

2015-2016-2017-2018 Evangelical Press Association Award of Merit

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2018

LEADING HEARTS

EMPOWERING CHRISTIAN WOMEN FOR LEADERSHIP

♥ THE SECRET INGREDIENT
TO MAXIMIZE
YOUR TEAMWORK ABILITY

♥ WHY EVERYONE NEEDS A
MENTOR

♥ 7 SIMPLE STEPS
TO KEEP IT TOGETHER

♥ WOMEN IN WORSHIP SERIES part 2
**LONDON GATCH
AUDREY ASSAD**

What Being a Business Woman
TAUGHT ME ABOUT MINISTRY
with Svetlana Papazov

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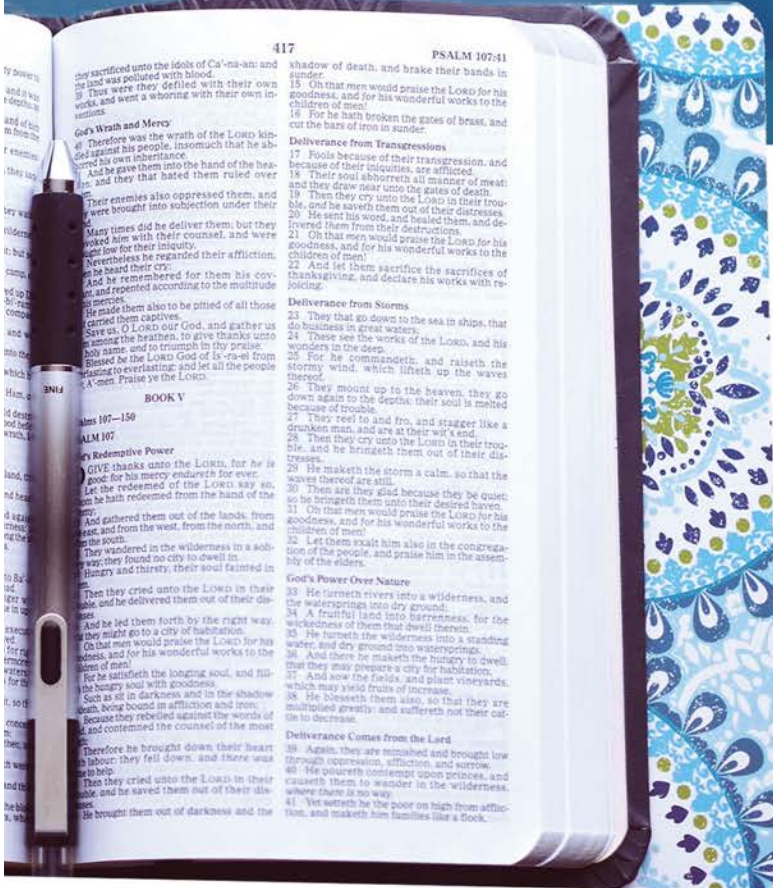




"Arise, Shine..."

the glory of the LORD rises upon you."

-Isaiah 60:1 (niv)



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FROM THE PUBLISHER
Linda Evans Shepherd

is God calling you to shift direction?

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO SERVE GOD?

The answer to that will vary. Some people may feel God is calling them to serve Him in their local church, or even in full-time ministry. Other people, believe it or not, may feel God is calling them to serve Him in the marketplace.

After all, Jesus himself spent time in the marketplace, learning to be a carpenter at Joseph's feet. He learned the art of woodcraft, perfected it, and probably even handled the cash box a time or two.

Even the Apostle Paul was called to be a tentmaker. Sure, Paul knew how to take an offering, but tentmaking was how he supported his work and met the people to whom he ministered.

Sometimes I wonder if our country has such division because so many Christians are hiding in the church. Many of us have all but disappeared from society, including areas God may actually be calling us — areas like business, the arts, education, politics, health care, technology and more.

So the question I want you to think about is this: how can we love our neighbors when they can't find us? How can we influence our culture when we've all but disappeared? I'm not suggesting we leave the church, but that we expand our borders to include our world.

Besides, when we disappear from marketplace ministry, how can we use our God-given discernment to discover the cure for cancer and more?

I, too, have felt God's tug to step out of my comfort zone to write movies. The idea of entering the world of movie making is exhilarating and terrifying all at once. I could be misunderstood, judged, scoffed at, panned or even edited in such a way that my work inadvertently promotes messages I don't care for. And worst of all, I could fail.

Yet, I'm willing to walk past my comfort zone and into the danger zone. I love that I'm on a pure faith walk, which is exactly the walk I want to make.

But what about you?

What big or even small thing might God be calling you to do outside of your current comfort zone? What if God was calling you to:

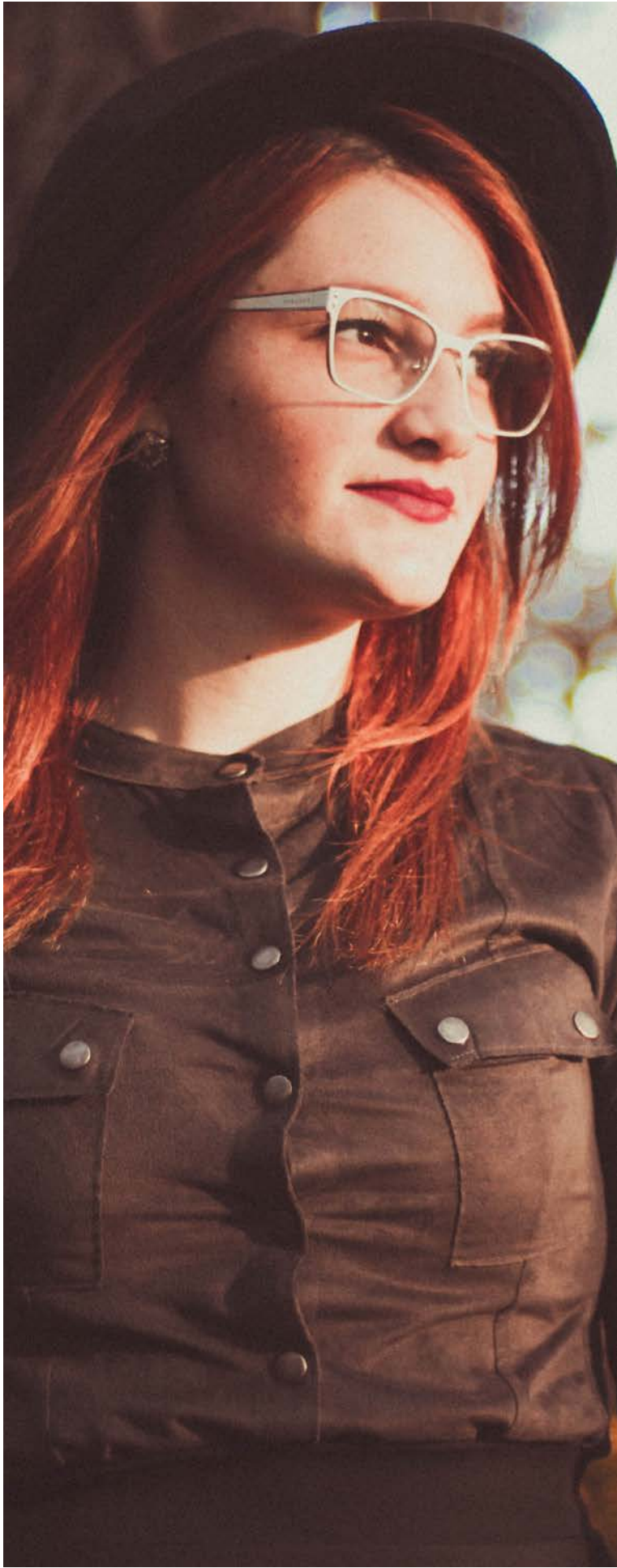
- Start a business?
- Volunteer with kids outside the church?
- Start a Bible Study in your neighborhood?
- Work as a caregiver?
- Run for mayor or even Congress?
- Develop the next FaceBook?
- Invent something extraordinary?
- Cure Alzheimer's?
- Go back to school?
- Work with the elderly?
- Work with new or unwed moms?

If you heart leapt at any of these suggestions, there could be something here you need to explore. It would be risky, and it would be a total faith-walk.

Maybe you'll even be misunderstood. But if God's calling you to move in a new direction, be brave and do something that would be totally impossible, except for God. *LH*

Love,

LINDA EVANS SHEPHERD
PUBLISHER, LEADING HEARTS MAGAZINE



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EMPOWERING CHRISTIAN WOMEN FOR LEADERSHIP

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TABLE OF *Contents*

Text **LEADINGHEARTS**

to **64600** for FREE

Mobile Sisterhood Support!

8 what being a business woman taught me
ABOUT MINISTRY

14 maximize
YOUR TEAM'S POTENTIAL

16 why everyone
NEEDS A MENTOR

22 seven simple steps to
KEEP IT TOGETHER

27 women in worship
LONDON GATCH
AUDREY ASSAD

46 grace to dye for

50 LIGHY MY FIRE

^this issue

every issue

12 IN THE LEAD

19 REAL CHURCH LADIES
DARDEN

31 THE BIG QUESTION

32 LIFEBYTES

37 HEALTH TRACKS

40 JUST 18 SUMMERS

41 PRAYER CIRCLE

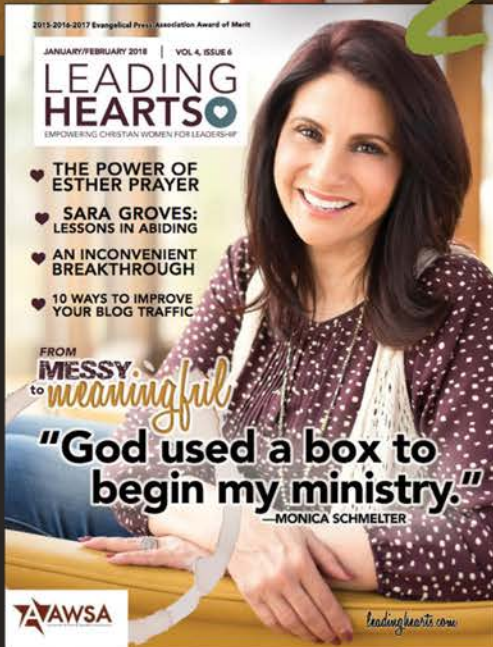
42 REVIEWS

52 THE TRUTH

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our 5th Year
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2015-2016-2017-2018

EVANGELICAL PRESS ASSOCIATION
-AWARD OF MERIT-

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FROM THE EDITOR
amber weigand-buckley

be the bean

I'VE ALWAYS HAD A DEEP AFFINITY FOR THE DIVINELY ANOINTED BEAN OF HEAVEN—COFFEE. So, when I started my homegrown branding and communications business, I knew that it demanded prominence on my logo.

However, a friend's recent theological revelation to the symbolism of the coffee bean brought its missional importance front and center in my life.

She told me when eggs hit the heat of water they became hard; that same boil turns potatoes soft. The coffee bean, however, has the capacity to transform the water.

Coffee is a bean that "distinguishes itself."

The reality is, however, it only releases its God-intended rich flavor when it is allowed to be put in the hands of a master roaster, ground down to its powdered state and combined with the essential heat of pure high-pressured H₂O.

Daniel was a coffee bean influencer of his time. Daniel 6:3 says that he "so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom."

And when his commitment to his faith took him to the heat of lion's den, the highest official in government was influenced to turn to the One True God.

