

# ROOM FOR THE CALL

*Sarah Beriylth*

In memory of my mother who passed away on Valentine's day  
14 February 2023, at 14:14

ISBN: 978-0-6397-8387-1(e-book)  
ISBN: 978-0-6397-8386-4(print)

I write this, for the sake of the next singular barefooted monk  
whom God chooses to call on a type of Damascus road  
potentially leading to a proverbial jail  
where with ink and paper the butchered church will find it written,  
“In my judgment, she is happier if she stays as she is  
and I think that I too have the Spirit of God.”  
(Paul the Apostle, 1 Cor 7:40).

*There is a price tag for singleness,  
even if she is happier.*

*Sarah*

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### Author Note

In light of the roughly 40 000 Christian denominations that exist today, I write what I know will provoke. Since the world-renowned monk with his serious mind innocently yet provocatively nailed a piece of bullet-points on a church door, seeking to reveal the truth and resolve, which guilelessly changed us from one Catholic body (which means universal one church) into 40 000 butchered bodies, now sadly limping here and there in the 21st century, I realize that writing about the dreaded word ‘singleness’ might too cause a stir, or deeply offend limping believe systems. I know my story will. Why? I have firsthand experienced the galloping horses behind my frail brown monk-tunic while trying to walk barefoot on muddy slopes that divide the horse-cart and barefooted poignantly. At least I have a handful of monks walking alongside me. I am not alone in the mocking that carries an undertone of “something is wrong – next to gay wrong” with us single poor missionaries who never got married.

A while ago, one of my sponsors looked me square in the eyes while she baked in her kitchen. “You know what they say about you, right?” “You know what they say about missionaries who choose to live a life in faith by joining a mission organization that pays no salaries?” It came down to (just don’t mention this too loud) that we are the undesired roaches in the kitchen of the church, and then a very small minority among the roaches (like me) takes it to the unimaginable next level. We become the blind moles under the green lawn of the perfectly shaped church backyard where families gather to celebrate as they sing Psalm 127:3-5: “Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one’s youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their opponents in court.” We mess up the lawn. When the proverbial monk tries to convey that God called him/her to a life of celibacy the reaction is near-universal: Genesis 1:28, “God blessed humans and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase.’ Inevitably the next line is: “I pray for you for a spouse.” I heard it once asked, “If I step on your holy cow, how holy is he?” For some, the topic of singleness is truly a holy cow. Just imagine it’s your child telling you they will never marry! I firmly believe that Christ has set us free from cow-worship in the desert of sin. It is for the sake of the next singular barefooted monk

whom God chooses to call on a type of Damascus road potentially leading to a proverbial jail where with ink and paper the butchered church will find it written, “In my judgment, she is happier if she stays as she is—and I think that I too have the Spirit of God.” (Paul the Apostle, 1 Cor 7:40).

Of himself, Paul wrote that if possible, “remain single, as I am.” (1 Cor 7:8). Let us take it from whom it comes. It is fascinating, in the context of this conversation, that the only person of the original apostles whom we know for certain was married was Peter. This should cause us to stop and ponder this topic for a brief while. Let us ponder together as I tell you my own barefoot muddy monk story.

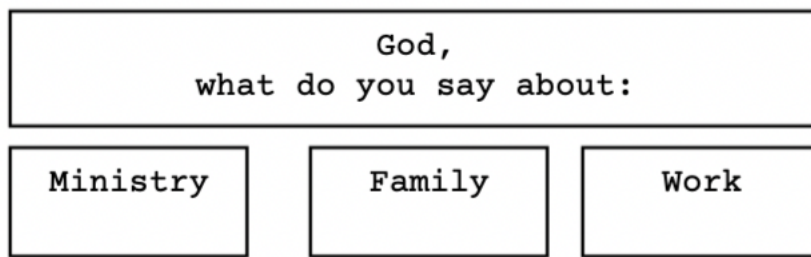
Note, the spiritual experiences and theological views held in this book by me does not necessarily portray the views of my family, my friends or Youth with A Mission (YWAM) and its University of the Nations (UofN).

## CHAPTER 1

### Prologue: The Question

Life can throw us many questions. Solving such questions when the actual situation might have a different perspective leading to a very different outcome means we need to know how to ask the right questions at the right time. Asking the wrong question might inevitably lead to an undesired conclusion even if the intention of the questioning is pure. How disturbing the moment when we realize that our lives were built upon the wrong presupposition. Here is a true story. In their latter part of life, the old man asked his wife what she would have done if they never married when they were young. She said, "I always felt God called me to missions but I was too scared to lose you, so I said yes when you asked me to marry you. I thought that if I told you about my call, it would be the end of us." Then she asked him the same question. Well, he answered. "I was called to be a missionary when I was a teenager but then I met you. I was scared to lose you, so I asked you to marry me but never told you that I was called to ministry." How disturbing this moment must have been when they both realized they missed it. The pressure of the fear that we would end up on the proverbial false shelf of life while our culture demands that we marry is very difficult. Let's look at a classic example of asking a wrong question. What comes first? Work, God, my family, my marriage? Many struggles with this issue. You have to pay the bills for your family to have a home but you never get to be with your family. Is there another way to deal with tedious tensions like these in our daily lives? Perhaps you are a pastor and you believe it is ministry before family and in the name of missions, your family has constantly to deal with so much. Perhaps even being burned out while doing what you really believe is right. We have heard it quote to us many times that the correct order of life is: "God first, then family, then work." Unfortunately, this subtly elevates pastors and missionaries to a place undeserved. A pastor is more important than a teacher, a married woman more elevated than the single, and so forth. It is deeply ingrained in our worldview. This means that there is a question that eludes most of us that can cause some of us to live very different lives, which includes the question of singleness. I suggest to you, that if we pray in the order suggested above, something is

going to go wrong and we will not know what it is until it is too late. Let's correct the question.



The very first and only question in every situation in life ought to be: “Lord what are you saying to me about this at hand?” “Lord, what are you saying to me about work, my spouse, my kids in this season of my life?” If you feel you’re in a situation where you have to choose, simply become quiet and ask God what the priority for that day, or for that season in His view is. His peace will come as you submit it to Him, not as you choose what you think the solution ought to be. How is this type of prayer possible? It is possible when we lay down our rights before Him, making Him Lord in every daily situation and then moving beyond our will into His. We first have to get the hierarchy of our culture out of the way. It is possible with the mindset Jesus told us to have: “If anyone comes to Me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.” Luke 14:26 “So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.” James 4:17. While I was writing this part of the book, I took up Badminton. During my very first time on the court, I was assigned to play with an older player, a man in his 70’s still fit as a fiddle. I told him I have never played this game, omitting that my partner and I won East Transvaal doubles tennis in high school. The very first thing he did was to point with his index finger to the front, bouldering at me, “you stand here, you are a woman, men play at the back.”

Out of respect for the elderly, I kept my cool and my mouth, but inside I thought that it is impossible in our generation that there is still a sport that has these types of rules. How can someone tell me to play at the net because I am a woman? That night, I googled the rules of the game. The next week I arrived, I told one of the women that I learned it is not a rule that women should be in the front at all times if their partner is a male. The rule simply is that the stronger player, plays at the back. She did not know this. She never bothered to search for the truth. She was deeply embedded in the cultural norms, and in

my culture, a woman still plays at the net, at work, in marriage, with the kids, with salaries, and on the actual badminton court before they have seen if you can hit the feathers! In so many areas in our lives, we believe we have rights when God is asking us to move beyond our rights into His will for us.

Jesus showed us the way, and fully human fully God ending up hanging on a torturous cross because he chose to lay down all his rights as the Son of God. We think we have the right to marriage, and we think we have the right to do certain things as a man or as a woman in the marriage. We think we have the right to a divorce. We think we have the right to win the argument and our cultural blinders cause us to be blind to some very clear scriptural passages. The only right we have is to lay down our rights and to ask God what the right thing at the right time to do, is. Asking the right question will save a marriage or a life of singleness. While I wrote this book, I got off my chair, walked to the coffee machine thinking, "I am stirring things too much now." Immediately an image of the angel who came to stir the waters in John 5:4 came to my mind. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had (NKJV). Some of you might feel like the person in John 5 at the pool of Bethesda. You are at a point where you are waiting for the stirring of the waters so that you can get in and leap into what God has for you. Perhaps you are sitting on the side of choosing singleness or marriage and God is troubling you in your spirit. Perhaps your idea of church and missions will be stirred and you have been waiting for a long time. Finally, in your heart of hearts, you see the water moving as you read. I invite you to jump in!

## 2. Dream: The Prince

In a dream, in a vision of the night,  
when deep sleep falls on men,  
in slumbering on the bed;

Then he opens the ears of men,  
and seals their instruction..."

Job 33:15-16 (WEB)

I was nearing the end of high school when I had a vivid dream. I woke up thinking, "Will I see England one day?" I have never been overseas. It was not part of my worldview to contemplate getting on an airplane to visit another nation, yet in this dream, I found myself in England. I was a waitress, standing on the second floor of a large building near a door. The feeling I had in the dream is unforgettable. Downhearted and deeply despairing because my life did not work out was putting it mildly. Here I was, a poor waitress, something I promised myself I would never become. In the blink of an eye, everything changed. By standing at that door that very moment, I was in the right place, at the right time to be asked to escort the Queen of England and a prince to the very front seats of this very large hall. I walked them to the front row and showed the Queen her seat. Then, as I turned towards the prince to show him his seat, our eyes met and we fell in love. It was instant. It felt marvelous. At that moment I knew that we were going to be very happy together. Once again, in an instant, the scene changed and we were standing in Buckingham palace. I had no idea it was Buckingham palace until I watched movie years later. I knew those stairs! I shouted in shock while I pointed to the TV screen, "Hey, those are the stairs in my dream I had years ago!" My friend looked at me and said, "Do you not know where that is?" "No, how should I know?" She answered, "That is inside Buckingham Palace!" "No ways!" I responded.

In the dream, the prince was standing at the top of the stairs and I stood at the bottom. Then he asked me the big question: "Will you marry me?" I was intensely happy. As I opened my mouth to say "Yes, I do" out of nowhere came the words, "for the sake of missions I am not going to get married." Just like that, I woke up.

As I woke up my first reaction was, will I see England one day? Then I thought, what is that part of “not marrying for the sake of missions?” I did not go into deep contemplation about the dream because... it was only a dream! I mean, I will never be a waitress and I will never fly to England!

### **3. This then, is my story.**

I grew up in a typical Afrikaans South African Christian home during the time of Apartheid. Afrikaans South Africans for the most part fall under the category of warm culture. Although very time orientated as in Europe, we are more likely to be group-oriented as with most African tribes.

In her book, *Foreign to Familiar: A Guide to Understanding hot and cold climate cultures*, Sarah Lanier helps us gain a broad spectrum of insight into cultures and how they function. South Africa is more difficult because of the diversity of nations that shaped this country over an extended period in the nation’s history, which included influences from extremely hot and extremely cold cultures We are a good mix.

This bit of information is helpful when it comes to my church background. What I remember is that the church we went to also represented the political party we voted for. In my mind, it felt like voting for something else meant you were not part of the tribe. This mindset went beyond voting. If someone received adult baptism or raised their hands during worship, they were asked to leave the church, as it was in my case. This type of tribal practice can be seen in the Muslim culture too. To marry outside of Islam means you turn your back on your entire clan and their way of life. Of course, this is not true. A new Muslim believer in Isa (Jesus) still loves their country and culture and family yet they become outcasts because of the state religion. State and religion, if married can be a stronghold that is very difficult to bridge. It does not help to ask challenging questions because the debate was over before we were born. It keeps the individual in check around every corner. It breaks the will of the young and finding one’s will in later years can be difficult.

I of course did not know that this was the undertone of my upbringing. I did not know I grew up in a religious state-owned institution until I had my Damascus experience, turning a zealous ambassador for what I believed in, into a monk on the proverbial run. When it came to a person's choice of vocation, I can relate to my warm-culture Asian friends I met years later. Even studies undertaken and income reflected upon their family and speaking publicly about a subject meant that they represented their entire family's view.

Very recently, I spoke with a girl, now unhappily married, whom I grew up with. She went into the medical field by family default. Mom placed a lot of pressure on her. While she was finishing up her last year in high school, she told me that she wanted to go into missions. Her very well-off parents did not allow it. She had to study. Her father, with wealth and farms and all, finally in a low-toned conversation admitted in 2021, that he was wrong to chase wealth and finance, saying no to the pastoral call he always knew he had. He is close to going to heaven and it finally dawned upon him that the treasures of the earth will not reflect the treasures of heaven Jesus told us to gather while on earth. He dragged his daughter right along with him. This warm cultural worldview is important to understand because of the implication for someone like me, finally breaking away from it all, especially in the area of singleness verse marriage.

This is something individualistic thinking cultures or people groups dismiss all too easily. Our global YouTube village started to infiltrate this deep-seated worldview, so finally, for many young people in South Africa, this is not an issue anymore. At least the debate is back on the table.

When it came to my family's religious life there is one thing I respected and honored my father for. At the end of every month, he wrote out a few bank checks to be posted to the missionaries he supported, including a child in Mauritius. In our house were books like "Vanya," the true story of Ivan (Vanya) Moiseyev, a soldier in the Soviet Red Army who was ruthlessly persecuted and incarcerated for his faith. Through two years of trial and torture, he never denied his Saviour, and he never hesitated to share the gospel with anyone who would listen. Even though I have never seen snow as a child, apart from a freak snowstorm in 1980 and never again in my town of birth, I could vividly see Vanya

on his knees in the snow, melting as he prayed through the Russian winter night. He left a mark on my Christian faith.

I remember the Chinese missionary stories, that deeply influenced my thinking and the obligation to get the Bible to closed nations. As a child, I thought that the underground church was really under the ground and I could never picture iron curtains in my mind. Seeing that one of the missionaries my dad sponsored used to be with Operation Mobilisation (OM), newsletters containing current stories of Christians being tortured in China regularly came to my house – including the actual missionaries that went there. If there was anything I knew about being a Christian since childhood, it was that following Jesus came at a cost. My brothers and I never missed Sunday school, a fact that I am exceptionally grateful for today. If my parents could not make it, people would find us three young kids riding our bicycles to church, a mere kilometer from home. We had our spot right in the front on the hard wooden pew. People admired the three mannerly kids, around 7,8, and 10 years old sitting still for an hour in church. ADHD was not an option!

Years later, the Sunday came that I had to say my confirmation vows, the confession of faith in front of the congregation. We were 52 seventeen-year-old Sunday school graduates. Mom bought me a very nice white dress. That Sunday morning dad took me aside and said: “I want you to know one thing, this is not a normal promise, this is a vow and it is a vow to Almighty God. You need to think twice before making it to God because you will have to give account for it.” I was so worried about my class because many of them used foul language, smoked, drank, and slept around. I went to school with them since Grade 1. I knew them. I knew who were the true followers of Jesus. How could they make this promise to God?

I grew up in an environment that taught me since childhood that there is a consequence to disobedience. This is where “sparing the rod spoils the child” makes sense to me. It meant that when God started speaking to me about his love for me and his disdain for sin, I listened. I learned that the pain of obedience did not compare to the pain of disobedience, especially not when it came to God later in my life. On that day of confirmation, I vowed to live for Jesus, but little did I know that He would soon call me very specifically to go into full-time missions with Youth with a Mission also known as YWAM. I find it difficult to write full-time missions here because in some sense according

to the last command Jesus gave us before the ascension, we are all called to disciple the nations and to influence the seven spheres of society with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are all called to live a lifestyle of making disciples no matter what vocation we are in. During the era of enlightenment, we, unfortunately, brought a divide between “spiritual and non-spiritual” that caused our generation to see missionaries as more “spiritual” than other spheres of society. In her helpful book, *The Old Testament Template*, Landa Cope summarized spheres of society as follows, “Those Seven Areas of Influence can be easily remembered by following the first 7 alphabets in the English language. A = Arts, B = Business and Commerce, C = Church, D = Distribution of Media, E = Education, F = Family, G = Government.”

It brings us back to what I mentioned in my introduction, asking the right question the right way. An important question we all ask at some point is, what is my calling and how does making disciples of all nations in the spheres of society fit into this?

There are three types of callings. A high calling, a general calling, and a specific calling. Each individual has a high calling, to love God and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We all have a general calling given by Jesus to all of us, to make disciples of nations, to love, to give, to take care of one another. We all have a specific individualistic call that God will reveal to you as you seek his face.

If you are called a pastor or missionary, it does not mean that your vocation is now a higher calling than others. You just found your specific calling. If you’re a school teacher, a shop owner, or still going to school, it does not mean you missed your ‘high calling.’ You miss your high calling the day you disobey to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength, and your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:30).

I took the admonishment regarding my vow to live for God from my father seriously. If there is one thing that the N.G. church denomination gave me over time all those years, it was a deep understanding of the fear of the Lord. I praise God for this. “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of true knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. Proverbs 1:7 (NLT).

The week before our actual confirmation we had a gathering of all the parents with the group of 52 students. I was friends with a boy who was one of five sons. His father

conducted my 3rd brother's funeral in 1984. The two of us discussed how something in our handbook seemed unbiblical and that we had a problem 'affirming' what it said as part of our confirmation before God and the church. I had a lot of respect for him. One day some school bullies took him during a break and wanted to beat him up, simply because he stood for nonviolence. They hit him and he turned his other cheek. The entire mob walked away.

During the question and answer session with the parents, I decided to put up my hand. You need to remember what I said about my culture at this point. My hand goes up, it means my hand goes up on behalf of more than just me! Later during my studies in a more American-European setup, I would ask questions on behalf of the group and the American-European speakers and teachers always thought I was speaking on behalf of myself.

That day with all the parents reminds me of another point in our culture. Children are seen and not heard and the Dominee (like a pastor) back then, was just beneath the proverbial pope in our society. When (not if) the Dominee came to your house... no one was more important than him in town. I stood up. "Dominee", I said. This and this is part of what we must agree to, but it seems unbiblical to me. (I did not want to mention my friend). I continued, "The Bible says... this and that." One could hear a pin drop. The people behind us loudly whispered, "whose daughter is this that questions the Dominee!" People could not believe I did that. I know, this is not called suffering for Jesus, but in my mind, I knew I overstepped the boundaries given to me, for the sake of Jesus and the Bible. It felt good.

Not many years later I visited a church and I knew something was off from the start. I could not put my finger on it until the preacher stated something about God being far away and not too involved with our emotions. I sat in the pew boiling like a kettle not switching off. At the very end, the pastor asked, "Does anyone have a question?" For the sake of the roughly 200 visitors, I raised my hand and stood up. "I would just like to say, for the sake of everyone here, that if you cry God hears every cry, sees every tear, and holds you in his arms. He feels your pain and cries with you." The pastor immediately picked up his books and said, we are done for today, turned around and left through the door behind the pulpit. That was the end of asking questions. I never went back there.

Like most Afrikaans people, both my parents also grew up in the Dutch Reformed Church where the topic of hearing God's voice was not taught. I knew very little about hearing God. This used to be a debate among the friends of my father. I remember that Catholics were to be avoided (but no one explained why except for the praying to Mary part) and people who were baptized as adults too. Most of the time they somehow heard God speak and we saw them as religious fanatics who did that 'under the water stuff.' I did not know any non-believers though and the term atheist was never mentioned. I met only one catholic boy in my class. I believed that the whole world heard about Jesus and He was coming SOON! I had no idea that roughly two billion people, a third of the world still needed to hear about Jesus for the first time, let alone be discipled. This still boggles my mind.

Our South African school system was such that all classes read the Bible and prayed every morning. Jesus and the Bible were as normal as bread and rice in my house. Who did not have bread or rice? In his book *Soulful Spirituality: Becoming Fully Alive and Deeply Human*, the author writes, "...being a good Christian does not necessarily make one alert to the spirituality of otherness. It is easy for spiritual practices to help us fit into the subculture of our religious communities even as they fail to help us experience solidarity with all humans or, even more broadly, with all that is. This failure invariably involves strong identification with our won tribe and an absence of curiosity about or interest in knowing those who are beyond it... Rather than being attractive, the otherness of these people is threatening or despised" (Benner, 2011).

Once I finished my M.A in Spiritual Formation I have come to deeply appreciate much of what the Catholic Church preserved for us, practices that the early church would have been involved with that Reformers and Protestants lost since the reformation. I think the church's first 300 years after Christ is vastly different from what we know as normal Protestant Christianity.

My parents became born-again followers of Jesus after the death of my third of four brothers, Antonie. This then is that story, shaping us as a family for years to come.

