnant
THERAPY
LCSW, P.C.

**CHRISTIANA MCPHERSON,
LCSW**

FOUNDING PSYCHOTHERAPIST

Mobile: (631) 902-1677

Email: RemnantTherapy@gmail.com

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**

Couples ◀ Individuals ◀ Pre-Marital ◀ Family Therapy

www.RemnantTherapy.com