So the question of the hour: Are you an egg, potato or coffee bean? Don't worry, your results are not based on submitting your Facebook profile pic to determine how your face lines up to the shape test.

Are you allowing the heat of circumstances to dictate the judgmental hardness or apathetic softness to those around you, or are you transforming the environment in which you are placed with the aroma of the good things of God in your words and actions?

It's the message of His love that permeates your atmosphere that can wake people up.

Influence is the currency of the Kingdom.

God has called you to distinguish yourself as a coffee bean influencer for heaven — whether you are writing books or washing windows. Whether you are reaching the one or one million.

I hope this issue of *Leading Hearts* helps you embrace the call to "be the bean" — a coffee bean influencer in the greater marketplace both inside and outside of church walls.

I'm committed to up my game by adding an extra venti double shot latte to my day topped with whipped cream and mocha drizzle just for good measure. *AH*

Love,

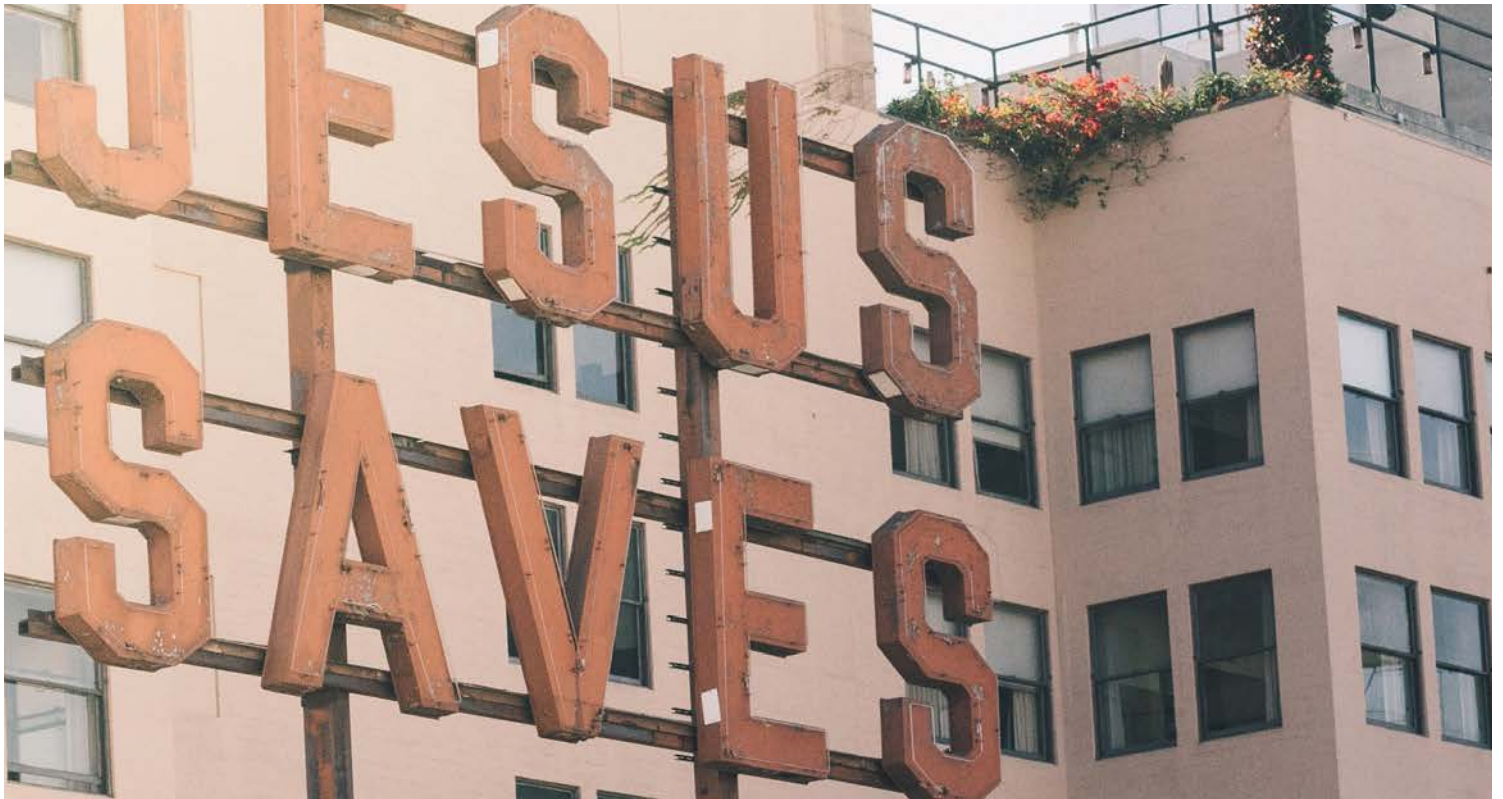
AMBER WEIGAND-BUCKLEY
EDITOR, LEADING HEARTS MAGAZINE



by Svetlana Papazov — WWW.SVETLANAPAPAZOV.COM

what being a business woman
taught me about ministry





THESE DAYS I FIND MYSELF JUGGLING MUCH ON MY PLATE. I'm a wife, a mom, a business consultant for entrepreneurs and a church planter. But a church planter not of the conventional type. First, I'm a female. And if that isn't enough to raise a brow or two, the church I started, called Real Life, is what one may call an inside-out-church. At Real Life, we open our doors to entrepreneurs seven days a week. We integrate a faith community and a business incubator all in one package in order to make real difference in our city's economy and effect social, economic and spiritual lift.

But I wasn't always a church planter. Neither was I always a pastor. My path to pastoral vocation took, what it felt like to me, a "detour" route through the marketplace in order to shape my heart to serve. Here are lessons I learned along the way of pursuing God's call on my life and finding its expression in mission in the marketplace.

1. There is mission in the marketplace

After my husband and I, with our nine-month-old baby, escaped the iron curtain and settled in America, we began to pray that God would bring

to pass one of my childhood dreams — to be in ministry in order to preach the gospel. As a family, we began praying for God's strategy on how to get into pastoral ministry. And as God often does, He clearly answered, but not as we expected.

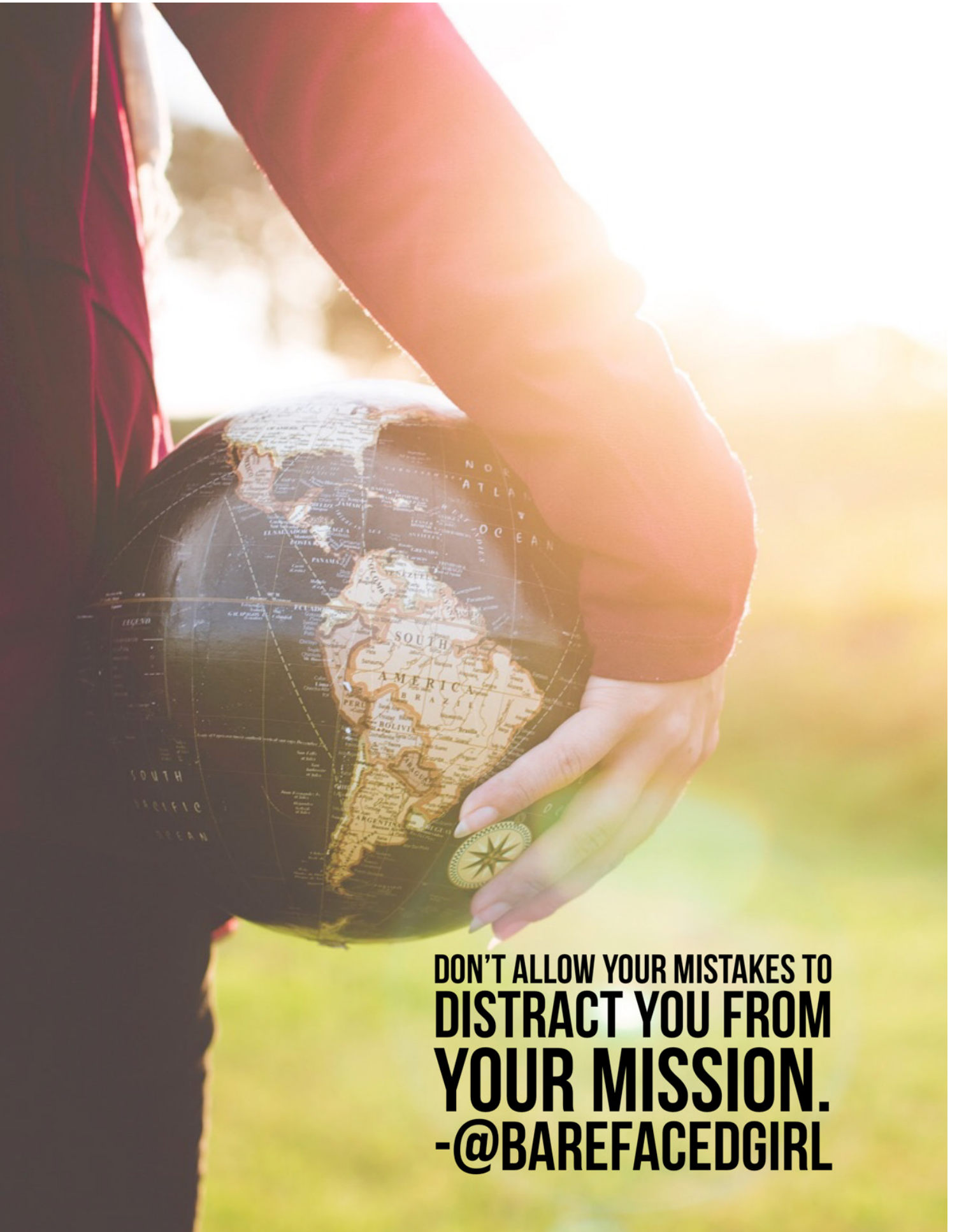
This is what I heard the Holy Spirit impress on my heart: "There are many people willing to work on the inside of the church, but very few minister outside the church walls. I need you on the outside of the church's walls." I guess that was what Jesus meant when he told His disciples to pray to the Lord of the harvest for workers.

The harvest is outside of our church walls, profusely maturing in vast, white fields, but the workers willing to leave the comfort of air-conditioned sanctuaries and go into the scorching heat to bring in the sheaves are few and far between. God was going to teach my heart to love His harvest as He loves it by having me be with the harvest in the marketplace for the first 13 years of my work life in the U.S.

2. Go slow to go fast

I considered myself to be a willing harvest worker, but I found out I was an impatient one. Have you rushed to do something good for God only to

-continued on p. 11-



**DON'T ALLOW YOUR MISTAKES TO
DISTRACT YOU FROM
YOUR MISSION.
-@BAREFACEDGIRL**

-continued from p. 9-

find yourself being calmly slowed down by the Holy Spirit's hand on your shoulder? Have you ever been there? I have.

What the Holy Spirit whispered during that prayer as God's strategy for my ministry vocation looked like a long detour to reaching my dream. I already had worked out a plan. Pastors who work in church ministries have degrees in theology. I fully expected that as I prayed my heart out, the Lord would give me green light to go for a Bible college degree. And why not? I had successfully escaped to my new country of chosen citizenship. Finally, I could do something that I couldn't do freely in my country of origin — preach the gospel from the pulpit without persecution.