**4****Escaping Death**

I am the oldest and only girl of five children. Mom had traumatizing stories for each birth. She was in labor with me for 22 hours and heard the doctor tell the nurse “she can suffer a bit, it’s her first child.” A few months after my birth she lost a baby. Then F.C. came and her kidneys wanted to stop. With the third 12 pound giant, Zarias... you can only imagine the difficulty. He got stuck with his shoulders. Antonie, the fourth was more in and out of the hospital with meningitis, fighting for his little life often. Finally, my youngest brother Jacque’s came with the cord around his blue neck. They lost his heartbeat and had to rush mom for an emergency C-section.

The first death sadly happened when my dad accidentally drove over my brother when he was only 21 months old. It happened three days before Christmas, 21 December 1984. I was eight at the time. We were one hour away from home after driving two days from the Western Cape to the old Transvaal, today Gauteng. I asked my dad to stop the car for a quick break. We were surrounded by fields of long golden grass fields, typical to Gauteng as far as the eye could see. Just before we drove off, mom asked me to see if everyone was in the car but I did not listen. I remember this moment. Why should I always do everything? I ignored my mom. The guilt ate me up for many years. I am quite sure that my sense of false responsibility in life and towards my remaining three brothers has its root in this moment.

My second (late) brother, Zarias, who was five at the time confided in me years later that he too felt responsible because it was his habit to count us before we drove off anywhere. That day, he forgot to count. Everyone in that car that day sat with some sort of guilt for decades. Arriving home was an emotional nightmare. The doctor came and the family had to hold mom down on the bed to give her an injection to calm her down. The funeral is erased from my memory but that arrival is deeply etched into the eyes of my heart. My parents lost nearly three of us older kids earlier that same year when our boat capsized because of a sudden change of wind at Sodwana-Bay, known for its shark-invested waters. I had the lifejacket that had an orange emergency whistle attached to it, and believe me, all I did was blow through the billowing waves. A boat with deep-sea

divers came to our rescue on their way in. I saw how they jumped off their boat in their black wetsuits to help us. “Are you ok boy?” the one diver shouted to me over the waves. I wanted to tell him that there was a whale under us but then I had to tell him that I was a girl with short hair, not a boy. When we finally arrived back at our caravan and tent, baboons ransacked our belongings and we left for a meal at a restaurant. “You have five lovely boys,” the young girl remarked. My family laughed but I thought, “can she not see my golden earrings?” I thus earned the nickname ‘Louis’ among my father’s side of the family. I was a real athletic tomboy but when it came to household chores, tomboy did not help!

Seeing I was the oldest, and a girl, I had the responsibility to put plates on the table for our family mealtimes. The first few days after my brother passed I kept counting one too many plates. This happened 33 years later again when Zarias, my second brother also passed away. Not long after the accident of my two-year-old brother Antonie, Zarias – the one who forgot to count us and five at the time, was diagnosed with polio. Etched into my mind is the little brown wooden step my dad build for him to get into the bath because he became too weak to simply climb in. The doctor said he might never walk again. The news went around and Radio Pulpit asked South Africa to pray for this five-year-old. Two weeks later a miracle occurred. He was playing outside in the tree with F.C. It was a miracle! God still answered prayer in this dramatic way.

I had no idea how this affected me. I discovered it during an impromptu meeting with a friend that is a psychologist. She does brain spotting and in our session, we hit the spot in my brain that contained the trauma of that time with my brother – 40 years later.

My parents' faith deepened in this season. Instead of growing bitter, they grew in and closer to God and it speaks volumes about my father who, lost his parents, a sister and her fiancé, and a beloved uncle when he was only 17. They were killed driving back from Cape Town after they visited my dad who was in hospital in his first year in the army. He nearly died from a burst appendix. Driving back to Pretoria, just before they reached home late that night, they accidentally drove in front of a train and were all killed on impact. The army felt so sorry for my father and his family that they flew him back to Pretoria, to the funeral in the plane of the president of South Africa at the time.

This is where things get strange. Not long after this incident my dad and a friend were driving. Dad, always the joker pulled a joke on his friend. When they stopped at a stop street, dad secretly placed the car in neutral. His friend did not notice and when he gave petrol to go, the car simply reffed loud but did not move. At that very moment, a train (hence the stop street) came at full speed. If dad did not 'trick' his friend, he would have died not long after the rest of his family, also by a train crash.

I escaped death on a few occasions. My parents nearly lost me when I was two. I was found floating found face down in a swimming pool. Mom saw me in time to pull me from the water! She became a full-time swimming instructor after that incident so that her parents never had to experience what she experienced that day. How many parents through the years came to say thanks to mom for 'saving' their kids. Part of this is because at the end of each season she also trained them to fall into the pool with shoes and clothing on. A child might know how to swim but if they accidentally fall into a pool with clothes on it becomes an entirely different story.

Mom also told me that around the same time, I was in a car accident with dad. My dad was on his way to the hospital to visit my mother who had just given birth to my brother F.C. He was in a motor accident and my head hit the dashboard. I was ironically taken up for observation on the floor right below my mother. My dad did not tell my mom for a long time! I still have a small dent on my head from that day.

Years later, as a teenager, I was rescued by a surfer in the ocean because a current held me between two sandbanks. I became so tired and although I swam for my province, the ocean is not a swimming pool. One would think I would not go near water after this yet one day I sat on the beach and watched a lady play with her baby, roughly 18 months. Very clear heard Holy Spirit say to me, "Watch that lady." This was before I had any teaching on hearing God's voice but it was so clear and directive that I followed it. The voice said: "She is going to go too deep and you will need to help her." She was still ankle-deep so what I heard did not make sense. I sat far away and decided to get up and walk slowly towards her. The nearer I got, I watched what I heard playoff before my eyes. Was she crazy? By the time I got to her, I was just in time to take her child from her cause she could barely touch the sand. She then swam out. I somehow managed to hold

her slippery child in the deep waves and got out myself. I remember being petrified but I experienced an instinct to save a child that day that I cannot describe in words.

## 5

### **God encounters in school.**

As a child, Jesus was very real to me. He appeared to me in a dream when I was around seven years old. This was 1983. In the dream, there was a war. I remember the army tanks and a brown dirt road. Suddenly, in a blink of an eye, Jesus came down with bright clouds in the sky and all the brown became the most beautiful green fields. He shone very, very bright. In the dream, I knew that regardless of where you were standing on the earth, everyone could see Him. No one could hide from Him. I was keenly aware that 'people on the other side of the world could see him at the same moment. I also knew it was too late to accept Him. I have no idea why, but in the dream I knew, "It is too late for America to repent." I was so scared because I could not remember a moment I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior. Then He spoke to me and said, "Do not be concerned, you are coming with Me." Then I woke up. I still remember it as clear as crystal!

Another strange encounter happened when I was seven. It was beyond my understanding because of the denomination I grew up in. Things like 'prophetic call' and 'seeing visions' and 'hearing God speak' were never part of a sermon that I can recall. I took my late brother Antonie (he was 15 months old) to a tap to drink water. I saw the tap and a bee on the grass just left of the tap. Suddenly in a flash, I saw how he was going to step onto the bee and get stung badly. Trying to avoid the bee as we drew closer to the tap, the exact thing happened just as I saw it in my mind. I freaked out, to say the least. How did I 'see' what was going to happen?

During my Gr. 9 (1991) year a very significant encounter took place that made me aware that God was watching me and that He knew me. I was secretly eating my sandwich during math class which was not allowed. While I was taking a bite, I thought to myself, "Why does my bread taste better when I eat it during class time and not during

break time?” I remember how it puzzled me. That night as I was reading my Bible before I went to bed, I randomly opened at Proverbs and my eyes nearly fell out of my head when I read the following sentence; “bread eaten in secrecy is pleasant.” (Proverbs 9:17 NIV). I sat on my bed thinking “Oh no! God was in the classroom. God knows my thoughts. I cannot escape God.” Needless to say, I never hung out with the kids who swore, drank, or smoked. (That was the religious standard by which I wrongly measure myself).

Timeframe of my conversion.

That same year, I was walking on the school grounds during class break, not too far from the classroom where I ate the bread ‘in secret.’ I suddenly heard God talking inside my head, saying, “You serve Me because you are scared of hell, not because you know and love Me.” I thought, is this not the reason why we choose Jesus? Don’t we choose him because we want to go to heaven? This type of thinking reveals the type of preaching I grew up with. The Christian message I grew up with basically began in Genesis 3, that we have sinned and that we fall short of the glory of the Lord and it ended with either heaven or hell when I died. Who is not scared of hell?

This half-gospel, rooted in preaching fearful evangelism and not in wholesome discipleship, and who we actually are in Christ is not helpful. If we start with the fall, we miss out on our purpose of knowing and accepting God in the first place. We miss Genesis 1 and 2. We miss what the term fully human and its redemption means. We miss the wonderful implications of a life lived in Christ. We miss out on our identity and how some could even be called to be single and still be a whole. As a born-again believer, I already live in an aspect of being a whole Bride with an amazing Groom. I am not a half looking for my other half.

If we end the gospel message with ‘repent to go to heaven,’ why should we engage in spiritual disciplines, discipleship, and the spheres of society in the first place? We will not engage at levels we ought to and we will not ask the right questions. We will only repent to go to heaven and the rest of our lives will be divorced from our original call, the call before the fall, to be fully human as God intended it to be, reflecting his image. We will be divorced from the call and the physical pandemic divorce rate with anemic biblical reference as to why we do not divorce a direct coloration to this type of evangelism.

Jesus came to show us what it is like to live a life fully human, that aspect of walking in the Garden in the cool of the day, in the image of God with God - that we lost. Oh, the cross is so much deeper than simply taking my sin so that I can go to heaven. As fully God, Jesus shows us in his life what God is like. But as fully human, he shows us what humanity is intended to be. As Kierkegaard has said, he came to be the “prototype” of a new humanity. “Jesus’ life shows us what it looks like to live out our human vocation amid this broken world while we wait for the dream of God to come true in all its fullness.” Jones, Barry D. Dwell: Life with God for the World (p. 84).

Was that day in high school perhaps the day I had my conversion? Some people have dates. The disciples did not have a date. Did you know that simply putting your hand up as part of your conversion started with Billy Graham? What did people do before that? I pin-point seeking and finding God to that period in my life. He was real. He spoke to me. He wanted me to know Him personally. He wanted me to serve him not because I was scared of going to hell. In the Bible, there is not one reference to believers ‘going to heaven when they die. Instead, they go to ‘be with Christ.’ How did I miss this revelation in John 17:3 that eternal life starts when I get to know God? “Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent”

“people who would be happy in heaven  
if Christ were not there, will not be there.

The gospel is not a way to get people to heaven;  
it is a way to get people to God.” John Piper

## 6

### **Hospital**

Not long after my encounter with God, one of the most difficult things in my life took place. My left leg started having intense pins and needles and I was in great pain. The doctors scheduled a cat scan. They saw that my L5 disc was damaged and pushed the main nerve to my left leg. While waiting for the results, our high school had its annual sports day with the Yellow, Green, and Blue teams competing. I had seven sport-event

that Friday. I was quite sure that I would win the long jump. I was unbeaten since I was 9 and broke records when I was 11 years old. I would most likely win the 200m and 400m sprints and end up second in the 100m. It was around 1 pm.

As I was warming up for shot-put I saw my mother from afar walking over the field towards me. Something was wrong. She was crying. For a moment I thought she was going to tell me something happened with my father and I felt the blood drain from my head to my toes. I was about to collapse with fear of this news when she said, "You must stop all your activities right now. We got the results back, one wrong move and you could be lame forever." I was so relieved that it was not news about my father that the shock of what was happening set in only later. That Tuesday in January 1992, the year I would turn 16, I was taken to hospital for an emergency back operation. The hospital staff took a body cast off my back. What I did not know was that I would not get out of bed after the operation for another four days and that I would need the cast to get up in the first place. The cast covered me from just under my chin, and screwed to the second half of the contraption just above my knee! We would rotate this knee part every two to three days so that each leg had a turn bending over time. It completely prevented me from bending my back.

The first four days were nearly done but the man who was to bring the cast for my back still did not arrive. I could not handle nurses turning me every two hours anymore and all I wanted to do was to get up and walk. I was so cold from lying still. My feet never warmed (I am a cold fish) and bed sores started to form under my heels. Now, this is painful! Why did my cast not arrive?

I hated both the catheter and the jelly I had to eat. Jelly for breakfast, jelly for lunch, jelly for dinner. That day, around 4 pm I cracked. I cried when my mom arrived, and then a new doctor walked in with the cast just as I was cracking up. Why are you crying, he asked. He was quite patronizing and it made me feel so foolish that he saw me cry in the first place. I think that was one of the lowest points of the entire ordeal. I was not emotionally prepared for such a big shift in my life. Since then, when I hear of people being paralyzed after an accident my heart always sinks into my chest for their sake, especially if they are athletes.

Some people at this point might question God as to why He allowed this to happen. When a stranger from some church visited my bedside, I remember telling her: "If sport becomes an idol then God has to stop it somehow - that is love." I truly believed God did this to bring me closer to Him. I have no idea where I picked up this - deep theology - but still, today, I cannot remember ever a terrible thing that happened in my life that I would blame God for. The book of Job is simply too revelatory to blame God like his wife.

A simple example could even be if I drop a glass it breaks. Its gravity, not God. As a child, I must have overheard and observed this mindset towards God from the way my parents dealt with death and sorrows. As the years progressed I have come to understand what an incredible unseen gift this was. After a full month in the hospital, I was finally released to go home. After four months of not sitting down, I finally could sit for 30 minutes per day. It happens to be my 16th birthday. I had to wear the body cast for 6 months. The first time I stood upright without the cast for more than 2 minutes, I fainted. All my muscle strength was gone and I lost a lot of weight. My body became dependent on the cast.

During the six months, I watched much more T.V than usual. The Bold & The Beautiful was one of the programs I started to follow by default. That soap show still shows today, a generation later. One day my father walked into my room with his Bible. He knew his Bible well and watched the show with me. Every five minutes he would page to a passage and say... "this is what the Bible says about what you are watching." (Cheating on your spouse, divorce, remarriage, etc.). Needless to say, that was the end of The Bold & the Beautiful in our house. I am deeply grateful for it. I started writing instead. Roughly four years later I threw all my poetry of that time away. Once again I felt it became too important to me and it did not portray the heart of God. One day I binned it all!

I did go back to school for the last two months of the year but because of the cast, I could not wear my school uniform. There is something to say about a school uniform. You don't have to think about what you are going to wear! It helps when you are a teenager. By November I could walk without a cast. That next January I did not partake in the sports but I could not help myself when I was watching the long jump. I told the teacher that I would jump, just once. I won without even warming up and was so scared that friends or parents would hear my name called over the speaker. I kept that jump a secret for years.

When I was finally back in school, I was allowed to jump to Grade 11 without doing Grade 10 but because I had math in higher grade, and to go to university, I stayed with the Grade 10 class. It was one of the best choices I could have made. A shout-out to Malcolm Gladwell is appropriate at this point. The study mentioned in his book “Outliers” how students fare emotionally, academically, and physically in sport due to their birth dates, and even up to when they go to university is something I experienced exactly as his studies proved.

During my final year in Gr12, our family moved to the Western Cape, in February of that year. My new school did not have geography as a subject and typing had different rules in this part of South Africa. I suddenly had three new subjects to deal with apart from moving and joining boarding school. I had economics, business economics, and home economics for the first time. It was impossible to make it to a higher grade level. In the very end, I had to take the new courses on Standard Grade, and the door to university and a degree closed in my face. In hindsight, one can see what God did with my family but at the time, this was hard to swallow. I did enjoy going to boarding school and my back did so well that I got provincial colors in swimming and netball. I played tennis again too. My back never gave any problems again, apart from my leg experiencing the occasional pins and needles if I sit cross-legged for too long.

## 7

### **The Zip Line**

Why do we think this happened to my back? Four years before the back operation, at the end of Gr. 6, when I was 12 years old, we went to visit my uncle on his farm in the Free state. There was a new zip-line on the farm. We never questioned injuries to my back when the cable broke as I left the start of the zip-line. I fell very far-right onto my bum. I had major facial injuries because the cable flung back into my face upon landing. This landed me in hospital with repeated operations for the next few years and it shadowed the back injury at first.

What made it finally surface was that two years after I fell out of that tree, a car hit my bicycle from behind on the way to school. I hit the road right on my bum the same way I hit the ground when I fell out of the tree with nothing to counter the fall. The fragile L-5 disc moved and hit the main nerve in my left leg, hence the severe sensation of pins and needles.

This happened again when I was 43 in Thailand. I was hit by a car while riding my bicycle and suddenly without warning found myself flying over a bonnet again, hitting the road. Now I had the L4 turn into a herniated disc to deal with but I managed to avoid a second fusion! Today I have constant back pain but through swimming, I will hopefully stay out of the hospital. I will never forget this accident in Thailand. I was praying for my very ill brother when the car hit me. I picked up my bicycle, and with shaking hands, I placed the chain back and simply said, "I forgive this man." Then I drove off while people stared at the situation. I was just so grateful I got the chain back on and that I could ride back home.

## 8

### **The Call**

At the end of my high school career, when I was nineteen, I was reading the book of Acts. After the powerful day of Pentecost, Peter was found preaching to large crowds of people. He said, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts2:38 NIV).

Paul goes on to explain baptism to the Romans by saying, "Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (Romans 6:3-4 NIV).

I don't understand why I have never noticed this passage in this way. Against the wishes of my denomination and course, my family at the time, I got baptized. The church

asked me to leave. My family did not understand why I was doing it. It was a difficult time and I had to find a church that was willing to baptize me. A friend of mine who lived in Stellenbosch said his pastor would help out. It took a four-hour drive to finally get to the small dam in the mountains of Stellenbosch, Cape Town where I would go under the water to symbolize dying with Christ and rising with Him. The details of the theological fight in the car all the way there and back is something I wish to forget, but this caused my family to finally look at scripture freshly. All my family members got baptized in years to come. I baptized my mother and Zarias in the river in Stilbaai.

Only six months later, on 5 May 1996 right before I turned 20, and one week before I boarded a plane to the Netherlands, I had a very special quiet time. As I was reading Jeremiah 1:5, it felt like the verse simply jumped off the page as if was written directly for me. Logos, the written word, turned into a rhema word, God making it personal to me, and it changed the course of my life forever. I read it over and over again. It was for me! God was calling me to be set apart for him.

## 9

### **Four Spiritual encounters in the Netherlands**

What did it mean to be called? Was I to study theology? Was I supposed to become a Dominee (Pastor)? Up till this point, I had no idea what I wanted to do after school. In high school, I wanted to go into animal conservation and/or psychology. Now, five weeks before I had to fly to the Netherlands as an Au pair, this happened. It was too late not to fly.

My tickets were booked so off I went in May 1996. Roughly two weeks into my new job I went to a town where many South-African au pairs gathered for an evening meal at someone's house. They asked me what I was going to do when I was done with the Au pair. I said I would like to become a missionary. One girl replied: "oh please, do not come and preach at us." It was like an unseen punch from nowhere that hit my stomach. For a moment I felt extremely alone in my faith even among my people. I took my bag and left. I never saw the girls again and made no effort to contact any young person my age during that time. This was long before the internet and Facebook. By choice, I was alone with a

baby boy, for 4 months until I could not handle the aloneness anymore. The people I worked for were not believers and I had no one to talk to. Being baptized and breaking away from the Dutch Reformed Church was still fresh in my mind. One day I found a shop in Amsterdam that sold “My Father’s house” DVD from Vineyard and I played it loud in my room while looking after the baby and ironing my boss’ shirts. Here I learned what it was to have deep fellowship with Him, united with Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit in the precious presence of the Father. This became my father’s house on so many new levels.

Four supernatural things took place during this time before I flew back to South Africa. One day I was going for a walk and suddenly I saw four angels with me. I did not see them physically but it was just as real as if they were physically there. This was the first time in my life that I became intensely aware that I was not walking alone. One walked before me, one walked behind me and there was one on each side of me. It felt really strange. I thought... why is this happening? Am I in danger? Why are they walking with me? Suddenly, they left. I was alone again.

Another time I was walking with the baby in his stroller when all of a sudden, I physically felt pushed on my left shoulder. I nearly fell to the side. At that very moment, a car passed by me so close, that if I did not stumble to the side, the car would have hit me. Wow, I thought! God just protected me!

One day, I needed to go to the kitchen downstairs. My room was on the fourth floor. I lifted the latch of the loft and then descended the steep steps. As I was climbing down both my shoulders were pushed by what felt like two hands, and I fell backward. The very moment it happened, I thought “Hey, I was pushed by unseen hands!” I managed to grab the rail with my left hand and it stopped quite a bit of the momentum. I still got badly injured but at least did not break my neck.

Finally, the fourth supernatural incident happened in Marseille, France the week I turned 20. Our family joined another family with their au pair for a holiday. One day as I prayed I asked God, “God, why am I not allowed to smoke?” Everyone smoked except the two babies and me. That day, I decided to test smoking so that I could “feel” what it was like! Yes, I got a hold of a cigarette and when everyone was out of the house, I went to the bathroom, praying and telling God what I was about to do. I lifted the cigarette to my mouth and was about to light it when a hand came, physically took my shirt below my

chin, holding it and with an audible voice saying, “Why are you doing this? Do you not know that I love you and that I called you?” Then the hand let go of me. I cannot describe all the emotions that ran through my mind. I ran to nearby woods and cried before the Lord, repenting of what I had done. That incident showed me how serious God was about my relationship with Him, His view on smoking and addictions, and that He was totally serious about the call on my life. I might have felt alone but I was indeed never really alone! Perhaps I should have known then that I would not last too long in my circumstances and I felt really bad to break the news three months later that I was leaving to go back to South Africa.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **10. YWAM**

Back in my hometown I joined a Bible study group and got to know the leader very well. Little did I know how much God was going to use her in my life. She told me about YWAM (Youth with A Mission) and the type of training I would receive. This got my attention, especially when I heard the word “evangelism.” On fire for Jesus was an understatement and before my missional mind and theology had major surgery and transformation, I painted my white T-shirts with flames that said, “repent turn or burn” walking on the beach hoping someone would see and at least think about God and eternity. I would walk to people and ask them straight if they were right with God or not.

In the same breath, I will add though that I understand why Jesus called teenagers as his disciples in the first place. Teenagers will do any crazy thing if they believe in it. During that time I was told, that I would soon lose my on-fire attitude toward God. I would soon become normal, marry and be... what culture told me to be and become! At least I can say, that never happened. I met Jesus, and He is a constant eternal fire in my heart and no cultural devil can quench it.

9 January 1997 I moved to Muizenberg, Cape Town, to volunteer full-time with Youth With a Mission. YWAM is a global movement of Christians from many cultures, age

groups, and Christian traditions, dedicated to serving Jesus throughout the world. Also known as YWAM (pronounced “WHY-wham”), they unite with a common purpose to know God and to make Him known. They have tens of thousands of staff called “YWAMers” and work in thousands of teams in 191 locations long term and in the rest of the nations, short term. A key component of YWAM is the ‘live-learn’ concept. Malcolm Gladwell sums up this concept well when he wrote, “If you want to bring a fundamental change in people’s belief and behavior, you need to create a community around them, where those new beliefs can be practiced and expressed and nurtured” (The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference).

To enter the mission every person, regardless of who they are or what they have studied, needs to finish the six-month Discipleship Training School (DTS). An unfortunate yet important point to understand the depths and implications of my decision to join YWAM financially is what happened to the business of my father. He did very well in the city and we grew up with means, more than most. Moving to the small town of Stilbaai, changed every dynamic we were used to, and not long after we moved, the term bankrupt became reality. My parents lost their house, their cars, the boat and so much more.

It is under these circumstances that I joined an organization that paid no salary. The first 12 weeks are the lecture phase with a practical short-term outreach of 12 weeks afterward. During my DTS, we had lectures on various topics, and then we had to choose between South Africa, Mauritius, and India for the twelve-week outreach phase. All I knew was one thing. I was not going to go to India. I had no money and India... who wants to go to India? I drove home to visit my parents one weekend seeing that it was only a four-hour drive to my hometown.

That weekend, I drove to one of my favorite secret spots on a small hill overlooking the bay, to pray about the outreach. On my way there I randomly stopped at a friend’s place to say hello. This was even before the days of CDs! She gave me a music tape with worship songs to listen to and said that it was really good. I took the tape and drove off. I finally arrived at the place where I was going to pray and pushed the tape into the tape player. It was part of my practice to play worship before I prayed (Ps100:4). The lyric of the very first song was a question asked by an Indian in India:

“Maar ‘n bedelaar in Indië (An Indian in India)  
Se oë is verwykend (His eyes are full of accusation)  
En deur Sy harde masker (Through the hard mask on his face)  
Sien ek sy oë is pleitend (I see his eyes pleading)  
En Jesus vra waarom ek vlug (And Jesus asks me, Why are you running away?)”

I sat there, stunned. I was about to ask God where to go on outreach and here He gave me the answer like this. In 2018 I met the author of the song, Louis Britts at my cousin's house and was able to personally tell him the story. That same weekend, an acquaintance gave me a check to pay off my debt for the lecture phase. The outreach to India was one of those life-changing seasons in my own life. It is where God started extracting the rich girl with her pride for the long journey ahead of her. God knew that only India could serve as such a knife. No one can prepare an inexperienced South African with my background for the moment the airplane door opens in India. That smell. The heat. The noise. The skinny grey-bearded beggars sleeping in the airport on all the open benches. Today when you disembark, one at least have time to catch a taxi before the real deal comes tugging at your skirt with dirty hands pointing to the belly and then the mouth in rapid movements up and down, up and down, black eyes begging. We went straight to YMCA. No air-con and slow turning fans chipped cement floors (oh, was that a rat), and dirty showers with buckets - no one prepared me for this national system. One cannot describe that poverty. We saw the raw deal first hand in the squatter camps and when we volunteered at Kalighat, the place Mother Theresa pioneered for those destitute and dying in Calcutta.

Our team met her right before she died and it changed my worldview forever. Calcutta is a terribly sad place. It means the city of death, named after the goddess of death, Kali. The scene was unlike anything I was ever used to. Iron beds. Cement floors. Grass brooms with strong bleach type of soap to keep the spreading of diseases at bay... etched into my mind. I understand why Mother Theresa said no to washing machines and western gifts. It is simply not the system.

I was feeding people squashed bananas while worms crawl in and out of their skins on their hands. Right outside, on the blistering black and dusty road, people were dying

and still are today. I watched in horror how a lady brushed her stained teeth with her index finger, first dipped into the soil full of urine while holding a baby maimed to beg for a rupee that the mafia collects at the end of the day. I saw this - the front door of hell. No human being made in the image of God should ever live like this.

This was my first encounter with unreached people groups, people who have truly never, ever, heard of Jesus Christ, and who had no Bible to read. They have never heard about their Creator nor His love for them. My world was turned upside down. My white t-shirts with repenting had no meaning in this place. To start a sermon with Genesis 3 made no sense to them. Where does one start? Much later I learned and even produced material for this cause, but I am jumping ahead of myself right now.

## 11

### **Follow the Breadcrumbs**

While on outreach every student wondered what they would do after their DTS. Study, work, go home or stay with YWAM as staff or a student. I use to joke and say I know what I would not do. I would not do The School of Biblical Studies (SBS). During my DTS lecture phase, we had the SBS students in our building and no one ever saw them! We constantly felt sorry for them. This inductive Bible course is extremely intense. You read the bible 5 times in 9 months. Methodically chapter by chapter, one color keywords, and phrases, and then in summary write out verse by verse according to the inductive method, and only then do you start with the real homework of exegesis, the critical explanation or interpretation of a text. This was before the days of laptops. It was all done on paper by hand.

Here I was, still in India thinking about what I would do once I returned to South Africa. One morning, in the heart of India in a city called Pune, under a small tree that provided shade from the blistering sun, I was having my quiet time. I was reading the book of Joshua and when Joshua 1:8 jumped out at me like Jeremiah 1:5 did a year before.

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth,

but you shall meditate on it day and night,  
so that you may be careful  
to do according to all that is written in it.  
For then you will make your way prosperous,  
and then you will have good success.” (NLT)

No, no, no, I thought... SBS? And so it came that I did my SBS in 1998 in Muizenberg, Cape Town. This truly came at a very difficult time. I could not turn to my family for finance. I left the Dutch Reformed Church and had no church relations to seek sponsorship from. All three quarters my school leader would come to me in private and tell me that if I did not pay, I would have to go home. I would do a water fast somehow, just in time, enough money would come in not to get kicked off the school. One particular day during our second of third terms is etched into my mind. I was on the cooking team for the evening meal and had to stir the meat pot. Round and round I forced the big spoon while my stomach growled. Would I break my fast for a nice meal? This is what Esau did when Jacob was busy stirring his pot with his spoon. I did not break the fast.

My leader said that if the money did not come in by that Sunday, I would have to go home. My parents came to take me home but when they arrived in Cape Town I told them “God told me to do this SBS, so I am not going home. The money will come in. If it does not, I will get on a bus and come home on Monday.” That Sunday as they drove away, their car disappearing around the corner, I suddenly realized... I did not have the R50 for the five-hour bus drive home to Stilbaai and I could not phone them because I had no cell phone. Monday morning came and I did not get ready for class. I stayed in my room. Just before 8:00 am my leader came into my room. She broke the news, “Someone anonymously just paid in all your money. You can come to class.” I still wonder today, if I had a cell phone with me that previous afternoon if I would have left with my parents.

During that timeframe, my shower soap ran out. I will never forget the morning I showered with the last bit of soap. I lifted it to God and said “Is this what your daughter has to shower with?” Of course, no one knew about this. That afternoon I walked back to our base with an older student from the Advance School Of Communication - APC. We talked and she told me that she was going home that weekend and that she had a bunch

of toiletries left that she wanted to give away - would I be interested? I could not believe it! I really, really could not! This was the same day I told God off, and here He was answering my prayer for soap. Why God always has to wait to act the minute past midnight, I do not know! I do know he did this over and over with the Israelites in the Old Testament to test their hearts and I was in the thick of those Old Testament tales. I cannot point fingers at the Israelites for their unbelief. I am just the same. If someone tells me that God always comes through for them on time, I will reply, no! Most of the time He is late. He does pitch up in His way and on His watch. His watch is pretty much timeless! This is something I had to get used to, through the years.

## 12

### **ANOTHER LANGUAGE**

A wonderful thing that finally happened that same year, is that I had the experience of speaking in a different language by the Holy Spirit. I believed that every Spirit-filled Christian could practice personal edification as Paul states in the book of 1 Corinthians 4:14. "The person who speaks in another language builds himself up, but he who prophesies builds up the church" (HCSB). It took a while to receive this breakthrough and most of the time I simply felt stupid when others prayed for me.

This is what happened that Friday night. We were roughly 40 people squashing into our base leader's open Friday night prayer meeting living room. Stephan would read a short portion of scripture and after roughly 10 minutes he would stop, put on worship in the background, and for the next two hours all of us would go around and pray for one another. I did not miss those meetings! I loved it. How many nights did I go there out of sheer personal discipline, feeling tired and discouraged because of so many things, and the pressure of finishing the intense SBS!

There was one thing that kept me going to those Friday night meetings. It was an incredible fact that if you start to take the focus off yourself and pray for other people and their issues, your issues somehow became really, really small. God's presence became so tangible in this place of praying for others. I also learned quickly that it takes a while to

switch from praying from the mind (the flesh) to somehow flowing with the Spirit and His ideas. Most of the time, I simply do not know what to pray for. It is like going for a swim in cold water. For the first five minutes, you think you will never get into the water, let alone feel warm in the water. We know, that once we make it into the water, in roughly five minutes the water seems to become warm! This was my experience with prayer. There is a place after 'the warm up' prayers, after you have prayed what was initially on your mind, that you suddenly sense – oh, this is what He is saying or this is what He is showing through a picture that comes to mind! Suddenly your spiritual antenna catches His wave... and then one can go on and on for hours. There is nothing like it.

This specific Friday night we stood in a circle around a girl that needed prayer. Suddenly it felt as if two fingers physically took my tongue and turned it in my mouth. Right after that, I spoke, and out came the same words as the girl next to me. I was so shocked. Saying the same words as someone else never happened again but I think God just wanted to show me that I was not making up a tongue and that I was indeed "flowing with the Holy Spirit." I was finally really speaking in a heavenly language. It does take some humility in the beginning because it feels awkward to say something you do not understand. I quickly got over that one!

It is nice to be in a group where all pray either in their own language or do not mind this taking place - where there is no judgment from others who do not pray in tongues. I love meetings where a crowd is spontaneous, soft, and prays in personal tongues together. We usually encourage those who cannot speak in tongues at that moment to simply focus on Jesus while singing praises unto Him in their mother tongue. Many believers start to speak in tongues during such times. A friend of mine who cannot speak in tongues asked me if I could just speak in tongues free of will. I said, yes. It is like speaking my language but I cannot understand it. Sometimes I can hear how I switch to a different language. This happens quite often especially if I continue in prayer longer than a few minutes while I focus the eyes of my heart, on Jesus. I seldom switch to another language if I am in a hurry.

This is the personal prayer language where a person's spirit speaks to God. "For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries in the Spirit " (1 Cor 14:2). This is the gift I believe we all have

even if you do not see it manifest in your life. If you have the Spirit of God dwelling inside of you, you most likely can speak in private (not public) tongues. You will never find me getting up to speak a tongue out loud while with a group of people.

Then came this one day, during an extended time of worship when our class listen to a friend praying in tongues. We were a group of roughly 25. One could sense God in the room yet no one interpreted what he spoke. After a long pause of silence, we moved on to our time of lectures. Suddenly a message kept going through my mind. I strongly felt to speak this out to the class. I asked permission to share. Then someone said: “I believe that is what the tongue meant!” I agreed but I did not want to say it because this has never happened to me before. This has only happened to me one time so I will not claim that I operate in this gift of understanding tongues.

The public gift is different and not many of us have this gift. I do not see this function very often. I have friends who would start to speak in tongues on outreach and then the people can understand them! This has never happened to me. I do not have the gift of tongues in this regard.

## 13

### **IT IS GOING TO BE A GOOD DAY TODAY**

I finished the SBS and as usual, asked God what was next. He spoke two things to me. He said that I was to do the Communication and Biblical View of Man (CBVM) and secondly, I needed to do a B.A. degree with YWAM’s University, University of the Nations (UofN).

The CBVM is a course that a student studying towards a UofN degree is obliged to take. I did not even know this at the time. In the middle of that course, I was asked to leave due to a lack of finance. Once again I had to fight my way through in prayer. I received favor from higher levels of leadership in the UofN and finished the course. Not long after that, I paid off all debt, but somehow the damage in my heart was done when it came to ‘living in faith’ to this extreme. I was done with YWAM and fundraising. It was

humiliating to be kicked out of a school. Humiliating to know God spoke to be there yet not to see finance released.

I did however have one of my most profound encounters during that course one morning. It started when I walked to the beach, roughly 300m from our classroom. On the way, I passed a homeless man. I said good morning and he answered back “Good morning. It is going to be a good day today!” I said I hope so and kept walking towards the beach. Suddenly Holy Spirit spoke to me and said, “I spoke to you through the homeless man. You are going to have a good day today.” I was so excited that I turned around and went back to my room. I closed the door and knelt on my bed praying for the day. Suddenly, while on my knees with my eyes closed, I saw in a vision how our speaker Fiona and a staff member came walking on the pavement towards the classroom. What struck me was that it seemed like a light engulfed Fiona and God’s glory was beaming all around her. I saw how she came up the stairs and touched the doorknob to enter. At that very moment, I could hear, through my bedroom door how the classroom doorknob opened. No way, I thought, this cannot be. I got up from my knees and rushed to see if my vision and reality were in sync. There entered Fiona and the person I saw. This was the first time in my life that such a vision played like a movie in my mind.

Later that morning during our class worship time, in my thoughts, I was suddenly in front of Jesus bowing down before Him. He stepped toward me and placed a purple mantle on my shoulders. He then placed a crown on my head, gave me a scepter and poured oil all over my head, and said I was to travel the world. The vision stopped and the debate in my head with myself about whether this was God or me making it up continued during our 15-minute break time. I told no one about the things I kept seeing that morning. After the 15-minute break time, Fiona began her teaching. Part of the topic during this communication week was how to practice listening to the promptings of Holy Spirit inside of us. One of the things we had to do that same morning was quite strange. We had to break up into partners and my roommate from Korea, Jung-Shin Kim, and I came together. One of the two of us had to close our eyes while very soft music played for two minutes. The person who had their eyes open had to ask the Lord what they should do with the person who had their eyes shut. Then the person who had their eyes shut had to ask the Lord what he was saying. I initially thought... what a strange way to

practice hearing God's voice! First, it was my Korean friend's turn. She shut her eyes and I cannot remember what I did with her. Music played for two minutes and soon it was over. It was my turn. We waited for the music and I shut my eyes. My Korean friend took my hand (remember I could not see) and walked me over to the cross in the classroom. She placed me on my knees. The very moment she did that I was back in the vision that I had during worship on my knees before Jesus. Then she left me for a while and came back. I could feel her throwing something light over my shoulders, just like Jesus threw the mantle onto me. It was a purple bedsheet! Then she took a long-stem flower and placed it into my hands, just like Jesus placed the golden staff into my hands. Then she took a string of pearls and placed it on my head like a crown and finally she took perfume and anointed my head with it. She then placed a Bible in my hands and she picked up my hands and made a circle with it - I was flying over the world with the Word. The music stopped. The two minutes were over and I knew I had a deep encounter with God about my calling to the nations. I also knew I experienced the prophetic at a level I never really encountered or expected before this day.

An intriguing point about 'seeing with the mind' is that I kept questioning if what I saw was my mind making things up. In his book 'seeing is believing' by Gregory Boyd, I finally found someone who wrote on this topic of the imagination used by God to convey His message to us. Through the years discernment with practice became easier.

## 14

### PRETORIA

Sadly enough, this was not enough to keep me in YWAM as God told me earlier that same year. Financially it became too hard. I had no permanent sponsorship from either a church or friends. I went home for a couple of months, helping at home while asking God what to do with my life. I heard nothing clear but I knew I somehow had to stay in ministry. In 2000 I moved to Pretoria to study Theology with Hatfield Christian Church. I do not know what I was thinking because I had no money. They strangely accepted me but at the end of the year, I still owed them the massive amount of R5000

which was a lot of money back then. I had four unforgettable spiritual encounters that year that stood out to me. A side note here: Dates, mates (you will marry such and such), and babies - never prophesy about these three things if you do not walk in the actual office of a prophet. The wounding in the church regarding this is deep and we need to know that we deal with the hearts of people. With this in mind, I will tell you a story, but I think it was one of two times only, that God showed me something about someone else's life partner. Even if I think I might know something, I do not tell. The first one was a prayer time I had with a friend. At that time she was my house leader but I never placed a distance between us because of her position, in other words, I placed no power distance between the two of us. One evening she told me that a very nice young businessman was pursuing her. I do remember that he was a very tall and attractive young man. In the natural, they made a nice couple. She asked me to pray with her. As I prayed the atmosphere shifted and one literally could sense how Holy Spirit made Himself manifest. It was incredible. Up until that point, I thought that she should date the guy. That was until God showed up. Out of my mouth came the words, 'I don't think this man is for you.' I initially felt bad about this. My friend cried and she said that she had a strong witness in her heart that what I said was from God. She told me how she knew she had a call from God for full-time missions into Africa and this guy was a businessman - she would have to drop her dream of being a missionary in Africa. She had no peace about him yet she really liked him. I had no idea that this is how she felt until that moment. Our conversation that night ended not with a focus on the man but on how one could sense God so strongly in the room and that He was calling her specifically, like her parents, into missions. It was special. Being a leader and under authority, she left at 8 am the next morning for a leadership meeting and told them what I told her. I was called in by the leadership and reprimanded for prophesying negative things over this girl. She took the advice of the leadership and officially started dating this nice man. I thought, we make our choices and left them there. We have free will. A few months later, they sadly broke up.

**15****VULTURES FALLING**

The second encounter that year was one of my most powerful encounters regarding a vision because the outcome of it was immediately felt. For roughly two weeks I was emotionally down in the dumps. It was deep-seated exhaustion with no appetite for life. No worship that I participated in could lift the heavy sadness from my heart and mind. It bothered me that I could not have any breakthrough during worship. Before this experience whenever I felt a bit sad, I would practice praise and worship and it always, literally lift heaviness. Isaiah 61:3 tells us that a spirit of praise can lift a spirit of heaviness or despair. This time nothing worked!

One of my roommates invited me to go with her to another church where there was a guest speaker. I did not feel like it but in the end, decided to go with her. The sermon was not that great. Afterward, the preacher prayed for people and Holy Spirit gently moved over so many. I simply stood at my chair, depressed. Why could I not sense God? I was standing with my eyes closed when the speaker stood in front of me. All I felt was a fingertip barely touching my forehead. The power of God came so powerfully on me that before I even knew it I was on the floor. There were no 'catchers' and I did not even feel the floor. Suddenly I had a vision while my eyes were still closed. In this vision of my mind, I was an eagle on a cliff. Thousands and thousands of ugly brown vultures came flying toward me. In my mind, in the vision, I yelled at them "In the name of Jesus fall, fall, fall" They started dropping down from the sky to the valley at the bottom. When they were finally all gone, I looked ahead and in the distance came the biggest vulture you can imagine. It was as big as a large truck. It came flying toward me and I instantly knew this was the strong man. I yelled at him, "IN THE NAME OF JESUS FALL" He could not come near me and flew away. I opened my eyes and most people had left the meeting. My friend waited for me. I stood up as a different person and never again in my life experienced that type of emotional deplete-ness.