Instead, God had another plan. He wanted me to go slow in order to go fast. God was setting my pulpit in the marketplace, so I would build an integrated life of faith and gospel proclamation. There, my actions, my words and my attitude toward the lost could preach some of the strongest messages that I would ever proclaim. He knew that He would lead me one day to preach behind a pulpit set on a church stage, but for the foreseeable future, my preaching opportunities would be interacting with my future clients.

God wants all of us to steward faithfully the opportunities for mission in the marketplace, because this is where his harvest lives and hurts. We are His open epistles of love and healing to the broken world in our work places, our government, our schools and our entertainment. If we exit the public square, then we are leaving the blind to lead the blind.

3. Detours are God's straightest paths to wins

In my zeal to pursue God's call on my life, I thought that the fastest way to get from the place I was to the place I perceived that God wanted me to be was to draw a straight line through the circumstances in my life and follow it. But I discovered that often, on the way to the new destination, God allows us to zig-zag through relationship obstacle courses, meander through the dark nights of our souls, slow down because of strategies gone haywire — all in

order for our hearts to transform, so we can lead in a new way at the new place. Our new destinations, together with our new dreams, are not only about new wins, but about the new person that slowly emerges from the zig-zags of life. We become new creations as God's grace transforms us with every foreordained step we take. Our detours become God's straightest paths to wins.

4. Work as worship to God

Somewhat surprised, maybe even a bit disappointed that my Bible college dream wasn't going to materialize right away, I had to admit that what God was leading me to do made sense. My husband and I decided to put my landscape architecture degree and my husband's skills for building beautiful yards into God's kingdom mission and started our first small business, a design and build landscaping company. We took our work as worship to God by discipling our unchurched employees, by leading missional conversations, servicing our customers in excellence, praying for them and giving them Bibles as gifts. God blessed our business and we went on opening three more.

All our work was done "as to the Lord" (Colossians 3:23, KJV). He taught us much about how to reach unchurched people and eventually began to stir our hearts to start a marketplace church that integrates faith, entrepreneurship and work and trains believers to reach the lost outside of the church walls.

Doing real life with real people, connecting them to the real God

After training my heart to love His harvest, God released me to get my biblical degrees in preparation to see my dream of opening a marketplace church become a reality.

In 2016, after much prayer, our family moved from Maryland to the greater Richmond area in Virginia in order to start Real Life Church and Real Life Center for Entrepreneurial and Leadership Excellence (Realliferva.com). Doing real life with real people in order to connect them to the real God is the mission we find in the marketplace and the desire of my heart!

This is one believer's journey of integrating faith, entrepreneurship and work. What is yours? *PH*





by karen porter
WWW.KARENPORTER.COM

a winning plan for failure



A LARGE FOOD CORPORATION LAUNCHED A NEW PRODUCT. Everyone anticipated success because the product had vast potential. The newly developed package was beautiful with sleek, classy colors and graphics. No one noticed that the package looked identical to a product already on the shelf — an insecticide. Since the corporation's new product was food, the comparison and confusion was disastrous. A unique and costly failure.

INTHELEAD

As a ministry leader, beware: conflict and misunderstandings are inevitable no matter how promising the ministry prospect. Failure is lurking nearby, because the enemy of our souls is fighting against your success. Paul knew that trouble follows opportunity. He said, “for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries” (1 Corinthians 16:9, RSV). I love to quote the first part of that verse—a wide open door! But I sometimes forget the second part—many adversaries.

No one sets out to fail. Moses didn’t intend to lose his temper in the wilderness, but he succumbed to the power of stress and exasperation with people. Abraham wanted to believe God for the promised son, but his patience faded, and he schemed a plan to “help” God. David allowed his emotions and feelings to invite a married woman to his chamber — and the cover up was even more dreadful. Peter intended to speak up for Jesus, but words of denial came out of his mouth.

Failure will somehow find us all.

You have two responsibilities as a leader regarding failure. The first is to watch for warning signs. In the story of the product failure told above, the leadership team failed to read the reports correctly and failed to ask the right questions. Begin your search of warning signs with communication by reviewing the interactions within your team. Does anyone ask the hard questions? Do team members share concerns and expectations? Good communication is the key to overcoming failure.

In addition to communication, keep the focus of the ministry clear. Use a well-written and clear mission statement, but also periodically take an inventory of the motivations behind the decisions. And as a leader, take good physical care of yourself and develop your close ties within your family.

Your second responsibility as a leader is to respond well when failure happens. How you handle yourself and your attitude about the failure will determine what your ministry will be after the bottom falls out.

Take a fierce and honest inventory of the problem

and what led to it. Was it bad planning, bad communication, bad teamwork or failed leadership? Ask God to search deep in your heart and your actions to expose your part in the failure. Then humbly repent, asking forgiveness from God and others. Then ask the hard questions: What can I learn from this situation? How will I grow now that I have experienced this situation? What will I do next time? It is not constructive to blame someone else. Someone said that Christians tend to shoot our wounded. Instead try to understand what went wrong.

For failures that are misunderstandings or differences of opinion, your future leadership will depend on how you handle yourself and other people. If the failure involves your personal severe lapse in judgment or a moral failure, future ministry may still be possible for you, but it may only be possible in a different place in a different kind of role. Be ready to move on with God at your side — if a move is necessary.

Yes, there can be success after failure. Ministry doesn’t mean sinless. That is unrealistic.

But our failures can be turned into our assets if we will allow the Lord to work in us first and follow His lead for everything else. *LN*

Let's talk about it

1. If you are a regular reader of this column, you know I love lists and bullet points. But there is no easy list for handling failure. There are at least two keys to handling failure as a leader.
 - a. Keep from sin. – Be the first one on your knees.
 - b. Pray for protection
2. What other actions can a leader take to stop failure before it starts?
3. Who can you turn to when failure happens in your ministry? Hint: Put God at the top of your list. Then add a few human names of people you can trust.



by *Linda Gilden*
WWW.LINDAGILDEN.COM

maximize *your team's potential*



IN A HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW

ARTICLE January 25, 2017, called “Great Teams Are About Personalities, Not Just Skills” by Dave Winsborough and Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, the authors mention a study done by Google in 2016 in which Google said they had found “the secret ingredients for the perfect team.” At Google “people are preselected on the basis of their personality (or ‘Googliness’).” Many large organizations use some type of personality assessment to assist in hiring, promoting and matching individuals with certain jobs and departments.

As speakers and writers, we sometimes feel we are working solo and don’t need to discuss team building or personalities. In fact, the opposite is true.

If you are a writer, you have a team waiting to help

you get your work published. You must interact with editors of various sorts, the design team, publishers and others. Once your work is in print, there are marketers, readers and the general public.

Speakers must have good communication with event planners, those who help with book tables, accommodation hostesses and the audience after you speak.

You may have never thought about the role personality plays in your work or ministry. But if you can master a few relationship skills by learning about the personalities — both yours and those you work with — you will find that you can work more effectively with those around you.

There are many assessments that use different words to describe each personality, but you will find

that most are categorized similarly, and it is simple to determine which one you are. Some use animal names, some just letters, others use names that are taken from ancient history. Here, we will use words that are descriptive and easy to grasp.

You are either a mobilizer, a socializer, a stabilizer, or an organizer. Maybe the words extrovert and introvert are more familiar to you. The extroverts are the mobilizers and the socializers while the introverts are the stabilizers and organizers. When we narrow it down, you might recognize yourself below.

- **Mobilizer — the get-it-done person**
- **Socializer — the life-of-the-party person**
- **Stabilizer — the keep-it-peaceful person**
- **Organizer — the everything-in-order person**

Once you identify your personality, you can then discover how it will benefit you to know the personality of your event planner, publisher and others you work with.

For example, if you are a mobilizer speaker, you know exactly how things ought to be done and want them done that way immediately. However, if your event planner is a socializer, she will not be as excited as you are to discuss all the plans and details of the event. Your “to-do” list will probably feel overwhelming to her. The promise of lunch after your meeting (if you are in the same town) may help her to focus while discussing the logistics since there is the promise of fun soon after.

If your event planner is a stabilizer, you may find him or her agreeing with everything you suggest in order to keep peace and move your meeting along.

You and the organizer will find common delight in working out the details of the event, but take care not to create debate over whose way is the best way. You both have set ideas on that. But if you are the speaker, you must remember that the event planner has brought you to the venue and you are under his or her authority. Most of all, you want to learn as much as you can about your audience and meet their specific needs.

In every case, remember to be respectful.

If you are a writer, you need to be aware that you are a very important part of a team. You cannot

be successful in your calling as a writer unless you can work well with those up the publishing ladder. Likewise, publishers, editors, designers and typesetters depend on writers to have the material they need to produce their publications.

As with speakers and event planners, writers will find it much more effective to work with those in the industry if they understand a bit about those with whom they work.

Suppose you are an organizer writer who is a perfectionist. First of all, it was probably hard for you to hit the send button. You wanted to make sure that your manuscript was perfect. But at the other end of that send button is a mobilizer editor who just loves to get a manuscript and waste no time in making notes and a list of changes for the author. If you know yourself well, you know that you must guard against taking the editor’s comments personally.

If you know your editor and understand his or her personality, you are able to look at the comments as constructive criticism that is an effort to make your work shine. The comments from the mobilizer editor just come with less fluff and flowers than you would like while the socializer inserts a bit of fluff just to make it fun! You will probably find fewer comments from your stabilizer editors in an effort to move the publication along with a minimum of conflict.

As a writer, you also know you will have readers (another part of a successful writing team) read your work who are of all personalities. Therefore, as you write, include something for your get-it-done person, your life-of-the-party person, your keep-it-peaceful person, and your everything-in-order person. If you can do that, you will broaden your readership as well as the scope of the reach of your message.

A little personality knowledge will go a long way in helping you to understand those around you both personally and professionally. Before you label your event planner, editor, publisher or friend as someone who is hard to get along with, find out what their personality is. You will be able to work with them and respect their positions as you understand what motivates them to react the way they do.

Article adapted from LINKED by Linda Gilden and Linda Goldfarb. Take your free assessment at linkedpersonalites.com. LH

A photograph of two women sitting together and looking at an open book. The woman on the left has long brown hair and is wearing a white long-sleeved top. The woman on the right has blonde hair and is wearing a yellow patterned top. They are both smiling and appear to be in a positive, collaborative conversation.

why everyone needs a mentor



by *Jayne Hull* — WWW.JAYMELEEHULL.COM





“I believe who is pouring into your life is more important than where you live or what job you have at this moment.”

AS A YOUNG PROFESSIONAL IN NEW YORK CITY, SURROUNDED BY STARS AND FASHION, I OFTEN FELT ABOUT TWO

INCHES TALL. Unseen by some, judged by others. Sure, I had a few friends, but I longed to find a woman who had been in my shoes and walking a few steps ahead of me.

One Sunday, I mustered up the courage to talk with a pastor at Times Square who connected me with a mentor. Her warm eyes and inviting smile put me at ease the first time we met.

“I feel so incompetent. I’m way out of my league here.” It all came tumbling out.

“Some days, I want to stay in bed, pull the covers over my head and drown out the noise of traffic with reruns of *I Love Lucy*.”

To my surprise, she wasn’t put off by my confession of how utterly alone I felt and how distant God seemed. She listened, really listened. She didn’t offer cliché answers or rush to give me advice. I felt known, heard and understood.

Little did I know the profound influence she would become in my life and how our mentoring relationship would significantly shape me. My mentor put a face and a heartbeat to all the verses we discussed together over a cup of coffee.