**16****CUTTING THE CREDIT CARD**

It became obvious that Satan was zooming in on my family. Not long after that, I had a terrible nightmare. In the dream, I was paging through a magazine. As I turned one of the pages there was a picture of a lion. In the dream, I asked the Lion, "Are you the Lion of Ju..." I wanted to say Judah but as I said 'Judah' the face of the Lion changed into the most fearsome horrible angry lion and it wanted to eat me. I woke up. I instantly knew something was up with my family back home. I phoned my mom and sure enough, there was a big problem. For the first time in their marriage, mom and dad had serious issues. Months later mom told me that one morning while she was contemplating a divorce, she switched on the radio. Our house was positioned in a way that it was hard to tune into a radio station but that morning, as mom switched it on, she clearly heard these words: "Never leave your children with the legacy of a divorce." Mom said she just knew God spoke to her that morning. The station was on Radio Pulpit and James Dobson was the speaker. Mom and Dad are still married - soon it will be nearly 50 years. When Jesus is Lord of our lives, the roaring lion can seek to devour but this is where it ends. He is still seeking because the Lion of Judah keeps us hidden under His wings in the secret place of prayer and humility and forgiveness. We know that for a Christian peace does not mean the absence of war, and the war for my family and over my finance was on.

God used my finance to teach me a lesson on the topic of debt. We read the following verse in Romans 13:8, "Be indebted to no one, except to one another in love." Mom applied for a credit card for me that was in her name when I flew overseas the first time. It was an emergency card. I had R50 in that account. I owed the church R3000 at that point. What is R50 compared to R3000? That weekend, the church cafe had a sale. The Gospel DVDs were priced three for one, a bargain! It took me a while to decide to buy these DVDs with the last cash I had. I bought the DVDs but my conscience bugged me so much that as I walked home, I took the 3 DVDs out of the case so that I could not return them. How could God not allow me to buy worship music for my quiet times?

Monday came and we had lectures. The pastor started telling us a story. He told us the story of the founder of YWAM, Loren Cunningham who had to trust God for millions.

I knew Loren. He was in South Africa when I did my DTS in Cape Town. The story goes that Loren went for a jog one morning and he passed a store where there was a special on. Loren is a very tall, large man and he struggles to find clothing that fits him. There was the sweater in the window and it was super cheap a bargain. He decided to walk into the shop and bought the top. He felt so guilty in his conscience that he wore the top so that he could not return it. Then God spoke to Loren and said: "If I cannot trust you with \$20 how can I trust you with millions for what you are praying about for YWAM? I listened to this story 48 hours after I bought the DVDs... and God spoke to me never to owe anyone anything, and not to have a credit card in the red. That day I cut up the credit card. I decided never to owe anyone anything and while I had debt, I would not even buy an ice cream until the debt was paid. Years later I still live by the same rule.

Every cent I received went into my studies. We went on outreach later that same year and my entire team bought ice-creams when we made a stop at a garage for fuel. I remember no one asking me why I did not buy ice cream. I was too shy to ask. Years later I found myself on a bus full of missionaries who went out for a night of evangelism on the streets. On the way back someone said, 'let's stop for ice cream.' I stood up and yelled - you have to ask the person next to you if they can afford one! Don't assume everyone here has \$3 for ice cream. At the end of that year, I left with R5000 debt. I cannot describe that feeling. I could not continue to study theology if my debt were not paid. I had no sponsors. I had no idea what to do anymore. Without me knowing, my mom told a close friend about my debt and the friend gave me R5000 to give to the church.

## 17

### **WINNING MILLIONS**

That year, during personal prayer time I asked God a question. "Dear God, I would like to lead people to you. Would you allow me to see ten people saved?" You see, up till this point, my worldview was very small in regards to people coming to know Christ. I perhaps saw three or four people in the Dutch Reformed Church "get saved." I have never witnessed mass evangelism yet that year, in that church people constantly got saved on

Sundays. This was very different from the church I grew up in. This was new to me. Asking God for ten people was a lot for me! As I asked God this question, I heard him laugh! I sat there, stunned. I heard him laugh yet I felt so loved by that sound, like a parent who laughs at their kid for being silly yet so super cute! Somehow I just knew that I had to change the number. I asked the same question and felt very bold at the moment. "Can I see 50 people come to know you?" There was first silence and then I felt him respond with 'higher'. This was also my first time having a back-and-forth conversation with God. I said, 100? The tone in his response became serious. Much higher. By now I was dumbfounded but I said 1000? He said no, again. I think this is how Abraham must have felt when he had his encounter with God when God was on his way to Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 18:32. Six times did Abraham give God a number. Finally, in verse 32 we read, "Then he said, "May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more. What if only ten can be found there?" He answered, "For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it."

Finally, I said, "one million?" He answered, "That is more like it." My brain could not wrap around such a thought. Very soon after this encounter someone 'randomly' gave me a poster. I cannot even remember who it was. Needless to say, my eyes popped out of my head like Popeye the Sailor Man's when I saw it. It was Benny Hinn speaking to a crowd of one million people at one time. I had no idea that meetings like this even existed! This poster became very special to me and I kept it on the wall next to my bed. I was mesmerized by it. One day Holy Spirit asked me to shift my focus away from the poster. He asked me to throw it away. This was hard. I sat on my bed, took down the poster but tucked it safely in the back of my Spirit-Filled Bible. He said, "No, you need to throw it away." I walked over to the bin with a heavy heart, and I threw it away.

I had no idea where I would ever see something like this again. I told no one about this because it surely would have sounded arrogant and prideful to even mention such a conversation I had with God. That night I went to bed. We were six girls that shared a room and one of them decided to clean her art supplies box that was under one of the bunk beds. She found a poster and while I was sleeping, she placed it on my wall in the place of the other poster. When I woke up, the night after I threw my poster away, I stared right into a crowd bigger than the one of Benny Hinn. It was Reinhard Bonke preaching

in Africa with millions of people in front of him. That same year, the year 2000, he preached to 6 million people physically in the same location! Needless to say, God changed my worldview. At the end of the year, God spoke to me and asked me the question he asked Elijah, "What are you doing here Elijah?" I answered, "I've been in YWAM and You did not provide. Now I am studying theology and I owe money to the church. I am not going back to YWAM. I have no sponsors and it is simply too difficult." That was the end of that conversation, but I also knew, the end of my theological studies with Hatfield. I went home, feeling deflated on so many levels.

## 18

### YMCA KNYSNA

It was the December holidays. I was so grateful that my debt was paid by my mother's friend. I had no idea how to pray about the future. One day, God gave me a verse from Isaiah 60:9 "The islands will wait for Me." I did not know what that meant but I wrote it in my diary. That week, I went to visit a family in the caravan park next to the beach that I have not seen for years. They asked me what I was up to and I told them that I had no idea! That day I learned that this family was part of Youth for Christ in Knysna and was looking for a youth worker. They asked if I could help them out for the year and if I said yes, I would stay on the Island in Knysna called Leisure Isle. Suddenly the verse God gave me made sense. I packed my bags and off I went. It was a very difficult year for me. Once again I was a volunteer and the frontline of faith and finance was like mount Everest before me. Once again I could not find sponsorship but the lady that I lived with on the Island was good to me. I loved her and she became a dear friend. We went on an outreach together to Lesotho where I became very, very ill on the way back home. I could not get out of bed for a month and my lungs took forever to take a turn for the good. Little did I know that this was the beginning of years of struggles with my health. At the end of the year, God asked me the very same question He asked the previous year. "What are you doing here Elijah?" I said, God, you know I want to serve you but I am not going back

to YWAM. I left Knysna after volunteering for a year and I was back in Stilbaai, more deflated than ever. I felt trapped with no escape.

## 19

### ONE MORE TIME PROPHET

I do have to insert one crazy story here that took place during my time that same year. The lovely lady that I stayed with on the island had a family beach house in Hartenbos near Mossel Bay, and we decided to go there for the weekend. We arrived and tried unlocking the sliding door. This was the only door we had a key for. We could not get it to open. It was stuck. Finally, we gave up and walked back to the car. We were very disappointed. As we walked to the car, I suddenly remembered the refrain of a song that was sung at a woman's conference the previous year. The lyrics came strongly into my mind as if someone was singing them to me, "One more time prophet, one more time" I walked over to my friend and told her "ONE MORE TIME" I took the keys from her and walked back to the house and the door opened so smoothly the moment I placed the key inside the door that I was speechless. I said, "like a warm knife through butter!" I thought of God at that moment... "You're a funny one Lord!" Then I went on a three-day women's seminar. The speaker was on fire and so was the worship. Many times the presence of God would overwhelm us and the speaker could not even speak. No one looked at their watches. The speaker stood at the pulpit and simply could not say anything. She went to sit down. The presence of God was tangible. Then one girl came to the front to give a word. The moment she started to talk, she also could not say a word. She became mute. They gave her a pen and paper and she could not write! That took place in the morning and only by the evening could she talk again and told us what she experienced. God's heavy presence came on me and I was on the floor for hours. One of the amazing things about this saturating presence of God was that I never became hungry. For three days, when mealtime was on, I was still in the building where we had worshiped. Food never came to mind for three days. I was never hungry. During one of these worship sessions, I poured my heart out to God about my financial situation. I walked over to the side where there was a large wooden door for people to enter. I placed my hands on the doorknob

and as I tried to open it while praying, “God, OPEN the financial door,” I realized that the actual door was locked. Suddenly Holy Spirit very clearly spoke into my thoughts and said: “The door will be opened in My Name.” That is not what I wanted to hear! I was done living in faith. I knew God provided, but I also learned that envelopes do not simply appear out of thin air, placed by angels on a bedside table.” He uses people to, many times anonymously, provide. If people don’t give, God in some sense can not give until He finds the next willing person. I was simply tired of it all. Missionaries were not supposed to be beggars. I surely felt like one. At the end of the year, I had to tear myself away from Knysna and went to live with my parents, defeated. I got into a car and drove to a good old friend in town. She was not a sponsor but a really good friend. She was in her office that day when I popped in to say I am back in town. She asked me questions, and I told her my story. She looked at me and said: “I trust you. I know you will pay me back, so I will buy you a ticket to the UK so that you can work there. Make money for two years and come back. Start a business.” Not long after that... I flew to the UK. Hope was renewed but not my hope to join missions!

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **20**

#### **HE KEEPS CALLING**

I landed at Heathrow airport where I felt completely at a loss. I had no idea that moving from one terminal to another meant catching an actual train! Every time I saw the train after clear directions to go down the stairs I thought, - gosh - can no one help me to find the terminal, not the train! Finally, I got onto the train to the next terminal.

My first cultural encounter was the phrase “Are you ok there love?” I know I was lost, but my goodness, how could a man openly flirt like that? By the third time, a random man at the airport said “my love” I thought something was wrong... I was “my love” to all the men I spoke to. I laugh now as I think back to that day at the airport. I went to stay with a contact and she graciously opened her house for me for one week. After one week, I had to find my own two feet in London, fast. Ending up in a house filled with South

Africans I felt I had a 'déjà vu' experience from five years ago in the Netherlands. I met no Christians... just smoking, drinking, swearing young people. What was wrong with the world? I kept phoning for job interviews like a frantic sailor who needed to find some shore. Back in South Africa, everyone said it was going to be so easy to find a good job. Nope! Not me. One morning while I was in desperate prayer about a job, Isaiah 49:1 leaped from the page. "Listen to me, O coastlands, and give attention, you peoples from afar. The LORD called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name." My eyes kept falling on the word 'coastland' and 'far away.' In the meantime, I found a job two hours South of London. I took it. I was washing dishes for a very well-off golf club. On arrival, I had to clean my room where the previous person left it like trash. I swept under my bed and out came dirty magazines. The one was open. This was the first of only two unfortunate times I saw porn for one second. I despise both times. It took such a long time for the split-second image not to re-enter my mind when I prayed. I was so grieved about it. Many years later the Lord started to challenge me on the number of movies I watched. When I had to pray after a movie or the next day, I could not see what God wanted to show me. All my mind was on, was the images of the movie. I struggled to lay down my love for movies until I found out that I had to deal with the adrenaline movies gave me. Once I realized why I liked movies so much, I could deal with the 'need for adrenaline' and change my habit. I no longer felt that God was a spoiler of my fun. He was a healer of my mind. He wanted to communicate with me and what I saw stopped the communication. I found a quote, that is not a bible quote, yet a good one to think about. "The portal God uses is the ear. The portal Satan uses is the eye." In my case, it was valid. It did not take long for people at the golf club to notice that I did not go to pubs to drink let alone any other things. Once again I met not a single Christian. This made life very hard. Some of my best friends today are British, yet it is difficult to erase the initial racism towards me and the black man that washed dishes with me from memory. My view about England before I lived there was that they were non-racist and Christian. Was this not the birthplace of Vineyard worship that went global? Are these not the people who condemned the Afrikaners in the name of racism? I had much to learn about history. I left the dishwashing job for obvious reasons. I had no idea what to do. I went back to London to the same South African house. With just enough money for train tickets and a few

nights' lodging, I phoned and phoned... no jobs. Late one night whilst I was fervently praying, I heard the Holy Spirit tell me very: "Go North." I had no idea what this meant and just kept on phoning. I remember back in South Africa how young people returned home after working on farms. I thought to give that a try. Someone gave me a number and I ended up phoning a man named Paul who helped people find work on farmlands. There were plenty of jobs he said, and I agreed to go. When I asked Paul which zone in London he was, he started laughing, and said, "Lady, do you know where you are phoning to?" I said, "No, which zone are you in?" He then said that he was in the North, an eight-hour bus drive away. I had such a shock, that I threw the phone down on the receiver. I realized it must have cost me so much money to phone so far. I was mad with myself and with the whole situation. I went to pray, and I suddenly remembered how God said: "Go North" and that "The coastlands would call me." Suddenly I was excited. After that prayer, I felt that God was speaking to me and that I would have a job, and pay off my debt to my friend in less than two months. Life, and making some money could finally start!

## 21

### SOUTHPORT

I booked a bus ticket and the next day I was on my way to a town called Southport, near Liverpool. By the time the second last person got off the bus, I was seriously nervous! Where on this earth was he taking me? For eight hours I only saw houses and fields, and fields and houses. I was alone on the bus and so scared. Then, all of a sudden, around the long bend in the road, the scenery completely changed. We were literally on the coast with the ocean to my left and Southport right in front of us. All I could think was: "God, You are true with me and he guided me to the North, and the coast!" I did not even have a phone with me, so I asked the nice bus driver to phone Paul for me so that he could pick me up. Paul sent a driver and the bus stop was only a one-minute drive to my new home, a large red massive English house. To my shock, I found myself amid people

from all nations, especially Russians. No one in that big house was a Christian. I was the only Christian again! The driver that initially picked me up, was very kind to me. I soon fell ill with a fever for two weeks. No one in the house had cared! It was shocking how people lived for themselves. I was so grateful to the driver who bought me medicine during that time. The stress was high because I was too sick to work and had to pay rent. I finally got better and started working. Sometimes we joke about “cleanliness is next to Godliness” but I tell you – something about it rings true. That place was a dirty nest with smoking, doping boys and girls. I was deeply confronted with my effort to run away from YWAM and my call to full-time missions. Who was going to tell these people about Jesus? This bugged me. I started working on the mushroom farm. It was one huge shock to my system, my brain, my body, my back... and most of all... my emotions. On the Meyers Briggs, I am ENTJ. My personality could not handle what was happening! You spoke to no one for hours except for your 10-minute break when most staff ran to smoke. The ungodly radio station over terrible speakers blared in my ears, ears used to edifying worship only. Where was Vineyard now? My back felt like it was breaking. I went to my boss on the 3rd day and said that my back could not take standing on the small ladders the whole day. When he heard about my back operation he understood and sent me off to a place where they sorted carrots. That was even more miserable! Carrots were constantly conveyed on extremely noisy green conveyor belts. You stood on one spot with hundreds of other workers staring at the carrots right in front of them. You could not talk to the person next to you because the machinery was too loud. I know we have to eat carrots. I know some of us to have to do this job, but I asked some people if they enjoyed sorting carrots like this and the reply was, “I have been here for 20 years and love it.” Once again my back (and my mind) could not handle it and I was placed at potatoes. It was the best of all these terrible boring jobs. The walls of the offices in the potato factory had porn girls all over them. How could people work in such an environment? Here is the funny thing which was not funny at all. Even though I was paid the same as everyone... and spent money on rent and food only so that I could pay off my debt, I had no money left at the end of the month. It was as if my savings stayed empty. With only rent and food to pay... I made NO money. One evening after work, I walked to an old red English phone booth that was in front of our home. I phoned South

Africa and had a massive breakdown-cry with my mom. She told me that I could come back to South Africa and join her at a school as a teacher. A post recently opened and I could help them out with the little ones. It was a school for special needs children and they needed staff. That night I had a dream from the Lord.

## 22

### THE MOUNTAIN

In the dream, I was climbing a very high mountain and I became very tired. I could not go on. I had no strength left to lift my arms to grab the next stone to pull myself up higher. I was nearly at the top but simply failed the strength climb the last bit to the top. I knew, that if I let go, I would fall and not be able to get up again. In the dream, I knew the fall meant going back to South Africa. I decided to climb on, and as I made this decision in the dream, I suddenly found myself miraculously on the top of the mountain. Then I woke up. I phoned my mom and against my wishes told her that I felt led by God to stay in the UK. During this season Holy Spirit began to ask me a question that I ignored for a long time. "What did I tell you?" He asked. I replied, "Never allow money to determine what I do." Then He said: "What are you doing?" I replied, "I am allowing money to determine what I do." "By now I was desperate for Christian fellowship. I wanted to go to church and meet believers. I told my boss from the beginning that I would not be working on a Sunday. My boss gave me a lot of favor and said yes. I prayed and said, "Lord, I do not want to do church hopping, where you lead me the first time, there I want to stay." That is exactly what happened. I passed many churches that morning on my way to work on the minibus and suddenly one stood out. It was walking distance from my flat. I went the following Sunday and God poured out His favor on me from that very first visit. As I entered the church, I noticed a man playing in the church band and when the church was over, he walked over to me, introduced himself, and asked if I wanted to join their circle of friends for lunch. We started hanging out each Sunday after church, and then more and more during weekdays. One day I told him about the dream that I had about England. I often reminded him that I was not going to go out with him because of the dream, but

we started seeing each other quite often. I was falling in love. I liked him and prayed a lot about our situation. Not long after that, I went with the church for a summer Vineyard church camp. My friend did not want to go and it puzzled me. In hindsight, I do remember that I saw this as a red flag but I did not know why, so I ignored it! During the camp, there was a speaker who spoke one morning at 6 am. I got up early to listen to her. Her name was Sue Hope. At one point she turned and pointed her finger into the crowd. I felt she pointed it sharply at me while she loudly said, "If God is troubling you in your spirit, FOLLOW IT!" I knew I had to tell my friend I would not date him. While on the road back, he phoned me. "What did God tell you?" I replied with a sad heart, that I am not going to marry anyone. The following Sunday we went for a walk around the lake. While sitting on a bench, he turned to me and kissed me. Writing this part of my story to singleness and the steep learning curve is quite an embarrassing one. I learned how I could twist God's word to fit an emotional frame of mind in a season. I suddenly saw Ruth, Boas, and marriage everywhere in scripture, not to mention in the book of Song of Solomon. I deeply questioned the dream and the clear word God gave me at the camp. I kept seeing my friend and our relationship grew. I still worked on the farms, and I became desperate to get some other kind of work. My kind boss said that there was one more job he could give me. This was where he sent young people he liked to 'really make money.' He told me that payment was not by the hour but by output. I am a hard worker, so I welcomed the change and the challenge. With new hope of paying off my debt, with new hope to start saving money, I went to work on the lettuce fields. I still had to read my Bible in the morning so I got up at 4 am every day before catching the van at 5 am that took us to Wales, an hour away. We started picking up at 6 am. The reason there was money in this is because we were paid per package and not per hour. This is how it worked. Lettuce would come via a conveyor belt into the truck where eight of us stood in a U around small iron buckets coming in from the front. As the buckets passed, one would grab the lettuce head, quickly place it inside a plastic bag, seal it and grab the next one. You then filled your tray and this is how they counted your payment. Guess where I ended up? At the end of the line, where there was no more lettuce left to pack! I could scarcely pay my rent that month, never mind food or anything else. At the very start of this line of buckets,

there was a Russian girl. She was like a machine. She packed so fast that I admired her skill.

## 23

### **DREAMED: THE INDIAN MAN**

One morning, on the way to the lettuce fields, I fell asleep and had another dream. I dreamed that a man was standing in front of me, holding out a pack of cards. He said to me, "pull one." I pulled out a card, and on it was a picture of an Indian Sheik with a red turban on his head. Then I heard a clear statement telling me, "we know they are not saved." I woke up and wondered who spoke to me. I looked around and suddenly I realized that I must have fallen asleep and dreamt. Oh no! No, no, no! My very first thought was, I am not going back to India! Then I said to myself, I am not going back to YWAM! The next day I received a phone call from a person I did not know. The lady, who I later got to know as the beloved and well-known Mariette Louw, a mover and shaker in the world of intercession in YWAM, told me that she had heard about me, and got hold of my UK number, and felt led to contact me. Mariette was a South African but living in Scotland on the YWAM Seamill base. She proceeded with, "Would you please pray about joining our YWAM Scotland DTS this January (2003) and take a team to India in March." This took place around September. I told Mariette that I would get back to her, but in my heart I knew, God could not have been calling me back to YWAM in a more direct way than this. Would that dream I had years ago come true? Was I going to break my relationship for the sake of missions? I still have not saved money since I came in April to pay back my ticket. I said God, why am I still in debt? God answered me with a scripture, "...he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes" Haggai 1:6. That was me! God supernaturally caused me not to save finance. Then, one of the most intense strippings in my life happened. I, the rich mans' daughter, who always said: "I will NEVER become a waitress" left the lettuce fields to become a waitress. I finally yielded and started making money by working as a waitress, a job I surprisingly liked. The owner was Scottish, not a Christian and his staff was all 10 years younger than me. Once again, I

was the only Christian. I never broke off with my friend and when I left the vegetable picking company, he helped me with housing and cheap rent. I finally paid for my ticket! I was out of debt!

Years later on a visit to England, I went back to this restaurant, and the owner was still there. When he saw my face he said with his strong Scottish accent: "Oh, look! The God-Squad is back" I had no idea until that day that this is how he saw me. As far as I can remember we had no religious conversations. When he said that, it did something in my heart. At this point, I became much more involved with the church, moved into my friend's best buddy's home, and became truly deep friends with John. It was John who told me, that sometimes it is better not to receive what we ask of God than to receive it. My friendship with John was one of those grace tickets in life that came my way. We are still very good friends today. The church I joined had a lovely street cafe called Vivesco. I informed the church that I met no Christians where I've worked so far, and we started to do a lot of evangelism among foreign workers in the city. We even did an evangelism street drama right on Lord street. John would tell the story of the sower and I mimed it. December came and now I had to choose between my friend, marriage, my lovely new church family, and going back to YWAM. This was extremely hard because I was deeply emotionally involved and finally happy. I loved the church. I loved my circle of friends and course my boyfriend. Oh but God... He was troubling me in my spirit.

Through lots of tears I said, "Lord, I cannot get myself to break our relationship. Then I prayed something that I meant. "Lord, I give you the right to break into my life and break this relationship because I cannot do it. I want to follow You." I meant every word of it. God answered my prayer. This does not mean I did not cry my eyes out. It took a very long time to get the relationship out of my system. Today I look back and see what life I would have missed if I kept going out and getting married. I cannot agree more fully with the words I heard that July of 2002. If God is troubling you in your spirit, follow it. The advice did come to me from my dear friend John whom I still visit whenever I can. "Sometimes, he said, it is better not getting what you ask for than getting what you ask for" John was right.

**24****DREAM: Sci WARRIORS & DEMONS**

What I am about to describe started after I had my call to missions but there were some seasons when this type of warfare in my life increased. It is called “Sci(Chi)Warfare” where one is being strangled at night during sleep with unseen hands by either demons or a satanic witch doing astral projection. What the church, in general, does not know is that Satanists and Satanistic Ritual Abuse Programmed Victims (SRA) astral project to attack saints. It is a demonic ability that is also taught in the military. High-level trained SRA dissociative identity disorder multiples, do this often. The Marvel movie series, like Shang-Chi and Doctor Strange, give us a glimpse of how they operate in real life. It is not a comic. It is the reel showing us the real. How do we counter this type of attack at the moment? In prayer, we target the demon that empowers this person. Before I went to Scotland, I had encounters with this type of demonic attack while sleeping. It would start with dreams where I would be waking up yelling “In the name of Jesus” because I was physically being strangled and could not breathe. Usually, the hair on my arms would be upright and a spirit of fear caused me to be so fearful that I could not even turn my head on my pillow. In the book of Job 4:15, we read a description of what I experienced, “a spirit swept past my face the hair of my flesh stood up” One specific night I recall, after waking up, the demons did not want to leave! I kept praying in warfare mode and then I said, “I put the cross of Jesus between me and you and I pray His blood over me.” I kept praying about the cross and suddenly a loud, BANG on the floor followed. I sat upright but I still did not want to get out of bed to switch on the light. Suddenly it left, the atmosphere changed and I could sleep again. The next morning I saw what fell. It was my big wooden cross that I had on my wall! The demons were so angry at me, praying for the cross between me and them that they threw it onto the ground the very moment I said “I place the cross between us.” I will elaborate on SRA near the end of this book.

**25****SCOTLAND AND INDIA**

Finally, I arrived in bonny Scotland. It felt like I climbed into the tourist book on the coffee table. I arrived at the big castle called the Seamill-Centre that YWAM purchased years ago. It used to be a nursing home next to the ice-cold sea shore overlooking the Isle of Arran, snowcapped during winter. The green hills in the book are really as green with long hair cattle strolling the rolling mountains. Later I was even introduced to the national Scottish meal called haggis, banned in 1971 in the US due to its food standards agency prohibiting sheep lungs. All this new beauty did not help my heart that longed for my friend at first. I realized, the dream I had many years ago, came true. I chose between a man and missions. The dream that I had on the way to the lettuce fields also came true. I took a team to India. This was my second trip to India. We landed and drove into a heatwave of 52°C in a place called Ongol which I dubbed the hell-hole cause it was so hot and dirty. I also had to deal with my heart which was broken. My team did not know about my deep sense of loss. I had to lead. This was not a time for a leader to fall apart. In India, we did as the Indians do (or as much as we could handle). We wore Punjabis, we ate with our right hands only, and the left hand was our toilet paper. My team and I visibly lost weight during those weeks, and fast too. The amount of crashed crabs (caught at the beach nearby) on rice buried under red chilies, or simply rice and chilies every day was too much for us to stomach. We could not say anything. They were giving us their best. I became very, very ill. For four weeks my body continuously burned with fever. Finally, it broke. I rejoined my team for night evangelism because it was simply too hot during the day to do anything. We had no air-con, just a fan, and we rented 6 plastic chairs to sit on during those seven weeks. Three families stayed with us on the third floor in this very small apartment. They never left us alone because we were a mixed team of boys and girls. Their bodies were accustomed to sleeping on cement. Part of our daily ritual consisted of starting with one of the 66 books of the Bible. The first day we landed, we started with Genesis. We read and discussed the entire Bible in 66 days. If it was a long book like Deuteronomy, then it was a long Bible study for the morning. One such morning, after reading we took a break. I sat on the floor, with headphones on, listening

to worship while playing a game of solitaire. This was the only way to 'be alone' for a while. Suddenly, through the speakers of my headphones came to an audible voice saying, "Go shave your head." I stopped playing cards, stopped the worship, and took off the headphones. My co-leader sat not far from me. I looked at him and said "You will not believe what just happened to me! God just told me something but it is so out of place that He needs to say it again." I placed the headphones back on my ears and pressed play while continuing to sort out the cards. "Go shave your head and shave it NOW," came the same voice just a minute later. I freaked out on many levels. For starters, a voice spoke through my headphones. Secondly, the woman in this place do not have short hair, and if they do have shaved heads it is because they are Hindus that participated in some ritual to be closer to the Hindu gods. When they give their hair to the gods at a temple, it is called tonsuring. It also shows they celebrate a wish that came true or the curing of an illness. Here I was having to shave my head while leading a team, in INDIA! What would I tell the students? What made it initially difficult for me was the memory of a girl who did her DTS with me in 1997. She was asked to leave our DTS because she felt that God asked her to shave her head before outreach. She was an introvert and deeply in love with Jesus, definitely not the attention-seeking type. I believed that she heard from God although I could not understand why God would ask this of her. It was not part of my framework. It made no sense. I later heard that she died of cancer a few years after our DTS. What would I do? I know this is where common sense and obedience clashed but in my spirit, I knew God spoke. I first told my co-leader who smiled a "you crazy woman" type of smile, then got his thumbs up to proceed, and only then, did I call my team. We were six on the team. I had to obey God. I made them promise not to tell anyone back at base or home because they had no context nor could I explain myself. After they promised, I told them. We proceeded to the roof with three shaving razors, a pair of extremely blunt scissors, and Indian friends following us looking at me with eyes and smiles that I will never forget. The scissors were so blunt they could not cut my hair. It was funny but ended up at a profound juncture in al journey! This is where God found me and allowed me to find Him in a much deeper way. He is found in obedience. The pain of obedience does not compare to the pain of disobedience. The prophet Samuel declared to King Saul: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as

in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Sam. 15:22). What that moment of obedience against all cultural norms showed me is that God looks for obedience above any other thing. My team never knew about my friend back in England. They had no idea how I cried in secret every day of that outreach. I cried until the day my head was shaved! When my hair was shaved, God spoke to me. “You have shaved off your past. It is a new day.” For some reason I felt freer, more human, more woman than I have ever felt before that day. It is simply unexplainable. Something in my very insides changed. How deeply God knew me. I kept my hair short for two years and loved it. That was June. Little did I know that I would suddenly find myself, with all of my England church friends in Jerusalem that July. We did voluntary hard labor for two weeks alongside a church in Jerusalem that needed help with a building. I will not go into details here but my ex-boyfriend was also on the team with his new girlfriend and soon-to-be wife. Someone warned me about his girlfriend in time. By now I moved on anyways. God deeply restored my heart and set me on a steady path of singleness for life. In South Arica, we have a gym franchise called “Virgin Active.” This is the joke between me and friend... yip, I am still with virgin active. I am grateful I went through the whole ordeal because God had to show me my real belief system while I was in love with him. There were lessons I learned about myself, about dating, and many other points not discussed in this book that I never would have known if I was not in a serious relationship one time. At least I have learned how I can twist scriptures for my sake if I am emotionally involved. You do not believe what you merely say you believe. Actions are what reveal worldview and beliefs. You do what you believe. Praise God that we can repent and move on. This reminds me of the scripture “repent and be baptized.” This is what happened next in this story.

**26****ISRAEL**

I always dreamed of being baptized in the Jordan river and one day before my 27th birthday, all three of us, my ex-boyfriend, his x-Muslim now Christian girlfriend, and I got baptized. God deeply ministered to me as I went under the water and came back up again. “I washed off the season of disobedience with you and your friend. You are forgiven. I am putting it in the past. It is over. You are clean.” I felt like a brand new person after that baptism. Not only did India prepare me, but somehow this baptism felt like the fullers-soap spoken of by the prophet Malachi in chapter 3:2 which says, “who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire and like fuller’s soap” Josh Wright wrote that “The ‘fuller’ was the individual who would take the raw filthy wool from sheep and purify it using a variety of techniques, including an extremely harsh soap that would ultimately help to make it clean.” That same year after Scotland, India, and Israel, as I was seeking Him about my future, Holy Spirit asked me a question. “What did I tell you?” I immediately knew what He was referring to. I said, “You told me to do my degree with YWAM’s University of the Nations.” I wanted to remind God about the finance but somehow I felt that things would be different. It was. Slowly sponsors started to come on board with me long-term but then one painful event took place. I felt I was to go to Israel for the school of intercessory prayer as part of my degree. I had so much faith that I packed my bags and left for the 4-hour drive to the airport with a friend of mine. He did not go to church and I thought... ‘dear God, at least show him that you do provide.’ A mutual friend of mine arranged for me to see her Bible study group before I left for the airport and they collected a few things for me for my trip. Another friend’s mother said she would pay for my air ticket. I got to the airport and the money never came. It was more than embarrassing. I had to eat bitter humble pie, return home and face the fact that I still made major mistakes. Not all our desires, even with good intentions is from God. I lost a friend due to this. The lessons one has to learn living a life in faith is not for the faint-hearted but if there is truly a call from God, one can continue and find the path He has for feet willing to share the gospel of peace. “A man’s heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.” Proverbs 16:9

**27****CHANGING MY NAME**

I was finally in the swing of things. I did a few courses with YWAM Muizenberg, Cape Town that added to the 144 credits I needed to finish my B.A. degree. A door opened for me to join a team to do my three months School of Biblical studies practical outreach, six years after I completed the grueling lecture phase. We left for Madagascar where our team trained 70 pastors to study the Bible inductively. I loved this outreach but Madagascar itself suffered from famine. We would often see army trucks with rice being delivered to villages. Our breakfast consisted of a dry baguette each morning with sweet condensed milk, remains of the French influence. They also do this in Cambodia. I was paging through a couple of books in the library on the base when one book, in particular, drew my attention. It was a compilation of testimonies from various influential international speakers. They all had one thing in common - a lifestyle of fasting. Holy Spirit tugged at my heart and I knew what he was asking of me. For the next eight years, I fasted one day a week. The next course I did was called the Leadership Training School, LTS. While doing LTS for three months, we had a week conference in the middle called "Nations2Nations." Right before the conference commenced, I bought a new diary. As I wrote the date on the very first page, I thought: "I am going to step out in faith today and write a letter to myself, from God." I barely started writing when I sensed that deep small voice saying "... you are like Sarah in the Bible. She was a mother of many nations..." What I wrote down intrigued me so I opened my Bible to read about Sarah, Abraham's wife. I knew that Abraham was called the Father of many nations but I did not know that Sarah was called the mother of many nations! You can imagine my utter surprise when I saw that I quoted scripture! God told Abraham that his wife would have a name change and that she would become a mother of nations. "I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations" Gen 17:16 NIV. I finished my quiet time but did not think too much of it. The next day during the N2N worship, the speaker made the following comment: "If you have a crown that you are holding onto, ask God what it is, and lay it at His feet" I asked God if I had something that I was holding onto that was dear to me that I could give Him but nothing came to my mind. After waiting perhaps 5-10 minutes I started to worship the

Lord again, thinking He had nothing to say to me on this topic. I lifted my hands to Him, and at that moment, He spoke with a very clear voice in my heart, "Will you give me your name?" I was completely caught off guard. "What Lord?" I stood there thinking, why on earth would He want my name? I liked my name. I achieved quite a few things in my life and my family name was respected in our circle of friends. So during that worship, I prayed the following: "God, I am sorry for my pride. I do not know the implications of giving you my name, but yes, you can have my name. I told no one of these two encounters with God. Seeing that it was a conference, we had another deep and extended time of worship later that week. Holy Spirit moved powerfully and many of us were in the front on our knees. I was one of those. Suddenly I felt a hand on my back. I recognized the key speaker's voice when he started praying over me. He said, "I sense God is saying to you that He is changing your name and that you are like Sarah in the Bible and that you will be a mother of many nations." He quoted my diary! That weekend I went home. The connection to the name Sarah in my family is not a positive one. It was similar to being a poor housekeeper because my mom and her sisters' all had housekeepers with the name Sarah. I had to deal with this and so I asked God if the name was just symbolic, or if it was something I had to change? I did not want to be called Sarah and neither did my parents when I told them what happened. I was the firstborn, and only girl who carried my mom, and two grandmothers' names! When I realized my parents were quite upset at the idea of me perhaps changing my name, I walked outside to talk to God. As I stood there, I simply said, "God, is this symbolic or an actual change of my name?" His answer came immediately into my heart. He simply said to change it. I walked back into the house and mom was still there. I told her what happened and from then on, I was Sarah. My family still calls me by my family name but in missions, I am only known by the name Sarah, apart from legal paperwork for visas and sponsors using my legal details to donate finance. I have German and French Huguenot roots from mom's side, (Von Gericke, Le Grange, and Du Plooy) but there is a rumor in the family that from Dad's side, Breedt & De Beer, our last name used to be Beryth and that they changed it during a time of Christian persecution in France. I have no idea how true this is but I like the story! Beryth (sounds like Beriet) is the Hebrew word for covenant and it sounds very close to Breedt. God made a Beryth with Abraham and Sarah. This is why I use 'Beryth' as my last name.

**28****REALITY OF THE SPIRIT WORLD – FREE MASONRY**

I pursued my UofN degree and finally got to do the School of Intercessory prayer. The real breakthrough in finance came after an intense prayer time one day during this 12-week course. We covered many topics but one week stood out. Our speaker was Eben Swart. He knew a lot about the strongholds over South Africa. One of the topics he covered was an introduction to Free Masonry. Many South Africans have roots in this seeing that the ships that came from Europe, were all Free Masons. I knew about this topic but I do remember how many people often, after praying for me asked me if I had Free Masonry in my family. Often people would pray for me in regards to this. At the end of the week, we did something unconventional. Projected on the wall in front of us was the list of covenants in order as one climbs the ladder in this secret society. By the time a person reaches 33 degrees, you are deep into Satanism and witchcraft. This is where the deep state comes in and the deep state is run by even a deeper state - other beings. We prayed, "On behalf of myself and my family I repent for covenant number one ... .." On behalf of myself and my family I repent covenant number two... .." We went through the entire list. When we were done we sat in our chairs and the leader said, "I am going to make sure you are all ok" He walked over to the first student, looked them into the eyes, and, said: "I command the spirit of Free Masonry to break off you and your family." Nothing happened with any of the students as he went around. He finally came to me and by the time he reached me, I could not look at him. I remember telling him, "I cannot look you in the eyes and something is seriously wrong with my stomach." I knew what to do and started repenting on behalf of my family. This is when I heard an audible voice say to me, "We have a right on your blood because you gave it to us." I said to my leader, "This thing is talking to me! It is telling me it has a right to my family's blood!" The entire class by now was passing for me. I kept repenting and suddenly, just like that, I could look my leader in the eyes. He looked at me and said: "In the Name of Jesus, the spirit of Free Masonry, leave her!" I started coughing and coughing and physically felt something leave my body through my mouth. I was completely shocked that this happened. Since then, I had a massive breakthrough in my finance. I have sponsors that stayed with me since that time

and I never saw any debt again. If God asked me to be somewhere, the finance came in. I know there are bible scholars and theologians that will have a problem with this story, but I cannot change it. It happened with an entire class as witnesses. You can imagine how this threw a lot of my theology upside down because I physically experienced deliverance as a Spirit-filled born again Christian. I was usually the one doing deliverance on people! Up until that point, I believed that a Spirit-Filled person could not be delivered like this. It caused me to see “being filled” and “continue to be filled with the Spirit” (Eph 5:18 & Acts 4:31) in a very different light. Since I have studied Satanistic Ritual Abuse and how we as believers can minister to survivors with multiple personalities due to trauma, I have learned quite a bit about how things work in the spirit - things the church does not talk about. Many believe that Christians simply cannot have demons attached to them. It is not as simple as “this cup is full of milk and therefore it is obvious that there is no place more place for any other milk.” The spirit world is different and not ‘contained’ in our mere physical bodies only but in many different dimensions in the spirit world. A Christian cannot be demon-possessed like a non-Christian. Non-Christians have nothing in them that can be completely taken over body, soul, and spirit. In Ephesians 4:27 Paul warns the Christians by writing, “...do not give the devil a foothold.” Sin can give a foothold to demonic activity. In Genesis 4:7 God gives a very stern warning, “You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is a demon crouching at the door, it will desire you, and you will be mastered by it.” (REB 1983). Sin is personified as a demon. Most English translations leave the word demon out. One can give the enemy legal right, not for full possession but to grab hold of an area and then one can have a level of demonization that has to be dealt with through repentance and renunciation. For a Christian, there are levels to demonization. One can have attachments. A Christian can manifest when the stronghold is strong enough to give this sort of reaction. I have mentioned SRA before. This has a deeper level of deliverance needed when they get saved because their personalities have been split on purpose into many parts and to each part, there can be attachments. For Born again believers like you and I, Paul is clear that anger can become a major issue that leads to these attachments. In Romans 12:19 he writes too that we do not avenge ourselves but we leave room for God’s wrath. In James 4:7 he commands us to submit ourselves to God, to resist the devil so that he

will flee from us. If we walk in the flesh, in the old sin nature, and not in the spirit for long enough and you stay there, then the enemy can have a hold. Mark 5:9 happens when someone is not a believer, where the enemy can speak through the person and have complete control over them. How can we protect ourselves from people who cast spells on us through black magic etc? We cannot escape spiritual warfare and in Ephesians 6:11-12 we are commanded to put on the full armor of God so that you and I can stand against the devil's schemes seeing that our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. We can be strong and bold. In Luke 10:19 we are told that Jesus gave us authority to deal with this, "I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you." We need to know our authority to trample and to tread because demonic powers come in all sorts of manifestations, including animals like lions, wolves, snakes, scorpions, and dogs in other dimensions. In Psalm 91:13 we read, Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet." The book of Romans links this when it says, "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." Free Masonry and Satanic Ritual Abusers know these powers for decades. They have been summoning spirits just like in the Old Testament, then sending them with assignments, or putting a demon on an object to give to bring a curse. We recognize it, then renounce and rebuke it, and then we pray for the sender, for the Lord to engage them. In astral projection, if they have summoned and sent, we recognize it and deal accordingly. The famous SRA counselor and true spiritual warrior for Christ, Late Russ Dizdar spoke about how drug lords and voodoo practitioners would do blood rituals, take pictures of child sacrifice, and send him a note, "Russ, we did this for you." (18 May 2021 Interview). He would ask God in the morning in his quiet time if anything was going to be sent his way so he could "hit it now" and that God would deal with them as He did with Saul of Tarsus. How did Jesus deal with this? Jesus spoke to people who manifested demons but when it came to the sick, he laid hands on them, the power went out from Him and they recovered. We want to follow what Jesus modeled to us. Peter and Judas are also two good examples of how the demonic can interfere in the life of a disciple.