I can’t imagine going through my college days, young married years, my kids’ terrible twos, career transitions, the death of my parents and countless other rattling life events without the support of mentors.

Amazingly, at each stop along my life journey, whether I lived in one place for two years or thirteen, I’ve met people who made an impact on who I would become. I grew. I changed. That’s why I believe who is pouring into your life is more important than where you live or what job you have at this moment. Sometimes the road to finding a mentor can be awkward, difficult or discouraging, but the walk is well worth the distance.

Now, years later, I have the privilege of mentoring younger women. Some are young professional businesswomen; others are teachers, doctors, musicians, designers or moms. Many have cute little apartments; others, rambunctious little ones. As we sit and talk over lattes or hot chocolate or sweet tea, I am inspired by their courage and honesty.

Younger women are hungry for the opportunity to connect life-on-life and build a growth-oriented relationship with a mature Christ follower who can speak into their life

In a world that is impersonal and systematized, face-to-face mentoring is the missing link. Mentoring is a win-win situation: Younger women are encouraged and grow, and older women find new purpose.

-continued on p. 18-





-continued from p. 17-

The search for a mentoring relationship isn't always easy, but I promise you, the journey is well worth every step.

Perhaps you have a heart's desire to find a mentor, or you'd like to become one.

But growth always happens best in relationships.

God created us as women to learn from and support one another. To stick together in life's darkest moments. To celebrate and cheer each other on.

Whatever season you're in, now is a great time to step out, be encouraged and become a part of a mentoring relationship.

HERE ARE THREE TIPS TO HELP YOU CONNECT WITH A MENTOR

1. Share what you admire about them.
2. Be authentic. Share where you are and how you want to grow.
3. Invite them to meet again and consider becoming your mentor.

One of my favorite action verses is Philippians 1:27:

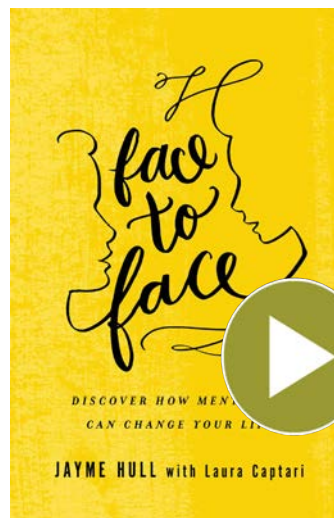
"I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel" (ESV).

I invite you to step out, challenge yourself. Be brave. Be yourself. Grow in your faith. The search for a mentoring relationship isn't always easy, but I promise you, the journey is well worth every step. And know this: you never have to walk alone. Instead of waiting on the sidelines and doing life alone, go ahead, walk across the room and start the life-changing connection conversation.

Who do you know that you can ask to coffee or lunch this week? The pressure's off. All you have to do is show up and see what connections God makes. He's calling you to leave your fears behind. Sure, there's risk. Will you take the leap anyway?

Let's start a movement. Let's commit together to be there for each other as women — not just in theory, but also in the messy and painful and wonderful moments of life.

My prayer for you is that you will boldly pursue a mentoring relationship. The only way to get across the finish line of life is together — cheering each other on, crying together, celebrating together, sharing our stories, instilling hope and fixing our eyes on Jesus until we get home. *JH*



Jayme's article is adapted from her book *Face-to-Face: Discovering How Mentoring Can Change Your Life*. Watch the book trailer here and visit jaymeleehull.com to subscribe to the Face-to-Face Mentoring Podcast.



FOUR SISTERS. ONE CALLING

darden
music that heals

“I CAN’T REMEMBER IF I TOLD YOU I LOVED YOU WHEN YOU LEFT YESTERDAY.” These are the opening lyrics of “I Hope You Can Hear Me,” a song written in tribute to those who perished and survived the Marjory Stoneman Douglas shooting in Parkland, Florida, on Valentine’s Day 2018.

Darden, a girl band of four Fullerton, California, sisters, and fellow musician Sean Oliu, wrote the song as they grieved the school shooting with their peers across the country. Within a week, they raised the funds to visit the survivors and minister with their music.

“Of course, when the [Parkland] shooting happened, we were in tune to what was going on, and we

-continued on p. 20-



-continued from p. 17-

were watching. It was heavy on our hearts already,” Clarah Darden, 20, said. “It really just resonated with us.”

It was suggested that they write a song, and the sisters thought it was a great idea. So, they sat down for a writing session with Oliu.

They bounced around thoughts, feelings and how they could only imagine those closest were coping with the tragedy. The musicians were able to share it with survivors and the Parkland community thanks to the efforts of their California community.

“A lot of the people in our community raised the money. We really could not have done it without our community helping us,” Selah Darden, 22, said. “It was raised overnight because a lot of people in this community felt like they wanted to do something in Fullerton. It was an avenue to do something and to help. That’s how they saw it, and they got us flights to Florida.”

“You go from one to the other and you’re constantly involved in these people’s lives due to the music and how healing it is,” Selah said. “So, I feel like it is such a gift to be invited into these people’s lives.”

The touching lyrics note the love and grief in prayers to God. “We were using the Florida incident. But not just the innocence of that one shooting because there have been so many; and not just shootings, but loss,” Selah said. “So, we were kind of going from hearts of loss and how it must feel to lose someone that quickly and not being able to say goodbye.”

Havilah, 19, added that the shooting inspired the song, but they also wanted the song to be for other people in similar situations as well. “It’s really just about connecting with

people because the connection is just so powerful to them,” she said. “When things like this happen, the community coming together is what really comforts everyone. It’s just really about connecting.”

Selah believes it’s all about love. “The love that we just received in going there and seeing it firsthand — that’s the thing. Anyone can sit behind a computer and see it. Everything is documented so well. So, we can feel like we can understand it, but when you are there, meeting people face-to-face, you have a

REALCHURCHLADIES



“I believe who is pouring into your life is more important than where you live or what job you have at this moment.”

—Darden to Leading Hearts

very different picture of how it actually is because you feel it a lot stronger,” she said “You feel like what if this was my brother or my cousin — someone that is close to you.”

The band is glad to see young people joining in the dialogue on creating good solutions to help students feel safe at school.

Darden and Oliu released the video to “I Hope You Can Hear Me” on the six-month anniversary of the shooting. They hope to release it separately as a single soon. The song is just one of over 50 songs that the sisters have written. Collectively, they play 10 instruments and are working on putting together an album with their unique Alternative Americana sound to be released later this year.

“Music is at the center. It has been for our entire lives, but whatever we do outside that generally always circles back to music and connects to that,” Selah said.

The girls grew up singing gospel music in church and traveling across the country for performances. Clarah notes the girls learned to harmonize in church early on and many today still comment on that being part of their distinctive sound. “So, it’s really cool that what really influenced us is the gospel music because you hear a lot of harmonies in that music. I think that’s what puts the alternative stamp on our music; it’s so different from a lot of things you hear.”

Darden is thankful their God-given talents and opportunities. As musicians, they are able to share in the joys and sorrow of others and pray it continues to be a blessing to minister to others.

“You go from one (emotion) to the other and you’re constantly involved in these people’s lives due to the music and how healing it is,” Selah said. “So, I feel like it is such a gift to be invited into these people’s lives. Hopefully, we have been able to share something with them that is way bigger than us — the gift of music.” They hope their listeners will hold on to the healing that can come from the music and grow from there. *LH*



by *jenn taylor*
PROFILE CONTRIBUTOR





by *pam farrel* — WWW.LOVE-WISE.COM

BECOME PRODUCTIVE

7 simple steps to keep it together

MOST WOMEN I KNOW LONG TO LEARN NEW WAYS TO SQUEEZE MORE OUT OF EVERY MOMENT OF EVERY DAY. We have a long list of hopes and dreams, and it seems the minutes fly quickly as we seek to accomplish what God has placed on our hearts. People have often asked me, “How did you write 45 books, serve your church, keep a happy marriage, and raise sons who have also become healthy leaders with happy marriages and families too?” So in one of the chapters of my *7 Simple Skills for Every Woman: Success in Keeping It All Together* book, I share my 7 Simple Steps for creating more time to PRODUCE:

1. Plan Out the Future: Plan each year, each month, each week, each day, and each hour. Those who fail to prepare, prepare to fail. I like to use Outlook (You can code your Outlook, or Google calendar so you can find items for family, work, social life quickly on your schedule. I also input all important details with each calendar entry, so details are quick to find.) Experiment with planning systems, software and apps to find ones that work

for you. I also plan how and who to delegate to. Planning in the time it takes to complete a task ups the success rate of tasks.

2. Respond instead of react. I don't waste time on negative emotions. Worry, self-doubt, frustration over delays or plans going awry are time wasters. If I hit a difficult emotional hurdle, I will cry for a few minutes, then plan in time to better deal with the emotional fallout later. To keep a positive disposition, I also plan nourishing time off for favorite activities, dates with my husband, my kids, friends, ministry colleagues and days off for solitude. Time for self-care transforms into more time because your state of mind will be positive, focused, proactive and much more productive.

3. Optimize Multi-tasking. Link tasks. For example, walk and listen to podcasts or audio books; fold laundry and watch the news; stretch while I listen to Scripture songs; walk and pray through priorities or post to social media; dust or do dishes while memorizing Scripture. Match business building or personal growth YouTube or webinar watching with meal preparation. By linking tasks that require less focus, you can nurture your soul or build ministry or

-continued on p. 25-

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First Question
Do you believe in God?
[Yes](#)
[No](#)

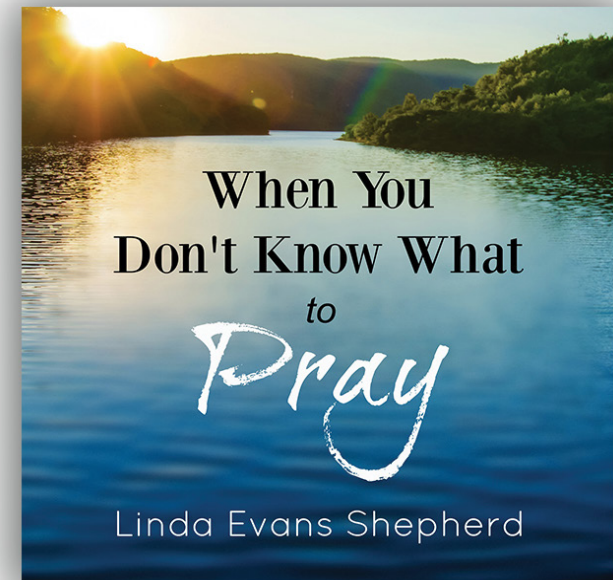
Next Question
How do you know?
[I have a personal relationship with Christ](#)
[I'm not sure](#)
[That's what I believe](#)
[Last Viewed Question](#)

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—Thelma Wells, author & president
A Woman of God Ministries



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-continued from p. 23-

business skills while getting mundane household or personal chores completed.

4. *Deliberately Group Tasks for Efficiency:* If I need to get dressed up for a meeting or speaking, then that is the day I also do other meetings or filming for our ministry. By deciding specific days where I am dressed up, made up and polished, I can complete a list of items that require this professional look. I also link all my errands on one day. This grouping by like task also means I can enjoy full days at home to be creative and comfy in my sweats!

5. *Use every minute.* If I have an extra few minutes I check email, read newsletters, a magazine article or a book that can help me improve an area of my life. I also handle small household tasks in those random five- to ten-minute slots: clean out a drawer, wipe down the kitchen, empty the dishwasher or make a quick phone call.

6. *Calendar Priorities First.* I carve out and mark down time with God; family vacations; marriage getaways and date nights; our kids'

major responsibilities, activities and celebrations. These all get placed on the calendar as far out as possible. Because we have a far-flung family, I make reminders on my calendar to call (or video messenger or zoom) and touch base with loved ones. I also schedule into my planner the time it will take to achieve the goal.

7. *Elevate My Vision.* I pray to get God's viewpoint on my life, my marriage, my family, my ministry, my business, my friendships, my health — on all my

life. I have found it saves me time to do life God's way. By seeking God's view of my life and taking time to be in the Bible and prayer daily, God can fine-tune

"Time for self-care transforms into more time because your state of mind will be positive, focused, proactive and much more productive."

my path and plans, steer my future, and give mid-course corrections and convict me in areas He sees I need personal growth. In the long run, this saves me time because doing things right the first time saves "do-over" time. In addition, seeing myself, my life, my ministry and the precious lives of others from a more heavenly viewpoint keeps my heart matching God's heart and gives me the courage and confidence to walk out the plans He has for me, plans to give me "hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11) and that "abundant life" God has for each of us (John 10:10). LH

BOOK FUN MAGAZINE

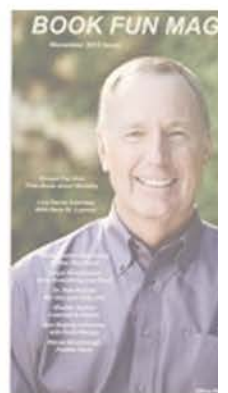
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BOOK FUN MAGAZINE

January 2014
Happy New Year!!!

Book of the Month
Rebellion
Dancing
Sharon Jaynes interview
Gift of Prayer Journaling
Redeemer
Ready to Jump In?
Christmas Journey
Ace Collins Interview
Kathi MacLean
Colorado
Crossroads Star Park
GB 4 Time
Cougar part 2
Guyana
Leadership
Instant Gratification
Kelly Klepfer Recipe
Linda Clare
Quiet Time
Grace
C.N. Bring
Tattooed
Blood Roots
Davis Bunn interview
New Bloggers List





part two
WOMEN IN WORSHIP SERIES

flourish *in every season*

CONTINUING PART TWO OF OUR WOMEN IN WORSHIP SERIES, WE'VE OPENED THE CONVERSATIONAL CIRCLE TO SONGWRITERS AND ARTISTS **LONDON GATCH** (RIGHT) AND **AUDREY ASSAD** TO DISCUSS HOW WE CAN LEARN TO FLOURISH AND GROW THROUGH EVERY SEASON.

-continued on p. 28-



“God has given me a voice to empower women around the world to dig deeper in their relationship with Him AND to find their strength and confidence in Him alone.”

—London Gatch to *Leading Hearts*

-continued from p. 27-

London Gatch and her husband, Lance, are best known for their ministerial work with Elevation Church. The couple joined the staff of Elevation Worship in 2009, collaborating on multiple projects until they felt the Lord calling them into a new direction in 2017. London says, “Not only did we feel the Lord leading us into a new season professionally, but at the same time we were personally going through a seasonal change. I was very pregnant with our daughter, and we were going to be first-time parents! It felt like God was telling us to slow down, take a rest and press in deeper to Him in anticipation of what was next.”



London and Lance playing “You Never Walk Away”

While many in leadership can relate to this kind of Abrahamic experience, we don’t always share with others the depths of emotion we go through as we traverse the waiting period. Recalling those early moments of realization, London states “In honesty, it was kind of scary and hard, leaving the church community that we had been a part of for eight years, but we knew that it was time. God was leading.”

Soon the couple welcomed a new baby and made the decision to move back home to Charleston, South Carolina, to be near family. They settled into parenting, as well as service to their local church, while continuing to remain open to what might be next. “When we first stepped out in faith with the knowledge that God was doing a new thing, we truly didn’t know where or when we would be there. But we took the steps of faith anyway.”

Bottom line, obedience coupled with faith has brought London into a new phase. “In the last decade of leading worship, God has taken us on a journey. One of the many challenges I’ve faced is being a female worship leader,” London explains. “God has given me a voice to empower women around the world to dig deeper in their relationship with Him AND to find their strength and confidence in Him alone. The perfect love of Jesus drives out our fear and insecurity.”

London and her husband have signed a recording deal with BEC worship and have released two debut singles, “Jesus Only You” and “You Never Walk Away.” Both singles are expected to be followed up by a solo debut album later in 2018.



Audrey Assad

Multiple Dove Award nominee Audrey Assad's newest project was met with great anticipation.

Early 2018 saw the release of *Evergreen*, and to date the album has been streamed over 2 million times on Spotify alone! Her musical content has struck an obvious chord with many. During the four-year music industry silence prior to the much-acclaimed arrival of the new project, Audrey was in a place of inward transition. Her personal life began to take on the weight of panic attacks and anxiety related issues. With the movement into counseling, prayer and the help of a trauma therapist, she has utilized those experiences and now shares her journey.

Much like King David, whose myriad struggles and thoughts are documented for us in the emotional raw of the Psalms, Audrey's songs chronicle her heart journey. The artist has been honest about the process of the past several years and her struggle with her faith, as well as her landing place.

Of the project, the artist has said, "This album, more than my last few, really is a combination of journal-style personal writing and worship writing, which are very different from each other. There is certainly a pastoral element to writing for corporate worship that doesn't necessarily exist in writing more confessional-style devotional music. I labored over the choice of songs. I desired to put together something that would be cohesive, but diverse in its intent."

As David's songs came from places of running and shaken faith, we find a person we can relate to in our own humanity. As Audrey chronicles lyrically the wrestling she has experienced as a believer, she gives voice to our own seasons.

With the latest project, Audrey has begun to launch out into another land of opportunity. She says, "*Evergreen* was much more of a 'patchwork' process than any other record of mine has been — I did a fair amount of pre-production on my own (arranging songs, building demos, picking sounds, making full scratch versions of each song) and then co-produced a few songs alone." Having wet her feet on her own project, Audrey Assad is now adding "producer" to her list of credits! As far as producing

is concerned, she says, "I think I'm incredibly suited to it, because I have an overwhelming number of ideas most of the time, and I also have the patience to chase them down. I've got a fair amount of the technical knowledge and ability, and far more of it that I need to gain, but ultimately, I think producing is a creative and artistic job that can be done by people with all different levels of software ability. It is probably tied with songwriting, for my favorite part of what I do—the actual creation of the sounds and the music in the studio." Audrey is extending her talents to produce a full-length album for worship artist Sarah Kroger, slated to release in late 2018. *LH*

Find out more about

**Evergreen at
www.audreyassad.com**



by Lisa Burns
PROFILE CONTRIBUTOR



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the big question

Q: How can I be sure I am called to speak or teach other women?



with *cynthia l. simmons*
WWW.CLSIMMONS.COM

I LOVE THIS QUESTION BECAUSE YOU DEMONSTRATE A LONGING TO DO GOD'S WILL, AND I COMMEND YOU FOR YOUR SENSITIVITY.

First, in order to follow the Lord, we need to understand spiritual gifts. First Corinthians 12:7 says, "Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good." When we trusted Jesus as our Savior, God gave us a special gift to use for the building up of the body of Christ. To some believers, He gives a speaking gift like exhortation, encouraging or teaching. At the same time, the Holy Spirit may give your best friend a serving gift like giving or administration. I believe God's gifts vary for each individual. Two people with the gift of exhortation can have a different emphasis because the Holy Spirit knows what the church needs.

Second, we must discover our spiritual gift.

Since Christians with similar gifts have particular tendencies, Christian organizations have developed tests which help you find yours. As I have studied coaching with my AWSA sisters this year, I learned to ask questions to unearth my client's deepest desires. Think about what you love doing because that's a huge clue.

Eric Liddell once said, "I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast! And when I run I feel his pleasure." Isn't that wonderful! You will enjoy using your gift.

Growing up, I had a huge photo on my dresser, in front of a mirror. I used the photo as my podium. Some imaginary person would introduce me, and I would thank them and start talking to my pretend audience. Plus, as I got older, I realized I was comfortable speaking to a crowd even though I lean toward shyness. Now I understand God wired me to speak because the desire came soon after I accepted Jesus. I also had the natural urge to study the Bible and examine every word and verb tense. That's very typical of someone with a teaching gift.

Third, when you use your gift, you will see results because the Holy Spirit works through you. People will comment on the impact you have in their lives, and God will open doors. For example, I know several people with the gift of evangelism, and they come across people who seek Christ daily. Even when I try to bring people to the Lord, I don't have the results they do.

Finally, it's important to remember Satan doesn't want us using our gift, and he will find ways to unsettle you even after you think you know where God is leading. Make your gift a matter of prayer and be confident in your obedience. *CL*



HOLIDAY BY DESIGN *by penelope carlevato* WWW.PENELOPECARLEVATO.COM



AS THE HOLIDAY SEASON GETS CLOSER AND THE DECORATIONS BEGIN TO FIND THEIR WAY AROUND OUR

HOMES, our thoughts go to having some holiday get-togethers and dinners. For some, it is exciting and fun, but for many, the idea of opening our homes, decorating, and making larger meals brings fear and dread.

Why the big differences? All of us have personality traits in combinations and are variable and adjustable and can be brought into balance when we are faced with making decisions on how we will use our gifts.

While there are many different types of personality inventory tests with different names, we will be looking at four basic personality types: Socializer, Organizer, Stabilizer, and Mobilizer. (Make sure you

read *Linked* by Linda Gildea and Linda Goldfarb on page 14 and find their book on 48).

So, how do the four distinct personalities react to our gifts of hospitality?

The “Fun” Socializer is always ready to have a party. She doesn't need a lot of planning time. She can get a group of friends together quickly; the more, the merrier. She is social, spontaneous, enthusiastic, high-energy and can entertain two or 20 with the same joy. Last minute is no problem for this person. However, this person can get off track quickly, and may even forget to serve one of the main dishes.

On the Menu: grilled brats, Costco potato salad, and make-your-own sundaes

The “Planned and Orderly” Organizer does nothing last minute. Everything has to be just right. If she has six chairs, then six guests. The menu is well thought out, and a checklist is essential to make sure there are enough dishes, enough time to set the table, cook the food and stay in control of the entire party. It's not easy for the organizer to be social for an extended period of time, so the event will be much shorter than a dinner given by a Socializer. She likes small groups and quiet music and expects everyone invited to attend.

Planned and orderly is the motto.

On the Menu: grilled steak and baked potatoes with all the toppings

The “Predictable and Quick” Mobilizer is always in control. Nothing is left to chance, and hospitality is by the book. The guest list is well thought out

with a particular focus on who will be invited — no surprises. The menu will be well planned but able to be completed quickly. No going back and forth on what to serve, and will probably be something made in the past, most likely a family favorite. The event will be orderly and precise, but still practical and sensitive to others — no frills.

On the Menu: lasagna, green salad, garlic toast.

The “Nice and Easy” Stabilizer is easy going and will invite at random without really overthinking about when or what to serve. The attendees will not be controversial or opinionated. The party will be warm, relational and comfortable. Once the invitation is sent, the menu will be changed several times before settling on the right one. The food will be simple, made ahead, easy to serve and not too spicy or exotic. The host is a good listener, not too talkative and likes quiet and soothing music. It will be an enjoyable event, and everyone will leave refreshed.