When you close your eyes, you enter that world as Gregory Boyd so excellently explains in his book 'seeing is believing' God gave us each a brain with its remarkably fast, automatic, image-making capacity so we could interact with him, ourselves, others, and the world as personal beings. The human brain is by far the most amazing, complex, and mysterious aspect of the physical world. When our imaginative re-presentations communicate truth to us, when they correspond to the way things are, and when they evoke appropriate feelings to motivate us to behave in effective ways, the imagination is a great ally. More particularly, when our re-presentations of spiritual matters are vivid and correspond with reality, we can experience the things of God as real and are transformed by this experience. Boyd, Gregory A.. Seeing Is Believing: Experience Jesus through Imaginative Prayer (p. 76). Baker Publishing Group. Kindle Edition. Unfortunately, a few missed his brilliant point and called it New Age. I think in my walk I am coming to understand that much of what we call New Age, are people without Jesus tapping into spiritual realities that are found in scripture that Christians for some reason don't want to experience. Just think of Peter and his trance! Or John and the book of Revelation. I have had dreams where I visited strange places and it felt so real.

One time I was in Africa in a dream and I met two blond missionary ladies whose names I just knew. I took their guitar and entered an African hut and worshiped. Suddenly a man from that nation stood at my door and said "you are bringing a different spirit to this place' (meaning Holy Spirit). I said, "in the name of Jesus leave this place." He left and then I woke up. These types of dreams are a mystery to me. Then there was the day my eyes saw something physically before it disappeared! I was standing with a group of young people we just ministered to. Suddenly I saw on the back of the one boys' shirt, the letters "WORSHIP LEADER" and it was written with fire, in English calligraphy. I walked over to my team leader and told him what I had just seen. He said, "thank goodness. I just gave my expensive guitar to that boy and when I asked him if he could play he said that he has never picked up a guitar. I had no idea if I heard from God or not but now I know it was God that prompted me to give it to him." Do you know what that fire reminded me of? Yes, it is a famous film and I do believe they tap into spiritual things that are occultism by nature, but they give us a glimpse of something perhaps that is more real and functioning than what most of the church wants to believe, look into or understand.

It is the MARVEL film. They draw a circle with their hands and open portals to travel into. Portals are what the dark world is doing, but my book is not on this topic. Perhaps in the next book! My challenge to you for this moment is, that there might be a biblical way to experience Holy Spirit that New Agers have hijacked. Read 'seeing is believing' and ask Holy Spirit to perhaps teach you a way to use your imagination, a gift given from God for you to use, and see what happens. Re-read my story about my car and Lectio Divina later in this book... and go deeper with Him. Back to the intercession classroom experience! Then it was another girl's turn to be prayed for. She repented about a few things in her life and all of a sudden, as I prayed for her, I had to step back from her because I could not breathe. The putrid egg smell was indescribable and with it was a grey smoke as if I was standing next to a smoking fire. No one else saw or smelled it. I walked to the back of the classroom. The moment I stepped closer it was too much for my nose. I don't even know how this works but my spiritual body's nose took over. She started to forgive her one parent and as she did this, this evil spirit came out of her head. I saw it leave. The smoke and smell went with it. Her life changed after that experience. How does one explain it theologically... I don't know but it was real with evidence of change afterward. That same day we also prayed over a friend of mine. She was very young and loved Jesus. She had one struggle though. Boys! She always talked about how she wanted a nice boyfriend. There is nothing wrong with wanting a boyfriend but she knew her heart was tapping into lust, not pure love. She stepped forward for prayer. She was a good friend but I looked at her and said. "I rebuke the spirit of lust over you." She shot like lightning away from me and collapsed onto the floor in the corner. Conviction came over her and she started weeping while repenting for things God revealed to her at that moment. Her focus dramatically shifted in that season. One of my most precious experiences while on the intercession school took place one morning when we pressed into His presence for over three hours. The Presence of God was tangible. At one point the piano played music for roughly five minutes by itself. The look on my friend's face as she lifted both hands in the air saying, "Guys, guys, I am not playing it. It is playing by itself!" I was on my knees and every time I closed my eyes I was in front of golden steps that went upwards before me. Water flowed from these steps and it was simply beautiful. I was in this place in the spirit when worship stopped. By now I completely forgot we were

a group of people together and I heard the announcement that we were going to stop. Too many students were just sitting around and not participating in the worship. A few years after that I read a poem by Elizabeth B. Browning that explained my disappointment and thoughts very well. "Earth's crammed with heaven, And every common bush afire with God, But only he who sees takes off his shoes; The rest sit round and pluck blackberries. "During this training time, I was invited to Amsterdam to pioneer the School of Biblical Studies on the Amsterdam base. I replied and told them that I was about to wrap up my B.A. Degree in Biblical Studies, and once done, I would fly to help them pioneer this course.

## 29

### AUSTRALIA

To finish my B.A. Degree, I had one more course to complete, School of Frontier Media (SFM). For this, I had to fly to Perth, Australia, to the second-largest YWAM base in the world. This school altered my life and the direction it took, forever. I only had my airfare money and the school leader told me, not to come if I did not have all my finance with me. I told him, "God will provide. I am coming!" I placed the receiver down and thought, "what did I just do?" I had no idea that the visa for Australia included a blood test. There were no ways that I was going to be in time. I fell into a chair at my parents' place and said to my mom, "That's it. I cannot go. It will take a miracle for the blood tests to be in time." At that moment of giving up, it was my mother who suddenly stood up and said, "You are going, let's drive to George." This was the nearest 'legal place' according to the Aussie application to draw blood. I was 150km away. Then it still had to go to Cape Town, 550km away! And, it was the weekend! Mom kept saying - COME! So... with very little faith, I drove to George. They used a special courier to speed up the process for me and guess what? Mom was right. I made it, though I was a week late. If it was not for mom's faith that morning my life would have looked very different because this last course, changed my entire life's trajectory. Flying to Perth, means you fly 7 hours into time. This means jet lag on steroids greets you on the other, and my school leader who initially told

me not to come, whom I told that I would leave right after the SFM to the Netherlands Amsterdam base. During my first week at the school of frontier media, Susi Childers was our speaker on photography. She shared how God used her and her camera for the sake of the unreached. I sat in the back of the class weeping my eyes out. Holy Spirit started speaking to me and showed me various places I have been in missions, especially India. He said, "You will never know what you meant for those people, and those people and those people! My mind went through memory lane as I silently wept at the back of the class. He said, "You will only see the fruit one day in heaven but do not doubt how I use you even if you cannot see fruit." From that day, I never saw any outreach in the same light. I will go anywhere God tells me and the size of the audience does not matter. What was the SFM all about? We made evangelistic and church planting films for very unreached language ethnic groups in the 10-40 window. We would find believers who were willing to put their faces and lives on the line for us. Once we were done, the film was in their language, acted by their people in their cultural clothing. No one would figure out that most westerners were behind the scenes, making these films. It was a heaven-sent strategy that God showed Calvin and Carol Conkey when they started with missions. Co-working with them for the next 7.5 years was one of the biggest blessings God gave me in my life. During the lecture phase the pioneers of Create International, Calvin, and Carol Conkey, taught us how to share the Gospel in culturally sensitive ways by always reminding us to be 'culturally relative, and biblically sound.' Our practical field assignment was coming up fast. Slowly money came in but not nearly enough for outreach. One day God asked me to give all the money I received and would receive to my Egyptian brother for outreach. Oh, I was deeply challenged and my school leader could not believe I was giving my money to him. "YOU need to go on outreach!" he would say. I was fully aware of this. It was a specialist outreach and if I did not make it, I did not finish my B.A. degree. Would I obey God, or would I place a degree above what He asked me? Needless to say, on the very last day, both my Egyptian brother and I had a sponsor that came forward and we both went on outreach. I am so glad I obeyed God! Off we went to make an evangelistic film on the prodigal son, alongside a church plant model for the Farsi-speaking unreached people group of Iran. We could not enter Iran because of the nationalities represented on our team. We decided to fly and film in another Muslim nation

where we used underground Iranian refugees to act for us. The nation we did go to is also an extremist Muslim nation and this is where I faced my fears of jail and dying for Jesus.

### 30

#### ... and ACTION!

“Will I go to jail for Jesus in a Muslim country?” I asked myself while I was standing with the sound boom over my head, arms in the air recording the home-group fellowship as they were busy acting part of a scene. I was scared and all I could think of was my family at that moment. I did not care so much for myself but for my mom and dad. We configured the room to look like an Iranian living room. My job that day was to hold the sound boom, to capture the sentences as the actors spoke. The room was tiny and at one point I had to stand outside the door. We were on the 3rd floor, and I stood where all the other tenants of this building walked up and down to their flats. What if they stopped and asked us what we were doing? During that same time, we had to lay low seeing that two South Africans had to flee the nation due to persecution. I was there on a tourist visa... but I did not look like a tourist outside this door with a boom over my head and Iranians sitting in a circle while cameras were rolling... I felt like my head was going to roll. I was so relieved when the scene was done and the door closed. No one came up the stairs during those 15 minutes that felt like 15 hours. We finished our project and flew back to Perth to put the movies together. One of our YWAM friends, a crazy Aussie family man, flew into Iran with these films to key underground partners. Years ago I heard that at least 15 000 saw the evangelistic film, so who knows how many by now have seen it since its release on YouTube. The crazy guy came back telling us how God oped doors for him through Iranian taxi drivers who were secret underground believers. Today, Iran has the fastest growing underground church in the world, bigger than China! It reminds me of the book “The insanity of God” Do read it! You will be uplifted in your faith. One morning during my quiet time, I felt that God was asking me to stay with Create for a while. I reminded God about Amsterdam and my commitment. The more I prayed the more I knew one thing - stay with Create. I had to phone Amsterdam and I felt terrible doing so.

Then I received an email during the time of struggle from Amsterdam. They wanted to speak to me. I told them that I also wanted to speak to them. We arranged a time and connected online. That is when they told me the story of what took place during their staff meeting, while they prayed for the School that I was going to pioneer. The lady said, they prayed and then went on praying for other things. She said, "you kept coming back to my mind so I told the staff, and we prayed for you again." As they now sat with more intentional focus before the Lord, asking Him what he is trying to say about me, the Lord guided them to Habakkuk 2:3, and the words "Though it tarries, wait..." jumped out at them. She said they understood that God was telling them to tell me not to come and pioneer the school during that season seeing that the base was going through a major unexpected transition. You can just imagine my relief when I told them that God has been telling me to stay in Perth for a while, not to come to Amsterdam. I finished my degree in 2007 and stayed with Create International. One of my first tasks in the office was to promote the DVDs among the outreach groups going to these nations where we made the films to help the evangelistic process. It was a nightmare because no one had figured out a system to put these foreign-language films for someone new like me to know what type of film it was, and where to find them. They went by photos on the DVDs because they were on the set and knew the faces. I was not! All I saw were 60 DVDs with 60 different Asian faces! We had Mobilisation films, Evangelistic films in many languages, Church Plant films, Music videos - and some were dubbed and subtitled too. In that season I learned something new about myself. I was a systems person and in a short time I figured out an international numbering system for all our teams living in seven locations so that even the newest staff could understand where the DVD was filmed, by which team, what language, people group, if it was dubbed in another language or subtitled into English or any other language. I loved my job. I love creating systems.

**31****THAILAND**

In 2010 a team of us moved to Thailand to be closer to the many unreached people groups in the region. It was much cheaper to live there and to fly to different locations from southeast Asia. We created many films during this season and covered a lot of unreached people that have never been reached with the gospel. Then I did something I never thought I would do. I pioneered a Discipleship Training School for Create so that we could train our students from the start to focus on the unreached and then take our films with them on outreach for distribution. It was very strategic. There was one thing I wanted to see take place with our outreach teams. I remembered my very first outreach to India. I remembered how I stood in front of hundreds of people who have never heard of Jesus, nor the Creator God who loved them. I wanted to see, that when a team left a region that Bible resources stayed behind. All of us know how quickly we forget a sermon, but I still remember my very first kiddies bible my mom gave me, paging through it every day and without knowing it at that time, that I was meditating on the word of God, saturating my little mind with Jesus and his stories. I wanted this for the Indian kids. When the missionaries left, I wanted them to pick up their coloring books with Bible stories as I did with mine. So many times, we come in as teams and do dance, drama, and preaching and then leave. How will they remember what we spoke about if they heard it only one time, and for most - the very first time? How do we not only evangelize but also disciple effectively? I had an idea for India. What if my team could produce a culturally relative coloring book that stayed behind? This meant we not only left the message clearly and understandably, but children would engage with it again and again. Parents would read the coloring books which was an introduction to the Creator God in the Bible! I connected with someone in India and for three months my students worked on this book during their workday time after class. I had three professional artists in my school seeing that they did the DTS to do the cartooning and animation course afterward with Create. They worked extremely hard and we managed to finish and illustrate 10 stories from Creation to the second return of Christ, Hindi style. We took a team to Varanasi and I saw my dream come true. We told kids the stories under the trees on the ground and then had them

color in each story we told. Much later I heard how this coloring book in PDF format spread even into Tibet and Nepal, two extremely closed nations. On this outreach, I became very, very ill but at least I could see, before I flew myself out of there after 10 days of severe dysentery, the Hindi coloring book that we created during the lecture phase do its work. It took another few days for the hospital in Thailand to finally figure out what bug was bugging my intestines so bad. It was not for nothing. Pioneering the DTS led me to compile material for the new pioneering base and school leaders of YWAM. This, alongside the coloring book, became some of my highlights in YWAM. All the books, including “pioneer and multiply” I made available online for free, and often I would hear of some new leader using the material in some nation. In 2015 I contracted dengue fever that placed me in hospital for 7 days. I would not even keep water down. One day the nurse said that if my white blood cell count did not change soon, I would have to have a blood transfusion. That same night it changed and I could go home. My mom flew from South Africa to come and help me because I was too weak to make food. I enjoyed living in Thailand. Our South African Rand was 6 Bhaat for R1 but by the time I left Thailand, it was R1,8 only when the military took charge after the King passed away.

## 32

### **IF YOU FEEL IT, YOU BELIEVE IT**

One of the prayer courses I included for my students during their lecture phase, is called Theophostic Prayer. Each Thursday morning we watched one of the eight training DVDs. I did this so that my staff and students had some understanding as to how to pray alongside people during one-on-one sessions. It was one of many tools I gave them. It was my turn to use this tool. My house buddy and I had to get visas for the USA for a YWAM conference. She left for the embassy and had a motorbike accident right after she received her visa. It is very common in Thailand to have such accidents because of the crazy traffic. This caused my friend to refuse to get on a motorbike for a long time and I got tired of doing all the driving. One day, we decided to bring this before God because she had to get back on a motorbike. We brought this before the Lord in a prayer full

manner as I learned in Theophostic. It shortly means Theo =God, and Phostic = light. You ask God to shine his light onto the situation you remember. The basis of this is that you emotionally feel what you believe. An example is, "I feel scared (fear) to get onto a bike" The next question is, "what do you believe is going to happen?" The emotion leads you to your belief. Once you realize what you believe, you exchanged it for what God's truth is in your situation. We went into prayer and I asked my friend what she emotionally felt when I asked her to get on my bike. Fear rose. We asked God to show her His reality. Suddenly God showed her how He was holding her on the bike and her fear left. That afternoon, we finally went together on a motorbike to a large mall a few miles from home. On our way back, I turned right at the traffic light and there were no cars in my rearview mirror. I looked again and suddenly I saw a big black double cab driving towards us. I kept looking. He was speeding. He was in the first lane and I was by default when I turned into the third lane, the fast lane. I wanted to go over to the first lane, this is why I kept looking in my mirror. I waited for him to pass me and watched in horror as he drove straight towards me as if to hit me! In my mind, I thought "Does he want to kill us or what?" I kept yelling at my friend screaming "what is the guy doing, what is he doing!?" I could not scoot more right because of the grey cement wall that separated us from oncoming traffic. If I slowed down, the guy would hit us but I could not go faster on my small motorbike. Both my friend and I felt the adrenaline pump through us as he came right next to us. He was so close that we both felt the heat of his car. I knew we were dead. There was no question about it. Suddenly, as if a force pushed this big car away from us milliseconds before hitting us, slamming us into the blocks of grey cement, it swerved to the left still at the speed it was. My very first thought was that an angel pushed him away from us. When we debriefed what happened we could not but wonder what would have happened if we did not intensely pray that morning for protection. That same week I had nearly four accidents and then it suddenly stopped. It was as if I had a target on my back that read, 'hit me.' Then it stopped. It was a bizarre week on the road. Both Penny and I prayed for a car. We've been praying for five years because we were tired of carrying our weekly groceries and toilet paper on the motorbike in the monsoon rain. For some reason, no one ever responded to our newsletters in regards to a car, not until much later. I was in Thailand six years by now and that year, at one of our YWAM Thailand conferences, a

friend of mine said, “Hey, you should do the Masters.” He had no idea that I wanted to do it and I never told anyone. I was at a previous conference in Australia where the Master students gave their testimonies and I wish I could do it. I for one did not think I could do it and secondly, one had to be invited. The Masters’ were not for me. I had no idea but this frontier missions friend whom I only saw when we had a conference in Thailand, wrote to the appropriate people in the university, and one day I got an email, “Let her contact me.” So, I did! I applied and was surprised to be accepted as a student in 2016 for the Master’s program in Spiritual Formation and Discipleship. This meant that I was a student on two levels in this season. My visa was a language visa, which meant I could stay in Thailand but now I was part of the Masters too with much more weekly assignments. Every few months students would fly from all over the world to the nation where the Leaders of this course lived - I was the fortunate one... it was Cape Town, South Africa. This meant I also saw my family more often. One of the Bible study methods we learned during this time is called Lectio Divina or Divine Reading. This is why I tell you about it!

### 33

#### **STORY OF OUR CAR**

Imagine, when you read the Bible you consider with your imagination how Jesus lived as one of us (human) in relation to His Father, Holy Spirit, people, the enemy, and in all kinds of circumstances. While you read a story or a parable, together with Holy Spirit, you use your imagination and put yourself in the story as if you are part of it. Then, ask questions like, where are you? What do you see and smell? What sounds do you hear? Where is Jesus? What is He saying? What else do you notice/sense in this scenario? Notice the interaction with people in the story. What do you feel and notice related to them? What areas of tension can you identify? What inspires/challenges you? Then finish by praying, telling God about your experience. When it comes to imagination Gregory Boyd writes, ...we mistakenly assume that information automatically translates into transformation. We tend to have a naive conviction that if only we read another book or get involved in another Bible study, our lives will be significantly changed. He goes on

to say, We have come to mistrust imagination, especially in spiritual matters. We have come to identify imagination as something that takes us away from truth rather than something that can be useful, and indeed necessary, to enable us to experience truth (pp. 71-72). "...it does not treat Scripture as texts to be studied, but as the living word. Opening to God: Lectio Divina and Life as Prayer by David G. Benner 2010, p. 47–53

The following story powerfully illustrates how imagination in prayer can be more real than we ever can imagine!

In January 2016 I wrote on my blog: "If you have been following my blog on my website, you will know about Blue Bubbles the small car we recently took over from a missionary It not only gave us tremendous trouble but finally decided in January 2016 to burst its blue bubble. Only a few days before our car went to the graveyard I got rid of my 2nd bike that my house buddy used to drive with. Little did we know that a week later, we would have 1 bike between the two of us and no car. We live 7km out of town, and 10km from the office - so! We had a huge problem. We decided that we would not pray for another bike. We had to pray for a car for many logistical reasons - not just staying out of the blazing sun or buying toilet paper in the monsoon whilst paddling through the mud pool to get to my gate but for the teams, we were leading. This was a massive step of faith for both my house buddy and me. I admired her for her perseverance in this because, to be honest - I would have settled for a bike.