On the Menu: Crock-Pot® macaroni and cheese

Since we are all wonderfully complex and made by our loving Creator, it's incredible that God has also given us the flexibility to live and work with others. As we gain insight on our personality types, we can ask the Lord to keep our minds centered on who is around our tables and not on what is on the table.

CrockPot® Macaroni and Cheese

16 ounces elbow macaroni noodles

¼ cup butter, cubed

12 ounces of sharp cheddar cheese (grated) or a combination of your favorite cheeses.

4 ounces of Velveeta cheese, cubed

1 12-oz can evaporated milk

2 ½ cups milk

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon black pepper

¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

½ teaspoon paprika

½ lb. bacon, cooked crisply

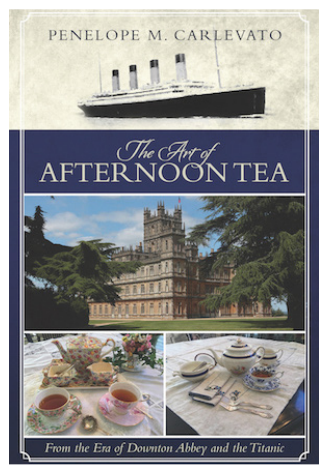
Spray the inside of the Crock-Pot® with cooking spray. Place the noodles into the bottom of the Crock-Pot® and top with the cubed butter. Sprinkle the cheese on top of the pasta and butter.



Whisk the evaporated milk, milk, salt, black pepper, cayenne pepper, mustard, and paprika into a large mixing bowl. Pour the milk mixture on top of the macaroni and butter and stir well to combine all ingredients.

Cover the Crock-Pot® and cook on low for 2 to 3 hours, stirring after one hour. The cooking time will depend on your Crock-Pot®. Check after an hour and continue cooking until fully cooked and all milk mixture is absorbed. Check often last 30 minutes. Top with ½ pound of crisply cooked bacon. Serve as a side dish or main entrée and enjoy. Servings per recipe: 8

PH



Find great recipes like this in

Penelope's book:

The Art of Afternoon Tea: From the Era of Downton Abbey and the Titanic.

Available autographed from PenelopeCarlevato.com



FAITHFULNESS IN THE CALL

by *karen whiting*
WWW.KARENWHITING.COM



WE ARE NOT CALLED TO MEASURE OUTCOMES, BUT TO BE FAITHFUL in our call. We leave the results to God who is the great connector. It does mean we strive to do the best and spread the message God gives us as far and as widely as possible.

Paul spent lots of time marketing. He wrote letters, listed his credentials when needed and turned many circumstances into opportunities. A snakebite, time in prison, and a statue to an unknown god became openings to share Christ.

Here are tips to be faithful in following your call:

- Know and state your mission to be clear about what God called you to do. That will help you avoid distractions.
- Pray. Be specific about needs and listen to God. Study Scriptures related to your call.
- Set measurable goals and steps to reach goals.
- List the benefits, the reasons God asked you to follow this call. These encourage you to persist.

- Assess your talents to know what ones to apply and what ones you lack and need to develop.
- List your credentials and build on them. That may mean additional training and certification.
- Post your vision and stay focused. Pray about it and do one thing daily toward achieving it.
- Overcome challenges and life circumstances. Keep working at what you can do.
- Network. Listen to people as they might have a connection you need or story that fits with your mission. Exchange information. Use software help, like camcard.com to store and sort business cards.
- Invest time and money wisely. Study your goal and those with similar ones who succeeded. Save money, even pennies a day add up, to use for needed supplies or travel.
- Engage with people who can assist, starting with family and church. Seek their support. Your church might let you share your talent and practice sharing your message.
- Track your actions and investment of time and money.
- Ask yourself daily if you are being faithful to the call.

God wants you to follow Him and not compare what you do or your results with anyone. Look to Korea and how the first missionaries, such as Horace Newton Allen (1885) saw little measurable success. But they planted seeds that sprouted. In 1974, the church began to grow, and 40 years later they sent out 27,435 missionaries. God sees the future that goes beyond our earthly timeline. *PH*



BUILDING A CONNECTED SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

by *edie melson*
WWW.EDIEMELSON.COM



WHEN I TEACH SOCIAL MEDIA, I ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO RELAX AND NOT TAKE ON TOO MUCH AT ONCE. So, let's back up and start with the basics. Because social media can reach millions, it's way too easy to think of it as mass marketing. In reality, it's about one-on-one relationships.

Here are 10 Tips to Build Solid Social Media Relationships

1. **Always provide value.** Value can meet a lot of different things, but these are the four types of updates I like to share:

- a. An inspiring quote or Bible verse.
 - b. Something funny (and never offensive).
 - c. A thought-provoking question or request for an opinion.
 - d. A link to something I find valuable.
2. **Find something to talk about besides yourself.** I use what's come to be known as Edie's 5 to 1 rule to stay balanced. For every five social media updates I share, I allow myself to share one about me or my product or ministry.
3. **Know where you want to go.** I think it's important to have goals. Have a long-term goal,

-continued on p. 36-



“Don’t over-stress about the numbers.
We sometimes forget that
behind each number is a real person.”

-continued from p. 35-

mid-range goal, and a short-term goal. One good way to do this is to find someone who is where you want to be and emulate them. Analyze how they are handling online connections. Learn from what they’re doing and follow in their footsteps.

4. **Don’t over-stress about the numbers.** We sometimes forget that behind each number is a real person. We get greedy and want to reach hundreds and even thousands. We need to keep our perspective. If I had 25 people who regularly showed up at my house to hear me share my passion, I’d feel really good about that. But on social media we find that number disheartening. Take care of the people God has brought into your online life. I guarantee that when you do, He’ll add to that number.
5. **Promote others ahead of yourself.** I’ve built my platform by promoting others. I find those more knowledgeable than me and share their information ahead of mine. This shows our followers that we’re not out for ourselves, but that we truly want to bring value to their lives.
6. **Don’t overshare.** Don’t share updates that are offensive or insensitive. Don’t dominate the feed of any network by posting update after update. And finally, don’t share boring day-to-day details. Remember this wise advice I heard early in my career, “Two things are interesting to the general public — someone famous doing something ordinary or someone ordinary doing something extraordinary.”
7. **Know the culture.** Every social media network has a different culture and etiquette. Learn them and act accordingly. For example, Instagram

users love hashtags. An Instagram update with fifteen to twenty hashtags is expected. In the Twitter culture, anything more than three hashtags is offensive.

8. **Be recognizable.** There is a lot of overlap from network to network. Take advantage of that by using the same or similar avatars for each account. Also do your best to get as close to the same user name as possible.
9. **Follow back with care.** There is an overarching culture of following back on social media. I’m fine with that — up to a point. I have my own personal standards of what accounts I’m comfortable following back. My goal is to avoid interacting with fake accounts or people who just want something from me. My guidelines vary from network to network. Decide what your standards will be and stick with them. But try to be open to new — authentic — connections.
10. **Be true to your brand.** We don’t have to be cardboard cut-outs who only share about one thing. But those who follow us should be able to expect certain things. I have just a few major areas I share through social media — writing and social media, creative inspiration, photography, and devotional inspiration. Occasionally I’ll share a picture of my workspace or my cat, but I stay true to what people have come to expect from me.

These tips have helped me build a solid online presence, and I know they can help you too. The last piece of advice I’d like to offer is to remain authentic and pray for your followers.

God has given us a great opportunity to share His love in a way no generation ever has before. When we honor that calling, we can feel His pleasure. *LH*



"If you find you are taking yourself for granted, belittling your self-worth, devaluing your potential, neglecting self-care, or self-sabotaging your happiness, today's a great day to start believing these truths."



10 truths i wish i'd believed *10 years ago*



by saundra dalton-smith
WWW.ICHOOSEMYBESTLIFE.COM

-continued on p. 38-



-continued from p. 37-

AROUND THIS TIME EVERY YEAR, I START REFLECTING ON HOW MY LIFE IS PROGRESSING. I wish I could say I'm always pleased with my self-evaluation.

Too often, I find myself utterly amazed at my ability to doubt, fear and regret. Instead of seeing the fruit I desire, I notice too much precious time spent striving and not enough time spent thriving. Too many moments focused on fighting back negative thoughts and too little spent on cultivating the truth.

The truth is timeless, but the time we spend outside of it has a profound effect on how deep our roots grow and how high we can reach. It doesn't change. The truth remains stable throughout our ups and downs.

But the truth does have the power to change us. It becomes a solid foundation on which we can build, and it refuses to be shaken by temporary nuances. The truth remains true even in the face of our deepest fears and unspoken doubts.

Today, I'm sharing with you 10 truths I wish I had believed 10 years ago. Why 10 years? Because that's around the time I burned-out, lost my joy, hated my job and wanted out of my life. Because that's when every weakness, flaw and imperfection decided to introduce itself to me. Because that's when I came to the end of myself and found God. These 10 truths became breath to my dry bones. They filled the empty places of my heart and spoke life to my body.

If you find you are taking yourself for granted, belittling your self-worth, devaluing your potential, neglecting self-care, or self-sabotaging your happiness, today's a great day to start believing these truths.

If only I believed...

1. My worth is not in question.

Psalm 139:13-14 – For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. (ESV)

I was born with value my soul recognizes even when my mind does not. Not feeling worthy does not change my self-worth.

2. My future is never without hope.

Jeremiah 29:11 – For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. (NLT)

Even when I do not know what tomorrow holds, I can be confident of this one thing — hope. Hope goes before me and paves the way for better tomorrows.

3. Fatigue is an invitation to rest.

Matthew 11:28-29 – Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am

HEALTHTRACKS

gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

I've always seen fatigue as a part of life. It's how you get things done. If you are not worn-out by the end of the day, then you apparently wasted your day. The truth is fatigue is how our body reminds us to take care of ourselves. It's an invitation to a divine exchange.

4. My weakness has potential.

2 Corinthians 12:9 – But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. (NIV)

Weaknesses are only opportunities awaiting a revelation of what is possible. They are a chance for me to experience grace on new levels.

5. Peace is a readily available gift.

John 14:27 – I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid. (NLT)

Many wars are fought over peace; some in my mind. An anxious heart has difficulty accepting gifts it can't fully comprehend. Receiving this gift means I have to give up my fight to understand.

6. Scripture has life-changing power.

Hebrews 4:12 – For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (KJV)

There will always be new books, new research and new ideas being birthed, but none of these will ever hold more power than the Word of God. Choose it as the definitive answer over all other resources.

7. Good is a pre-determined destination.

Romans 8:28 – And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. (KJV)

On the way to the destination, you will journey across all types of sorrow, pain, disappointment and failures. Don't visit too long at any of these stops.

8. Life has many seasons.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 –There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens. (NIV)

In one season, I spent most of my days changing dirty diapers. In my current season, I navigate the complicated waters of teen hormones. Each season is different. Some are more difficult than others, but it's only for a season.

9. Jealousy is a silent killer.

Proverbs 14:30 – A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot. (ESV)

I wasted many years comparing myself to others. Instead of celebrating their successes, I feared their gain was my loss. Jealousy is a slow poison, destroying you from the inside by blocking your personal growth. It puts unnecessary boundaries on your ability to excel.

10. There's plenty for both of us.

Philippians 4:19 – And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. (NIV)

Life is not a fight or competition. There is an abundance of everything for everyone, including you and me.

Learn more about renewing your mind, body, and spirit in my new book SACRED REST. In it, I describe seven distinct types of rest you need, discuss the resulting 12 gifts of rest, and give practical tips on how to spend more time enjoying the good in your life. *SH*



JUST18SUMMERS

by michelle s. coy
WWW.JUST18SUMMERS.COM

keeping up appearances



THE AFTERNOON HAD BEEN STRESSFUL FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY. Kathy made the twentieth effort to make her makeup and hair perfect, but she still wasn't happy with it as she applied a liberal coat of hair spray.

Then she moved on to her husband, Chad. She barked an order for him to change his tie because the gray in the stripe didn't match his suit. She missed his look of frustration as he sighed and headed back to the closet.

Once Kathy had him squared away, she turned her attention to her children. "Miranda, change that outfit for something nicer. And do something with your hair. Bobby, you cannot wear your tennis shoes. I'm the speaker at this event. What would people think if my children showed up looking slouchy?"

The quest for perfection didn't end there. Once the family was in the car, Kathy began a diatribe of instructions. "Chad, I know you're reserved and don't like these kinds of events, but everyone's going to be watching us, so talk to people and act like you're enjoying it. Miranda and Bobby, be on your best behavior. Use your manners. And whatever you do, sit up and act interested while I'm on the platform. I'm speaking about parenting with joy tonight, so it's not going to look good if people think you're bored or see you pestering each other...."

The mood in the car was anything but joyful. Then

Kathy started her inner conversation as she ran through all the ways she didn't measure up to the other speakers. *I'm not as pretty and I don't have the fashion sense of the others. I'm not as funny as Betsy when she speaks, and Carol is so good at sharing her heart that everyone loves her. I just don't measure up.*

Ouch. I suspect most of us in leadership roles have been guilty of some of the above. So how can we take the stress off ourselves and our families?

- We need to realize that sometimes our quest for perfection comes from our own insecurities.
- When we make things all about us instead of all about Him, we have our priorities skewed. If God is pleased with our efforts, then we should be as well.
- We need to remember that our faults and failures are often what most touch the hearts of others. God doesn't expect perfection from us or our families, and we shouldn't as well. After all, there was only one perfect person in the Bible.
- It's important to understand that unrealistic expectations for our children (and ourselves) can lead to resentment, pressure and burnout — and can cause our children to hate spiritual things.

The most important leadership role we'll ever have begins at home. So let's ditch "keeping up appearances" and be real. That's when we'll truly be able to model Jesus for our loved ones and for those we'll reach as we speak and labor for Him. *SH*



how do i know i'm hearing from God?

ONE SLEEPLESS NIGHT I PRAYED, "Help me, Lord! I'm only one little gal. How can you expect me to accomplish so much in the next few weeks?"

It was in that moment I heard God's still, small voice. He simply said, "Behold Me." Suddenly, it was as if I saw Jesus walking across the Sea of Galilee. "Come," He told me, unfazed by the paper storm that swirled around me.

He calmly walked over my flapping and floating papers, motioning me to join Him. So, I beheld Him, and with one foot after another, I too was walking on top of my storm.

I'm telling you this story to give you one of my best secrets: if you want to hear from God, you need to *Behold Him*.

Take your focus off your worries and look at Jesus. The next thing you know, you'll find yourself walking in step with Him.

But here's the part I don't want you to miss: as you walk with Him, ask Him to speak to you.

Here are my top five favorite ways to hear His voice:

- **Through His Word.** His Word is alive and will quicken your spirit and fill your heart with wisdom and understanding.
- **Questions.** Ask Him to show you things you need to know. He may whisper the answer to your heart or may answer some other way.

- **Paying Attention.** He may use natural or supernatural events or circumstances to speak to you.
- **A Good Night's Sleep.** God might give you a dream, vision, or turn your thoughts to His answers.
- **Wise People.** God may use others to give you wise counsel.

But once you think you have heard from God, how do you confirm that God has spoken to you?

One of my favorite evidences that I have heard God's voice is that I feel relief or supernatural peace. James 3:17 says, "But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere" (NIV).

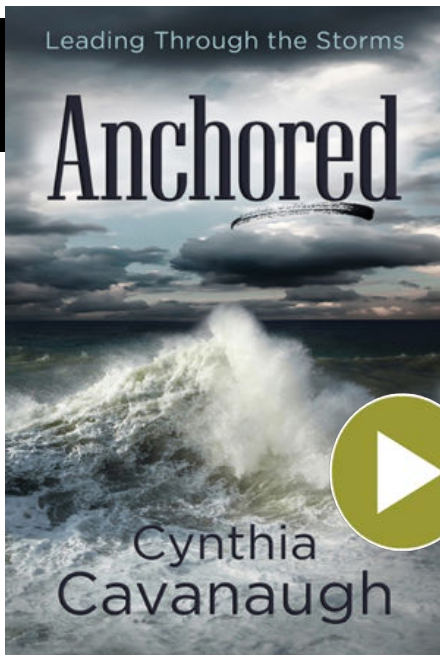
Another evidence we have heard from God is that God will never call us to break His Word. For example, if you have a financial need, and you hear a voice tell you to rob a bank, you can be sure you did not hear God's voice.

If you still need more evidence, ask, "Is that really You, Lord? Am I hearing from the One who sent His Son, Jesus, to shed His blood on the cross for my sin?" Any evil spirit will shrink back when confronted with the cross.

But if you are still not sure, go back to square one. Behold Him! Read His Word. Bask in His presence. Look at the problem through Him and wait. He will tell you in His perfect timing. *LEH*



BOOKSTOREAD



ANCHORED by Cynthia Cavanaugh

Cynthia Cavanaugh's latest book, **Anchored**, will be at my bedside for a long time. Cynthia writes with soul-level honesty and authenticity as she weaves her personal stories with Biblical truths. Her book is chock full of wisdom, practical tools for leadership, and sound biblical research. As a leader, how do we continue to lead when we are in the midst of ugly storms? I've highlighted many sections including: "The choices we make ahead of time determine the choices we will make during the storm." Cynthia is a dynamic leader, and her words ring true because she has lived them. I highly recommend this book for leadership workshops, or for personal growth. Well done, Cynthia! —Heidmarie Erika McLaughlin

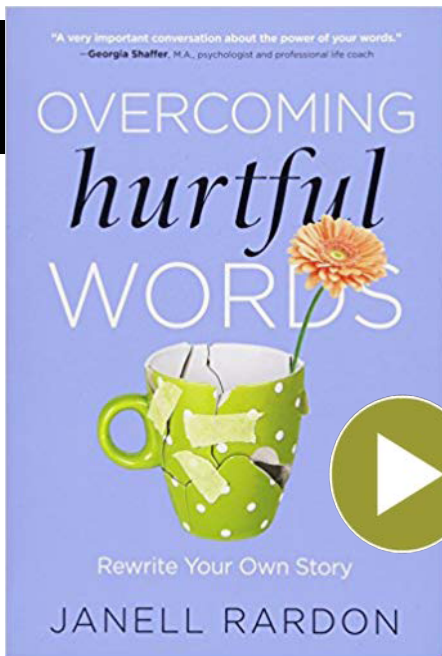


LINKED

by Linda Gilden and Linda Goldfarb

What a fun book to help anyone identify and understand not only their own personality, but others. With the opportunity to go through the LINKED Personality Assessment, in one sitting the reader will gain useful information that can be put to use immediately.

The authors' experience and expertise are woven through the book in a helpful, encouraging way. You get the sense that they really want to help you understand yourself and those around you. This is a wonderful resource book for parents, teachers, pastor's, writers, managers, leaders, business owners. If you deal with people, which we ALL do, this book is invaluable. —Beth K. Fortune



OVERCOMING HURTFUL WORDS

by Janell Rardon

With wisdom, heart and candor, Janell Rardon dives into the needed subject of overcoming hurtful words. I really enjoyed the reflective questions and practical insights in each chapter. Reading this book is a great combination of chatting with an encouraging friend and working with an experienced counselor. Janelle takes the reader through workable and practical questions and information to both understand the issues and hurts that need healing. Each chapter shares a specific practice for overcoming hurtful words and building healthy responses and behaviors.

Featuring practical teaching on God's word as it relates to each chapter, Janelle thoroughly gives the reader a biblical foundation to overcome hurt and shame stemming from words that wound. My book is filled with underlined statements I want to remember and apply and I'm enjoying journaling my answers to her insightful questions. —Ginger Harrington



by heather van allen
LH STAFF REVIEWER



MUSICREVIEWS



INSPIRATION WORSHIP Powerful

New Radiate Music artist, Inspiration Worship, featuring singer/songwriter Linda Doane, has released its debut full-length album, **Powerful** (August 31). Undergirding Linda's music is her story of overcoming Stage IV Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and now praising God in full remission.

"I don't think a lot of Christians walk around feeling powerful," says Linda. "There's power available to believers in Jesus, and that's the overall message I want people to come away from with this record."

Linda shares her message, which is, as the album title declares, powerful, with breathy and pretty vocal tones that rise and fall to varying levels. The first notes of the first track reveal a young sound to her voice, which may come as a surprise to listeners predisposed to expecting a sound with a bit more age and depth to it. Her style grows on the ears as the album progresses, as the listener settles deeper into the praise-and-worship-infused message.



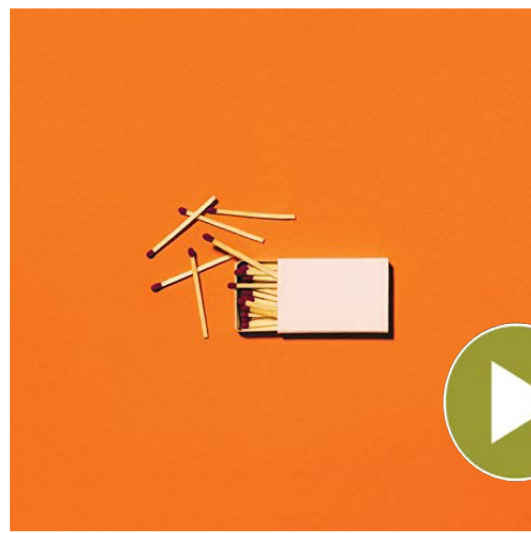
CHRIS AUGUST

Seasons

Seasons, Chris August's first independent project since 2008, presents eight tracks that show the artist's willingness to be a bit innovative with his musical choices.

The album features familiar radio single "Nothing's Beyond Broken," a song for which the title aptly captures the message that nothing is beyond God's power to restore. The other seven, among them the title track along with "Delivery," "Lips" and "You and Me," communicate devotion to a God unmatched in goodness with upbeat, non-stop energy mixed with plucky and positive melodies.

"I love the journey and the seasons we go through in life," says Chris. "I'm in a different season now since my last release. I've gotten married, I've grown in my faith, and now I'm releasing music on my own for the first time in 10 years. It's my hope that these songs will encourage, inspire, and challenge people in the season of life they're walking through now."



JESUS CULTURE

Living With a Fire

Jesus Culture has released **Living With a Fire**, (August 31), a live worship album recorded at their conference in Sacramento, California. The album showcases the powerful voices of worship leaders Kim Walker-Smith, Chris Quilala, Bryan and Katie Torwalt, Derek Johnson and Chris McClarney. A certain vocal maturity, coupled with genuine passion, are qualities all six artists have in common. They combine into a worship set that keeps

building one song upon another to inspire the listener to go deeper with God and lift Him higher.