February 2016: We prayed. At first, we said "Lord, a car, any car. We are desperate for wheels as long as it does not break!"

April 2016: One weekend whilst praying again for a car, a scripture from Matthew 21 came to my mind. Jesus sent two of his disciples to a village and said - Go, you will find a donkey tied there... bring it to Me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs it and he will send them right away. Faith suddenly rose in my heart "for the donkey" (the car). We had to pray that it would get "un-tied" and that it would be sent to us because we needed it to do what He called us to do. We prayed up a storm. One time when we prayed and I said 'any car Lord' when Holy Spirit told us to pray specifically for the white Avanza that we needed." We just knew God engaged back with us in regards to our request. A rhema word like this births tremendous faith. This is what we did - we

prayed very specifically. “Lord, release that white donkey! Bring us the white Avanza that is so needed.”

May-June 2016: I came to South Africa to do fundraising and to celebrate my 40th. The fundraising somehow went downhill and I had to come to terms that I lost more support than gained sponsors. Talking about a car seemed completely ridiculous. I also had to raise a few thousand US dollars for the Masters. Nothing worked out... yet I knew that the donkey was going to walk over to us at some point!

25 October 2016: 6 Months later (and much prayer in between) while I was busy with a “prayer assignment” for the Masters’ program in South Africa, God spoke to me about the car in a very special way. The master’ assignment was reading through Luke while doing Lectio Divina. The passage was from Luke 7:36-50. I imagined myself in that scene as if I was that woman, breaking my expensive oil over His feet. I said to the Lord: “I have given you everything in my life. I have nothing more to give.” Jesus looked at me and said: “Turn around and look.” I turned around and behind me was a shelf with 5 new jars of expensive oil. I was quite surprised. I wrote the conversation down in my diary and went on with my day. The next day, when I had to read another passage from Luke, I could not get Luke 7 out of my mind. Every time I closed my eyes, I was back in the scene sitting in front of Jesus. In the vision this time, I walked over to the 5 jars and gave them back to Jesus. I said “Lord, everything belongs to you. I know you gave me these five back in the place of the one I gave you but I want you to have these too” Jesus looked at me and said: “Look behind you” I turned around and I saw not only an uncountable amount of jars of oil but in the middle of the jars stood a White Avanza. Then the scene changed and I saw how Penny was driving it in January 2017 and how she came to the airport to pick me up! I just knew it was a matter of time before we would have the car. 48 hours after the vision with the oil jars I received a phone call. “We are buying you the car you want.” Between them sorting out the finance and the banking time between SA and Thailand, it took two months before the car finally made it to our house... What led to this was that the day I saw the vision, I posted a picture of the white Avanza on FB saying “Still trusting” and hours later I felt that I had to delete the post because putting it on Facebook felt like saying to God that I did not trust Him. Little did I know that in those two

or three hours before I deleted my post, someone in South Africa saw the photo and God spoke to him and his wife to buy us the car.

For two years in a row, 2012 and 2013 he came as a speaker to the schools I ran and saw how my house buddy and I struggled without a car. When he saw my post he suddenly felt they were the ones to step in and help. His wife simply responded, "Did God speak to you, or is it your good heart that wants to buy them a car?" He said "God spoke" and that settled it between them. They have their own story of stepping out in sacrificial obedience but it just showed me that God was looking for people who would listen to him and obey, not rich people who could simply give. Someone gave them a gift and God told them that my friend and I were to be the recipients of that gift. In this sense, God was truly able to use them as conduit channels through which to move finance. Many people pray this but few act on it.

22 December 2016... Penny drove the white donkey home.

29 January 2017 she picked me up at the airport just like I saw in the vision!

## **CHAPTER 4**

**34**

### **2016: THE EAGLE AT 40**

I turned 40 when I began the master' Program with the University of the Nations. It became a very intense season for me but not without warning from the Lord. A few months before I turned 40 the Lord started speaking to me about doing a 40-day fast when I turned 40. I was well familiar with fasting by now but I have never fasted for this extended time. In 2004 I started to fast every Thursday until 2008 when I fasted every Monday and Thursday after that. My body was not able to cope with this and after eight months I stopped. Since then I would only fast if I strongly sensed God asking me to do so. In 2013, three years prior, I did a 30-day speech fast in which I spoke with no one. I flew out to a cheap hotel on the coast of Thailand and spoke to no one. During those 30 days, I developed a bible study book that would help young Christians enter into and develop a habit of certain spiritual disciplines over twelve weeks, called Day & Night.

Doing a food fast was different, but then one day someone sent a clip around. The moment I saw the clip, God confirmed in my spirit that I had to do the 40 days of fasting and prayer. The clip consisted of a made-up story to illustrate the positive side if a person allows himself to enter into a difficult season for the sake of renewal. In this story, a forty-year-old eagle finds a place high up on a solitary cliff on some mountain where it can sit and pluck out its old weathered feathers. Once every feather is painfully plucked out, the eagle starts hitting its beak against a rock until it falls off. As it sits vulnerable like this, not being able to fly or eat, the feathers and beak slowly start growing back, causing the eagle to have another 40 years of renewed strength. While I was watching this clip, making up my mind to fast for 40 days, I could feel how God was taking me into my second half of life. This can happen at any age but the actual journey to the second half of life can be difficult because of the lack of structure for change at first. Many people get stuck in their first half of life, just drifting on as they get older. I am anemic and still had to work so it felt right to have a scoop of Herbal Life for breakfast, lunch, and dinner with milk and water. It never filled me up but was enough for me not to faint. This was really, really difficult and if I did not have such a strong word from God to do it, I never would have made it. By day twenty an intense struggle began and by day thirty I thought I was going to give up. Finally, day 40 came. It felt like a hundred years but I made it! This was one of the most difficult things I have done in my life. The endurance called for was unexpected. During this time He gave me a very clear prophetic picture of myself flying a kite in the air. Suddenly a hand came and cut the kite's rope and it flew into the clouds where I could not see it. God showed me that my house-buddy of 12 years was going to go and live in the Middle East. I did not tell her. When God said he was going to pull my feathers, I had no idea just how intense this word would come true. Not only did I feel God pulling my feathers one by one through the master's program that started the month I stopped the fasting, but the next He left the eagle pretty much naked on the cliffs. I flew out from Thailand to South Africa for one of our Master's intensive weeks in Cape Town. During this time my brother Zarias, his wife, and Alexander (2) decided to go and live in Thailand, teaching English. They also wanted to fall pregnant again but Zarias had to be off his Scleroderma meds for one year before they could try. Thailand was perfect. When Zarias visited me briefly in 2013 he saw that the weather in Thailand did him good. It was warm, so his hands and feet did

not become blue with sores as they did in South Africa. I came back from my studies and could finally go and say hi to them. In my heart, I thought, “finally I am not alone in Thailand. I have a family with me.” Just before I drove over to Zarias and his wife who lived 5 hours from my place, my other brother, F.C. also came to Thailand to visit. I waited for him. I thought, I never have time alone with F.C. so I told him we would drive to Zarias in three days. There was no rush. Those two brothers were as thick as thieves! At the end of having an amazing time, showing F.C. amazing Chiang Mai and the mountains on my bike, we drove to Sukhothai. We visited my sister-in-law’s school where she gave English. She had so much favor and loved it. Then, as if Someone waiting for myself and F.C. to arrive, Zarias suddenly became extremely ill. He could barely move. His feet were a mess. In two days, he went from driving his bike, showing us around to where F.C. had to carry him upstairs to his bed. In a blink of an eye, overnight, my brother who has been fighting Scleroderma since five, could not walk. He was fit. He had to stay fit to keep his lungs from hardening. Instead of simply visiting him, we realized by day two that we had to pack up the house while he was in and out of a nearby public hospital. Imagine, they just arrived a few weeks prior! They were happy. So happy. There were no signs that this would happen. Fortunately, my personality, instead of getting emotionally stuck with no brains under these circumstances, becomes very task-oriented and I can think clearly. F.C. and I knew we had to get him back to Chiang Mai and on a plane back to South Africa. My house buddy went out of her way, took a bus, and drove for hours to come and help us pack up. I felt deeply sorry for my sis-in-law. This must have been so hard for her. We packed their entire house into the car and onto the roof, thanks to F.C.’s amazing spatial intelligence. Zarias was in so much pain. I drove us back and at one point made a mistake that caused us to drive an extra two hours, cramped in that van. We finally got him, just in time, on a plane back to South Africa. When I say, just in time, I mean, just in time because he was so ill that the pilot wanted to turn the plane around to go back to Thailand. I will never forget the horror of his last shower before we drove to the airport. He scarcely made it to my bedroom and said he could not continue to the shower. My sis-in-law and I helped him onto the bed and it is then that I saw death coming for him. His wife shouted at him “stay with us, stay with us.” Then I yelled-prayed: “I rebuke the angel of death coming for you. It is not your time today. You will get back to South Africa.” He opened

his eyes and said, "what just happened? It felt like I died." His wife then washed him with a cloth and got him into clean clothes. We went to the airport and their journey of hell started but he made it to South Africa. Three days later I got a phone call from him. "Are you sitting down?" he asked. I knew something was wrong. Then he said, "I have fourth-stage cancer." All I could say was, "I am coming." The next flight out to South Africa was two days later. Then a very strange thing took place while I was in the air, preparing myself to say goodbye to my brother, who I thought just a week ago thought would be with me in Thailand for years to come. I still remember waiting for my flight between Bangkok and Chiang Mai, how extremely happy I was to have him in Thailand. Having that snatched from me within one week was hard.

While in the air, two of my cousins flew to Cape Town to the hospital to pray for him. A miracle happened. We have no idea why, but for 48 hours after that prayer, he was not sick. In actual fact, he was able to pick up a coin with his stiff fingers - something he has not done for years. When I arrived, my dad said, do you believe in miracles? I did not know what he meant. When I saw my brother, instead of a dying man, I saw him doing just fine. I was so confused. Then, as he was laying on the couch in F.C.'s home, he took a turn for the worse. His oxygen levels dropped and just like that, he could not breathe without an oxygen bottle. These 48 hours, captured on video will be a mystery until we get to heaven one day. Zarias asked us if we could take him to Stilbaai, where my parents and my youngest brother Jacques and his wife lived. On his last night in hospital, while waiting for the ambulance, I hid under his bed from the nurses doing the rounds. I was not allowed there but we did not want to leave him alone. The one nurse caught me and she was mad. All I told her was, we are waiting for the ambulance, and stayed. That next morning we drove to Stilbaai. I drove in the back of the ambulance with him. They told us it was a miracle that he made the six-hour trip. They did not know how strong my brother was. He was a fighter. Very close friends of our family said that we could live in their house that was right on the beach in Stilbaai so that Zarias could see the ocean. He was too weak to go out. There was one day that we carried him out on his bed but we realized that moving him even just the 5 meters was nearly too much for him. This was June 2017.

A friend of my parents tried to warn us that he was dying but none of us believed it. He was struggling to eat but his spirit was so strong. The will to live so unbreakable.

He trusted for healing. He was worshiping with us, his hands in the air. It was a very precious time. For three weeks, we stayed by his bed. His wife took such good care of him. It was Sunday, 8 am on Father's day that he said he was cold. I took a hair drying and tried to keep him warm. I looked at him and suddenly it struck me - he was leaving us. I called F.C. No one can prepare you for this. My parents were home, and we called them. They rushed over. We all stood around him. We were all present when he breathed his last. Oh, how indescribable 9:10 am was. His little boy was asleep but the moment Zarias passed away he shouted "Dadda." That freaked us out! Did Zarias go to say goodbye to him? I believe so.

One watches movies of dead bodies, their eyes wide open, staring. No one told me what it is like to look at the corpse of your brother, his eyes open but life is gone. Movies cannot show you this. One can see life in the eyes of someone whose heart is beating. The empty eyes are what haunted me for a long time. Due to his illness, and the stiff skin, we could not get his eyes shut. As typical Afrikaners, we started making jokes to cope with our situation. We cried and joked and cried and laughed. We were all grateful to some extent because Zarias's feet started to show signs of gangrene. He was in dreadful pain, but now it was over. We phoned the morgue and they brought us a body bag. They allowed his wife and F.C. to wash the body and put it into the bag. We did everything, and looking back we are so grateful that we took care of him until the very end, and not some nursing home. We are forever grateful to our friends that we could stay in their house, a bit of paradise while going through the trauma. This reminds me of a dream I had years before this, that I forwarded to the owner of the house's wife. I told her how I had a dream of Stilbaai, and that over the bay, in front of their house in the sky were suddenly thousands of shining angels. It was the most amazing dream and to know Zarias is now in that environment, in the presence of beautiful Jesus is wonderful. I cannot wait for myself, to join the cloud of witnesses. Not for one day, wish I, my brother, back on earth, or in that pain. Yes, his son has a journey ahead of him, but as difficult as some things are, we do not wish him back. We will go and join him and all the rest of the family that went ahead of us. Praise God!

You can watch our story on YouTube under "Zarias Breedtscleroderma" or my web page ([www.sarahberiyth.com](http://www.sarahberiyth.com)) because I filmed us from the moment I realized we

had to pack up the house until the day the ambulance brought him to Stilbaai, and then the funeral. I was just about to fly back to Thailand after 6 weeks away when I got another phone call. One of my three doggies, Stripes, went missing. We have no idea how she escaped our garden. Oh, that hurt. She was my shadow! I rescued her from a life stuck in a cage. Once back in Thailand I had banners made and drove like an insane person through the neighborhood looking for my small Yorkie dog. She was seven, could not understand Thai, and did not eat what Thai dogs ate. My heart was aching for my dog. During this month I did not think too much of my brother, because I had to find my dog. We never found her. One of these days I was driving when I heard an ambulance behind me. I scooted over with the car. Suddenly I found myself driving behind an ambulance for the first time since Zarias' passing. I burst out crying. I completely lost it in that car that day. All the memories suddenly flooded back into my mind, driving with him for six hours. In that same week, my friend said, "I have something to tell you." I told her that I knew what she was going to tell me. I told her about the vision God gave me a year ago when He cut the kite's string. "Your moving to the Middle East." Yes, she said. Just like that, my world shifted dramatically. We have been sharing a house, three dogs, life, and ministry for 12 years. I could not imagine living in Thailand without my friend. I thought of the eagle. More and more feathers were being plucked from my body in this extended season. Then, five months later I had to apply for a renewal of my Thai language visa while I was in South Africa for my Masters. I was on book 3, studying this difficult language, and once again I had Thai Government letters to extend my visa for another year. I waited for a reply from the consulate in Pretoria but I will never forget the feeling I had while waiting. Then the phone rang. It was the consulate. "Mam, we are not extending your visa. You have been denied." My heart stopped a beat. "Why?" She replied, "You have been too long in Thailand." I told her I am still studying the language and that it was not a valid reason. She coldly and very firmly just said, "You have been too long in Thailand" The moment she said it again, Holy Spirit spoke to my heart "I am The One calling you back to South Africa." It was so clear that I became calm and asked her for a two-month tourist visa to pack up the house. The eagle analogy became intensely true. I was intensely stripped of all. Penny and I ended up packing together after twelve years. We held the two remaining doggies in our arms. They were like kids in our house. We cried while

asking God to show us who would take Chommie and Daisy. He provided the most amazing two homes for them. I started packing. Then God spoke to me again. "I want you to model giving." In Thailand, ex-pats can sell all their belongings, even second-hand clothing for a good price but I strongly felt to give my belongings away. I had two iMac computers that I gave to YWAM's office, but what I did find hard to give away was my bed. I had a very expensive bed for my bad back. I felt to ask people who needed a bed to write their names on paper to "draw a name out of a hat." The little Thai girl who received the bed was overjoyed. She needed a bed but had no money to buy one! It felt so good to give my bed to her. The only thing I sold to have some money back in South Africa was my motorbike. Wow, God very quickly interrupted me! "What did I tell you?" I said, "to give everything away." "What are you doing, selling your bike?" I gave the money away and immediately felt relief!

### 35

#### **2018: BACK IN SOUTH AFRICA**

When I heard that I was going to go back to SA, I told my house buddy that she could have the car. I said it is no use selling the car, split the money, and then neither of us would be able to buy a car again. One morning before I finally left Thailand she came to me and said, "I need you to listen to me and not say anything back!" She said that she strongly felt that I was to have the car. I said, "Well, I can pray about it. God can only say yes or no. YOU need the car in the nation you are going. I am going to South Africa and I will see God's favor once again. I have faith for it." That night I went to bed and I could not sleep. God said over and over, "the car is yours. The car is yours. You will need it in South Africa." I cried and cried and cried. Here I was to give everything away but I would have a car in South Africa. The next morning I told my friend what happened. She was so relieved. When she arrived in the nation she moved to, she found out that the type of visa she was on did not permit her to buy a car! We were both overjoyed with how God led us with the car. Do you know who bought our car? An American couple who heard the story of my brother. God spoke to them, not only to buy our car but to move to the

very town my brother and wife were in. It is still very a very unreached city in the heart of Thailand. God spoke to them to take the place of my brother (who was an x-YWAMer too). That warmed my heart. When the car money finally came into my account from the USA, I felt to wait. I waited for three months while using my friend's car. Suddenly I felt the release to go and buy a car. I did a lot of research. Due to family opinion, Ford was not on the list. I went to pick up a friend who came along to find a car. We passed VW and because they are more expensive, including parts if it breaks, they were not on the table at all. As we drove past VW which was around the corner from her house, I said to her "Let's hop to see what is on the floor before we drive to Johannesburg. It will be quick because I will not buy VW." There were some lovely cars. One that stood high off the ground caught my attention. It was a Ford. The price was too high but I opened the door 'just to look.' I got in and as I sat in that chair (I still feel emotional just writing about it!) I heard clearly in my spirit a voice saying, "This is your car." I sat there, with both my hands on the steering wheel, thinking, it is impossible. There was no logical way that I could have this car. It is too nice. It is too expensive, and it was a Ford! I was looking for a Toyota. I called my friend over and said, "Hey, we have to go." So, we left for the East Rand and visited many Toyota dealers. At every dealer I would tell the person helping us, "I am a missionary. This is the amount in my bank. Don't try tricks on me and do not lie to me. I saw a Ford Eco Sport back in Benoni for this price and with this amount of miles - what do you say?" Every dealer said, "Get back there now and buy it." Nearing the end of the day, I realized, we better get back to that dealer. Every man I spoke with said that I would not make a mistake. With my experience of the morning in mind, we drove back there. Back in Benoni, I told the guy... I have this amount of money - what can you do? He said, "just wait a minute" I saw him enter the office which I assume was the boss. He came back. "It is yours." They agreed to give the car to me at a massive discount, did all my paperwork for me for free, and the next day... I drove away with the car that I know, that I know, that I know, was handpicked by my heavenly father - just for me. Thanks to Princes Benoni VW agents. God bless you! I told my cousin who initially sponsored the car when we were still in Thailand and he was overjoyed. He proceeded to tell me that his dad, a Professor in financial risk management at the University of Pretoria, after all his calculations, drove the Ford Eco Sport himself! This is where a good feeling feels

good! Three more crazy financial miracles took place when I arrived in South Africa with three packed suitcases (one full of blocked photos and precious books). First was housing. I had no idea where I would live. I was not ready for a small town like Stilbaai and to pay rent here compared to Thailand, and without my friend splitting the difference made it impossible to sign a contract. When I prayed about going back to YWAM Cape Town, I felt a no. As I kept praying two scriptures drew my attention. Elijah and the widow, and Elisha stayed in the little house prepared by a couple because he visited so often. I linked this scripture to a friend who stayed 1km from the house where I grew up, a mere 10km from O.R. Tambo International Airport next to Johannesburg. She was a widow and an intimate family friend for over 37 years. I asked her if I could stay with her for just a few months until I got sorted in South Africa. When I finally arrived at her house, thinking I was going to stay in her house, she suddenly handed me a key and said, "here you go." She gave me the key to a small flat with a living room and small kitchen right next to her house. I could not believe my eyes. This was completely unexpected and I was so blessed and relieved.