"We want the listener to encounter Jesus and to have their lives changed through that encounter. We pray that every song will be fuel to fan the flame of intimacy with Jesus and relationship with Him," says Kim Walker-Smith.

The right music can stir up worship anywhere, and with **Living With a Fire**, Jesus Culture shows that the power of God's presence in corporate worship can come into the intimate prayer-closet spaces of the individual as well.



by rhonda rhea — WWW.RHONDARHEA.COM

grace to dye for

I DOUBT IT'S ANY SURPRISE THAT I'VE NEVER BEEN KNOWN FOR BEING LOW

MAINTENANCE. Recently, though, I did at least shoot for being a little less of a budget drain. Like maybe a bit more "DIY" in a few areas. I confess, "do-it-yourself" is rather out of my wheelhouse. I'm a lot more comfortable as a "do-it-for-me" kind of gal. But I was willing to try.

I decided to focus on the hair budget. No, not giving up the color. I'd dye first (pa-dum-ching). I don't think I'll ever be so low maintenance that I'll go color-less. But I thought, surely I could color it myself. What could go wrong?

Oh my. Somehow, somewhere between the shake-this, the apply-that and the rinse-the-rest, I managed some sort of slinging spill — a gazillion splotches of hair color in all sizes and shapes, all over the carpet. And did I notice I'd done it so I could clean it right up? Oh no. I had to wait the half-hour it takes to become one with the carpet. Most. Expensive. Hair color. Ever.

I told my husband, head hanging and shame-faced, that I'd made a major accidental art project of our carpet. He answered, "That's okay. It could've happened to me."

Could've happened to him? What? When he colored his hair? He doesn't have to color his hair. He doesn't have hair. But I'll tell you what he does have: grace. And lots of it.

I thought about just adding some more dye splotches on the rest of the bathroom carpet. Because ... leopard print! And though I still may put that DIY leopard rug idea on Pinterest, I decided

against DIY-ing mine because, while my husband is full of grace, I don't think he's really much of a leopard-print-carpet-in-the-master-bath kind of guy. It's good to know the grace is there if I need it, though.

My hubby is full of grace because he's so full of Jesus. I so love how he demonstrates the grace of God.

It's amazing to me that despite how messy my life gets—whatever stains I may slop and in whatever direction—God's grace is there. Unchanging. Steady. Always enough.

It's God's grace that saves us. Paul says in Ephesians 2:8, "For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift" (HCSB).

And it's God's grace that sustains us. When Paul was experiencing pain, the Lord told him, "My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Corinthians 12:9, HCSB). For every difficulty we face, His oh-so-sufficient grace is waiting. It's the kind of grace that holds us up when circumstances threaten to flatten us and life seems all too difficult. In every one of those circumstances, by His grace, He offers us absolutely everything we really need.

His grace is sufficient to save, sufficient to comfort, and sufficient to grow us into the faithful followers of Christ we long to be. And when we think we've seen all the grace there is, guess what. There's more! Grace after grace. "Indeed, we have all received grace after grace from His fullness" (John 1:16, HCSB).

Thank You, Lord, for Your grace that cleans my every splotchy life-mess. And thank You for the "more" grace You give even after that.

Color me grateful. All the way to the roots. *LH*

MISADVENTURES IN AFRICA,
HOLLYWOOD, AND OTHER
WILD PLACES



TORRY & DOUG
MARTIN PETERSON



lessons in hilarity from
THE CALL OF THE
MILD
LIGHT MY FIRE



“The pickpockets had stolen my wallet, but I wanted the Word of God to steal their hearts.”

“PLEASE FATHER, LET MY WALLET BE STOLEN,” I prayed in my hotel room in Amsterdam. “Bring forth the pickpocket that You would most like to be rewarded. I put my wallet into Your hands, Lord, and I ask that You will place it into theirs.”

For most people, having their wallet stolen while on a European vacation would be a nightmare. But for me, it would be a dream come true.

I was in Amsterdam for the Christian European Visual Media Association Conference, and I planned a side trip to Dublin on the way home. With my red hair and Irish descent, I had always wanted to go to Ireland. I felt it was my sacred duty.

Prior to leaving, some of my Facebook friends had warned me all about the pickpockets in Europe. “If you take the hop-on, hop-off bus tour in Ireland, you’ve got to be especially careful because it’s also known as the pickpocket express,” said one friend.

“The trains in Amsterdam aren’t much better,” said another. “Make sure you keep your wallet in your front pocket.”

A third Facebook friend added, “Some Gypsies work in teams and use their kids as distractions to gain your trust. They will charm the wallet right out of your pants.”

A week before my trip, I was at Goodwill and happened to spot a table full of old wallets, which caused me to remember the pickpocket warnings and triggered an idea. If I’m going to get pickpocketed, I might as well have some fun with it. So I bought five of them and put together what I called my Witness Wallets.

I loaded the wallets with Christian tracts and had ten euros sticking out of them to lure pickpockets. I also added my business card with a different Bible verse written on each one. Then, in the plastic window of the wallet, where a driver’s license normally appears, I inserted a card that said: “Congratulations! You have stolen a Witness Wallet!”

On my first day in Amsterdam, however, I failed to attract a single pickpocket, but that wasn’t God’s fault. For that I blame my pants. They were new and a little too tight. If a pickpocket tried to slip a hand into my back pockets, he’d never be able to pull it out. My pockets were the Chinese finger traps of trousers.

The next day I put on my bush pants. These pants were bigger and baggier, with multiple pockets. In fact, these pants were almost too baggy. My wallet was buried so far down in the large pockets that any would-be thief would have to stick his entire arm into it. I solved this problem by packing the

-continued on p. 50-

-continued from p. 49-



bottom of my back pocket with some wadded-up tissues and slipping the wallet on top. That way my wallet rode higher and would even stick out a little. If a pickpocket saw me, I would be a walking five-fingered temptation.

The tissues worked — I had two wallets stolen in Amsterdam, which left me with three for Ireland. Getting pickpocketed was thrilling. Seriously, I got an adrenaline rush every time. I was especially excited the day I got set on fire. That was very cool. It was also very, very warm — but overall ... cool.

I had just finished shopping, and I was standing at the hop-on, hop-off bus stop with about 25 people when I suddenly felt a fierce tugging on my shirt, and I looked down to see a short woman in Gypsy clothes, saying in broken English, “Umm ... This! This!” She was pointing to the shopping bag in my right hand.

I quickly realized what “this” was. My 100-percent cotton bag was 100 percent on fire! My newly purchased souvenirs were about to go up in smoke.

The fire appeared to have started in the center of the bag, and it was flaring out to all sides. As I frantically patted the bag, the fire singed my finger, forcing me to drop the bag to the ground. Then I tapped down the flames with my foot.

During all of this commotion, I thought I felt a slight tug coming from the back pocket of my pants, but I wasn’t sure. I was too busy putting out the fire to look. After I finally extinguished my badly burned bag, I reached back to check on my wallet and discovered that it was gone — and so was the Gypsy woman who had told me my bag was on fire.

An elderly Irishman sitting on a nearby bench hopped up and hurried to my side.

“I saw the whole thing! That Gypsy woman held her cigarette ’gainst yer bag until it lit,” he said. “The next thing I know, I saw the flames and her pointin’ ’em out to you! And when ya was putting it out, her partner pinched your wallet, and they took off that way.” He pointed toward Saint Patrick’s Cathedral. “I saw it with my own eyes, I did! ‘Twas unbelievable!”

As he was telling me this, I couldn’t help but chuckle. The two thieves had probably taken one look at my size and picked me as their victim, thinking I was the only one they were certain they could outrun. I like to picture them sprinting away, sitting down on the steps of Saint Patrick’s Cathedral while excitedly digging into the wallet, only to discover the gospel message. There is just something ironic and romantic about imagining it that way.

“I shoulda done something,” the bystander said, obviously embarrassed. “But it happened so fast I could’na think!”

“Don’t worry about it. I’ve still got my real wallet right here,” I said, patting the right front pocket of my bush pants. “They just stole my Witness Wallet.”

“Your what?”

“Witness Wallet. I wanted it to get stolen.”

When I explained what I had done, it was now the Irish fellow’s turn to break out laughing. “That’s deadly news!” he exclaimed. “Brilliant!” Then he turned to another fellow and said, “Didja hear that? They pinched his wallet, but he went arseways with the gospel on ’em.”

Arseways with the gospel? That’s got to be the funniest line I’ve ever heard!

“Arseways” is Irish slang that means to totally mess things up. In other words, “He went arseways with the gospel” means that I had fouled up the thieves’ plan by luring them into pinching my wallet and giving them the gospel instead.

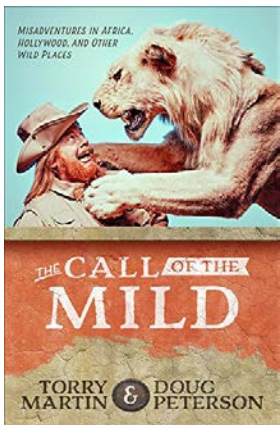
The pickpockets had stolen my wallet, but I wanted the Word of God to steal their hearts. Even though I had been set on fire, my burning desire was to show God’s pure love to the cash-stealing couple.

* * *

During the agony of the crucifixion, Jesus told one of the two thieves hanging next to Him, “Today you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43). So I prayed that my two thieves would likewise turn their lives around and someday join Him there too.

Whatever our mission in life, whatever our calling may be, we need to remember that it’s not about us — it’s about others. Our main calling is to lift up the name of Jesus, even if our wallets get lifted in the process.

Article is adapted from the Call of the Mild by Torry Martin and Doug Peterson available on Amazon.





by *sharon elliott*
WWW.LIFETHATMATTERS.NET



THE TRUTH

don't let your gifts stay buried

AS I LOOK BACK, I REALIZE THAT A DRIVING FORCE BEHIND MOST OF WHAT I'VE DONE IN MY LIFE HAS BEEN THE DESIRE FOR SIGNIFICANCE. I admit that I want my life to count. I don't want to just flow through this earthly existence from my birth date to the day I die and leave nothing behind except the dash on my tombstone to indicate that I was here.

Consequently, I've chosen to answer the gracious call of God and hook my life up with His. The line is not in the Bible verbatim, but the idea is there and the quote from the old spiritual song is true: only what you do for Christ will last.

"For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire" (1 Corinthians 3:11, 14-15, NKJV).

So for me, I recognize my spiritual gifts to be in the areas of teaching, knowledge, leadership and wisdom. My calling, therefore, is to use these gifts for the furtherance of the gospel and for the edification of the body of Christ. That's why I write,

I don't want to just flow through this earthly existence from my birth date to the day I die and leave nothing behind except the dash on my tombstone to indicate that I was here.

speak and teach seminars about the Bible and its application to our lives. Words are the vehicle God has given me through which to express my gifts.

Knowing all of that helped me identify with Paul as he was explaining himself to the church at Corinth. He said:

"And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God" (1 Corinthians 2:4-5, NKJV).

Even though Paul had education and a fine pedigree, he humbled all of that under the hand of God and subjected it to the Holy Spirit. He didn't apologize for his gifts or his

position, but he turned everything inside of him over to the Holy Spirit.

We can't use our gifts unless we know our gifts. We can't be effective in our calling unless we embrace our gifts. We can't be powerful in the operation of our gifts unless we submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit.

What are your gifts? Your gifts and your calling go hand in hand. Don't just stand around bragging about them; put them to use as you are guided to do so by the Holy Spirit. *LH*



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