## **36**

### **Birth of SandBoxBible**

Then the second miracle happened. During the first initial months, I was still finishing my MA degree. My thesis was on examining the potential impact of re-imagining God through the use of our personal narrative in Christian spiritual formation, expressed through the means of Transformation Prayer Method (TPM), sand-play therapy, and Immanuel Journaling. In my observation practicing TPM and sand-play therapy with people, I noticed a constant gap between what a person think they believe about God the Father, Jesus, and Holy Spirit and what they experience once they are willing to tap into any past trauma that they remembered. Once I unpacked my suitcases, I bought some toys, a sand tray with sand, and practiced sand-play therapy for a small donation to finish my paper. One day a businessman came to see me. He gained profound personal insight into what he explored in the sand while packing the plastic vegetables in a row. Two

weeks later I received a donation from him. I text him back, "I think you made a mistake with the bank transfer. Can I wire the money back to you?" He wrote back. "No mistake. When I prayed and asked God what donation I should give, this amount clearly jumped into my head. Be blessed" I knew God was up to something. Apart from immediately paying my tithe to a missionary that I sponsor I left the money just like that until God spoke. Then one day, I did a sand-play session with a mixed group of people. We walked through the passage of Jesus meeting the woman at the well. When we were done, my youngest brother who participated said, "Imagine! If this is so much fun with a 'boring' story, how would it be telling the story of Jesus walking on water in the storm." I could not get his words out of my head. Imagine I could make Bible figures to tell Bible stories in the sand. I started my research and I went to shops to find a 3D printing machine. I could not find one. In hindsight, I am so glad that I did not immediately find it. In my search, I came across a machine that cuts the wood into any 2D shape you want. It was just a little bit more expensive than the amount I had in my bank account. I drove to the factory where I could buy such a machine. The man said that he could not give me a discount but he could point me in the direction of a Chinese guy who might, and he did! He came down with his price to what I had in the bank and just a few months after landing in South Africa, I started making Bible figures out of 3mm wood to tell Bible stories in sand. Sandbox Bible was born. Soon teams flying on outreach got a hold of the small outreach box I created to fit into a suitcase to tell stories in Nepal, Mozambique, Thailand, the USA, and more.

The third miracle right after coming back to South Africa had to do with the little flat I was staying in. Just a few months later, someone gave me a large donation again. Dear God, I prayed, what now? I felt he said that it was for me to decorate my little place in a way that I liked. I finally could buy a coffee table, a set of drawers, more sand-play toys, and my late brother's couches from my sister-in-law. I went shopping! For the first time in my life, I bought objects for my walls and my washing machine. I missed my doggies and bought a Pocket-Yorkie called Lilly Jordan that reminded me of my friend, and not much later a chocolate Pocket-Yorkie, called Maycee as a friend for Lilly when I was not home. It stands for "May you c (see) the goodness of God." As you can see, I saw the Goodness of God in extraordinary ways. My bank account was funny to watch. Empty. Full. Empty.

Full. Empty. Full. Once I had all I needed, all went back to full meaning, enough for fuel and food. I had no lack.

### 37

#### **The Single Table**

Once back in South Africa the pressure of 'why are you not married' was flung full in my face again. I was 43 going on 44. It felt like my culture had no idea how to handle an older single woman that was not seeing someone else, not to mention the jealousy and insecurity of married women when I seemed 'too nice' to their husbands. This is quite a painful point seeing that I grew up mostly around men and a bunch of boy cousins. I was not the kitchen, let's bake cookies girl but liked standing around the fire strangely persevered for men.

The viral video "South African Braai Etiquette" on YouTube starts with, "I will not show this video to any woman" which says it all. It is funny because we can laugh at ourselves - laugh at the fact that men braai and a woman cook up a salad in the kitchen. When men like baking and putting roses on cakes something is 'wrong' with them.

Single life has its ironic moments in the form of many divorced friends telling me 'you don't know what you're missing.' Yeh, right! Once I settled in South Africa, I started a group called 'The Single Table.' Once a month we met at a coffee cafe of choice to encourage one another. The first few times were nice until they relaxed among faces not so unknown and unfamiliar anymore. I was taken aback by the type of conversations this genre of Christian churchwoman had. I obviously had a gap in my adult education and no idea what type of lifestyle these 'church-going' people were into. Romans 2:24, "If you say people shouldn't commit adultery, do you commit adultery? If you boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? 'Because of you, God's name is blasphemed among the nations!" I lived in Australia for four years on a base with 500 people. It was a mixture of singles, couples, and married people, many came from different ethnic backgrounds. None of us ever talked like this. In Christ, with the common goal to make

Him known and to live holy lives, gave us a lifestyle that was in stark contrast to what I was hearing around 'The Single Table.' If an unsaved divorced person sat with us, I would not have been able to tell the difference. After roughly five months, I stopped calling the group together. As a Christian, I felt that some conversations that seemed normal around this table simply grieved Holy Spirit. I was not there to judge anyone and I am quite sure they would have taken it as 'the missionary' judging them. I understand that there are informative conversations that might need to take place in a safe environment. These were worship leaders and cell group leaders. I am writing to say, there is another way to be single, even if one messed up in the past. We grow and mature and we become more like Christ, who was single and can relate to us as singles even if we want to marry. I am not a pot waiting for my lid. I am not a half waiting for my other half. I do not need grown-up toys to play with while I am waiting for someone else to make me happy. What is the definition of contentment and happiness anyway? If it is marriage and sex I have breaking news. It is not. If it is to have kids, It is not.

Luke 14:25-26 will elude one if marriage and kids are the be-all and end-all. Jesus was frank at points. "A large crowd was gathering around him. Jesus turned to face them. 'If any of you come to me,' he said to them, 'and don't hate your father and your mother, your wife, and your children, your brothers, and your sisters – yes, and even your own life! – you can't be my disciple. If you don't pick up your cross and come after me, you can't be my disciple.'"

I am a whole pot, lid and all, in Christ. I am united with Christ and not alone. In Christ, I am constantly in the presence of the Father by the power of His indwelling Spirit. Perhaps this is a religious only concept and not a reality for many single and divorced people, whom the Bible made clear should not marry again unless they divorced because of sexual immorality by the other spouse. I might feel alone but I am not lonely and I do not give into that. Some cultural sayings are not biblical and it keeps us from making ROOM FOR THE CALL and those he calls to forsake the dream of marriage, re-marriage, and children, for His name's sake. This is not a shame. It is one of the greatest honors that can be bestowed on a single person.

Do I have to mention the pain of those calling us lesbian because we choose to be single and in deep relationships of the same sex? This generation is not just a-moral but

judges those with deep same-sex relationships as either gay or emotionally dependent, especially in the Cold Western Culture norm. I can tell you many stories and name many names of friends I know with whom this happened in the mission, let alone outside church circles. Missionaries judging missionaries - UK, Scotland, USA, SA, Australia. As I type this list of nations of people I know - I suddenly realize they are all from Cold Climate Culture nations. If you go to India or the Middle East where boys and men are holding hands as they walk down the road, you will realize that this is normal. They are not gay. They don't sleep with each other. There is a place to realize there is over-involvement, meaning, that people in enmeshed relationships often become overly involved with one another.

There is something to say for co-dependence. Codependent friends, spouses, or parents may become over-involved in their loved one's activities. In this system, there is often little space for privacy or personal growth. These people do need help, not judgment. To judge friends because of a shallow worldview really hurts. David spoke of the love of Jonathan but most Westerners simply cannot wrap their minds around this Warm Climate Culture perspective. This is a tragedy and something all singles at some point will have to face, in the face of the cultural pressure today.

## 38

### **The Boy from Russia**

I once counseled a boy from Russia. He was a missionary and without anyone's knowledge a practicing gay when he was back in Russia. He kept telling me it was his own choice. The third time we met, he finally started to trust me and I helped him go back to the time when he first felt gay. He started weeping like a baby. It took a while for him to calm down. Through tears, he said, "They told me I am gay. I never wanted to be gay but at some point, I chose to believe them." I cried with him. He was molested by a man as a young boy and men took advantage of the confusion that raged inside his heart in the years to come. He repented and embraced the truth that he was not gay.

In the book of John 8:32 Jesus says, “If you continue in My word, you are truly My disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” I do not have to mention that in our generation today, there is a massive spiritual war for the souls of men and women in this regard. It is on CNN every day. The word that sets us free has never changed. Our culture changed to embrace the doctrine of demons but Jesus said in Matthew 19:4, “Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female...”

In Matthew, 5:31-32 it is recorded that Jesus said, “Furthermore it has been said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.”

I have drawn a line in the sand. Apart from my call to singleness, Matthew 5:32 is a line that too many of us in the name of grace and forgiveness cross. Slowly books are appearing that are speaking up around this issue of ‘cheap grace.’ This cheap grace view has caused an unprecedented spike in divorce and re-marriage and hurts billions of children. This book is not about divorce. I leave this thought here but add one more sobering scripture if we want to live lives that please God.

“Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband. But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife.”

1 Cor 7:10-1140

## 39

### **Hello Western Cape**

I finished my Masters’ Degree and for some reason, God did not move me from Gauteng for quite a while. I was in Cape Town staffing the next Masters’ Cohort that started in February 2020. I felt to ‘stay in the current, current’, and for me, it meant to stay within the masters’ program. I had no idea what else to do. God brought me to South Africa, placed me in Kempton, and had me develop the Sandboxible, and... that was my

new life upon arriving after 12 years of being abroad, living on 5 continents in 21 years. Once our cohort meetings were done, I drove to Stilbaai and decided not to go back to Kempton Park immediately because my brother F.C.'s baby was due on 26 March. I stayed with them for the time being. The Cohort was to meet again in the UK in May 2020 but I sensed that I would not go. Covid was breaking out in China but no one seemed to give it thought that we might be heading for something more serious. I felt like a conspiracy theorist. In the back of my mind, I remembered how I wrote our cohort leader a daunting message I received on 20 August 2019, a near-exact 7 months to the day of the serious lockdown in South Africa. She travels eight months or more per year and the vision I saw concerning her made no sense. In the vision, a guard was guarding a door to the entrance of a massive mountain. We entered this door and inside to my right, there was a see-through glass wall many meters high up. Behind this glass, one looked into the ocean. Think something like an aquarium but just 20 times bigger. Suddenly a storm broke loose on this ocean and I saw a boat in the storm. I felt paging to the story in the Bible where Paul was supposed to go somewhere but the storm kept him from it. Then I saw my leader's calendar and that it was being cleared for several months. I wrote her an email. Then, Covid-19 hit the world globally and South Africa went into lockdown. I suddenly realized that this is what the vision was about. Our May meetings to the UK were canceled and I could not go back to Kempton Park. I was stuck staying in Stilbaai. As I packed my suitcase to move in with my parents I got a message from my sis-in-law. "You can stay at the Riethuiskraal horse farm with friends of ours." It was just 7 km outside of Stilbaai. I will never forget the sunset as I drove in. It was dark red and as I drove through the gates, still amazed at the beautiful sunset, I sensed Him saying to me, 'you are entering a new season.' It left a deep excitement in my heart. I had no idea what this meant but at least I was about to live in a bit of paradise. The little cottage that was open, use to be the famous writer, Wilber Smiths' place where he wrote the first of his international bestseller books. Later he builds a cottage roughly 200m away from the main house, right on the river splitting the farm into two. This river runs through Stilbaai into the ocean. It is from this beautiful farm I felt led to write this book, the very place Wilber wrote his first books. You can visit their website to read about this very special farm. Riethuiskraal and Kransfontein lie on opposite sides of the Goukou river. The farms

making up Kransfontein were originally Birdsong, Muffets, and Milkwood. These farms were collected by Wilbur Smith over many years. In 2000 the farms were purchased by Altus Joubert who enlarged the property by adding Drie Heuwels to it. The estate was developed into an olive farm. The lands nestling against the river are also used to cultivate some of the lucerne used at Riethuiskraal. [Riethuiskraal.co.za](http://Riethuiskraal.co.za)

During this time I learn a lesson when it came to listening to God and just following the current, current I am in. When I kept feeling that I was not going to go to the UK in May, I buckled under the pressure of friends and colleagues saying “oh, you will be there, the finance will come in.” Against my gut feeling, I kept pushing forward with the visa letters to go. Today I realize that I still have some level of fear of man and fear of missing out. Pushing in prayer with God until the strong unease of ‘not going’ left me was what I was supposed to do. How many things did I plan for 2020, disregarding what I felt about 2020 at the end of 2019 when I was praying over the new year. In January 2021 I left staffing the masters' cohort. I had no idea where God was going to lead me next but one thing became very clear, it was about my choice to stay single.

## 40

### STAYING SINGLE UNDER PRESSURE

I had family and friends ‘bugging’ me about my journey of singleness for years. When I turned 40 I decided to write in my monthly newsletter: “Please stop telling me that you are praying for me for a husband. Your prayers will not be answered.” One day, in 2019 right after my graduation, while I still lived in Kempton Park, a friend I have not seen in decades visited me. She did not know that I officially asked people to stop praying for me for a husband. She said that she wanted to introduce me to this amazing single architect in Pretoria, one of my favorite cities and where both my parents grew up. He was part of a home church that I would like. His wife passed away from cancer a decade ago. Out of character, I said, yes. I will meet him. I drove to Pretoria, very near where my mom and dad grew up and I love that part of Pretoria. In actual fact, Menlyn Shopping Centre was built on the piece of land where my dad’s house used to be where he grew

up in. My dad is known as Frikkie, and his mom's last name was De Beer. The street next to the UK Embassy right behind Menlyn Centre is called Frikkie De Beer street. 1km from there is Hatfield Christian Church. That, my dad, told us, is where my granddad kept the cows and the horses! Whenever I drive past the Mall on the big highway, I always think, "this is where dad use to ride his horses." It is not far from this Mall where we met for our coffee. We were introduced and I mentioned off the bat, that I was called to single life. It is quite intriguing to see the reactions of people when I say I am called to a life of singleness. I still need to meet the person who responds with "Yes, God still calls some to be single. Good for you for saying yes." Most people respond with, "God wants us to be married. Where in the Bible does it say to stay single? Just look at Genesis." This happened again right before Covid-19 and that is when I really felt to write a book about my specific guidance. Little did I know that just a few weeks later I would sit in the very house the giant Wilbur Smith use to write his books! It was psychological encouragement at its best. Anyways, after I met the architect, I decided to join their home church. He understood that I was not interested in a relationship that potentially could lead to marriage. Their home church was quite like-minded to me and full of people who were somehow directly or indirectly involved with missions. This was important to me. It was also different from going to a building where you walk in, sit down, listen to someone talk from the front, and walk out. I was used to making films for the 10-40 window where over 98% of the population is still unreached. How do you explain 'church' to an unreached people group that does not have a Bible or only portions of it? It was not the way we did the church in South Africa. Something I appreciated during covid-19 was people's voices surfacing as to what, or perhaps who church was. Francis Chan asks this question, "If someone asked you to describe church using only the Bible, what would you say? His book letters to the church' will answer many questions from his years of experience. He writes, "For decades church leaders like myself have lost sight of the powerful mystery inherent in the Church and have instead run to other methods to keep people interested. In all honesty, we have trained you to become addicted to lesser things. We have cheapened something sacred, and we must repent" (p.44).

When I came back to South Africa after losing my visa to Thailand I wanted to join a fellowship as soon as I could. All the churches I visited followed the same pattern. It

was fairly dark inside with worship bands in the light. You were greeted at the door but after that, if you knew no one, it was very difficult to enter the community for fellowship. Twice I filled in a 'welcome card' at the counter and no one came back to me. I was wondering, if Jesus came with me I would likely have to explain to him what church was. Have you ever thought of explaining to Jesus why some guys washed my car while I worshiped Him inside? Imagine this conversation. "So, Jesus. We are about to enter this building. It is going to be dark in there with a camera filming us so that this message can reach those who did not come. It is called church online, or something like that. Don't worry Jesus, once you are in there, you have one minute to 'mingle' with your neighbor. It's a great fellowship. I know Jesus, it's a bit awkward but the music is loud during this minute so just shout 'good morning' at perhaps four strangers who will make eye contact with you! It's great fun, you get to meet four new people but there is no pressure to ever talk to them again! Yes, even the meal of communion... Jesus, don't worry. It's not a meal. We get a waver and a sip of juice. There are many alcoholics these days. We have to be careful. Once again no talking. You are going to be just fine. Oh, and the car washing thing... how can I explain?" It is called job creation. It has nothing to do with racism or classism. Those people don't need to be inside. They need the money. It's great. When we are done inside, we just walk straight out to a clean car and go home. The best thing is, that the preacher will most likely not read long portions of the Bible. That is super boring, right. It is quite entertaining in there, even if the message is on a serious note. Fortunately, I have never seen people come to the mic to openly confess their sins to one another. That would be super awkward and so embarrassing. What can happen there? We will be home in no time to have real fellowship around a fire with some meat and wine! I cannot wait."

I am fully aware that writing this here, is going to cost me but something is foundationally wrong with this picture and my personal experience when I came back to South Africa. When I made mention of this, I quickly realized people did not get what I referred to and I got massive backlash. If you want more on this topic, watch Francis Chan on "why I left the megachurch" on YouTube. May Covid-19 remind us what or actually who church is. So I chose to go to both of these Body of Christ expressions we call church. The home church felt a little bit more like what the Book of Acts speaks about. Worship

in this group was a joyful noise and it did remind me of the times we filmed our church-plant actors playing their national music instruments while singing away. It never came to mind that someone was out of tune. I was greeted by so many who quickly learned my name. If I did not make it to the fellowship, a few would notice and ask me where I have been, and if all was ok at home. I could not hide! I felt there was some sense of accountability for where I was at, how my week was, my fears, my worries, sin I could confess in this safe place.

On [premierchristianity.com](http://premierchristianity.com) Sam Hailes quotes Chan, “What people want from church is different to what the Bible commands” says Francis Chan who often asks church leaders what their congregants expect. He responds that typical replies include: “A really good service, strong age-specific ministries, a certain style/volume/length of singing, a well-communicated sermon...parking...coffee.” Chan then asks the same leaders to list biblical commands regarding what a church should be. The responses look very different: “Love one another as I have loved you” (John 15:12), “Look after widows and orphans in their distress” (James 1:27), and “Make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). Chan continues, “I then ask them what would upset their people more: If the church didn’t provide the things from the first list, or if the church didn’t obey the commands in the second list.” I appreciated my new home church. Everyone shared what God did during the time we did not see each other. We finished with a meal after we prayed for each other. ‘Church’ was hours of fellowship. Everyone learned from everyone. This was very important to me as a single person. When I realized that I questioned my experience during my re-entry phase with the local church, I did not want to criticize what I saw but wanted to contribute and be part of the solution that I stood for. I started a mid-week homegroup from my place too where we came together over a meal, communion, and the Bible. I was in the thick of pioneering SandBoxBible and used this as a new tool to run this group. Yet more than scriptures, the fact that one could discuss what we read, pray for one another, getting to know one another is what I was after. Everyone was heard. Everyone could bring his gift to the table. I started to imagine in the context of our small group, of missions and what Paul and the apostles did in their small home churches. A group like this could potentially support and send out one in their midst to the nations. I have worked out that South Africa could potentially release hundreds of thousands of

missionaries if we took on this model and they all would have support and personal covering. You might understand why I thought that in regards to the church, Covid-19 did us a favor. I am referring to the fact that we could not come together on a Sunday for what we call church. We had to be at church where we were. For many, this was a huge challenge. Unfortunately, we have no idea how to 'church' so we were on YouTube for sermons. Can you imagine all the leaders and their leadership potential, all the preachers in the pews that we lose because we go to megachurches? Where are all the evangelists and teachers? It is on this mega-body's shoulders to support the missionaries.

You will start to understand why I am talking about the church! This is not a random thought thrown into the book. This book is about singles that will be called to singleness and missions but who will holistically look after them? Once South Africa starts to send out thousands of missionaries, as it was prophesied over this nation, this is what it could potentially look like. Each missionary is part of a home church fellowship that knows them well. If a home church is around 12-16 people, the tithe of the group together could fully support their sent-out missionary. The missionary would have a group praying for them, supporting them, and have a place to debrief when they come back. Quickly this group will start to personally experience the N.T. letters! Can you imagine how the church will grow in number and depth! This is what I believe we lost when persecution among Christians stopped in 313-380AD. State religion under Constantine was never the plan! How much we have lost. The catholic church (meaning universal church) came together in big cathedrals to worship once persecution stopped. Overnight it became an institution and we somehow cannot break out of that same mold.

One day, I was on my way to home church, a good 40-minute drive when I started to question my singleness. It came out of the blue. I was sure I was not going to date the lovely architect but I asked myself questions I have not asked myself in years. I caught myself doing it and it bugged me that I was asking these questions. Did God mean for me to stay single for life? Was the dream 24 years ago only meant for England? That same morning, while we were praying for one another, a man that I got to know a little bit by then came to pray for my back. I slipped a disc and was in quite a lot of pain. As he prayed for me he suddenly said: "Sarah, I feel God is saying that He has given you a ring and that there is only one road for you." I could not believe my ears. What he did not know is

that I do wear a golden ring with the inscription, “My Maker is my husband” taken from Isaiah 54:5. I usually never take this ring off but after putting lotion on my hands that morning I forgot to put it back on. I have never taken it off since. God was so faithful. He knew what was going on in my heart. He knew I was in a season of major transitioning. Country, ministry, friends... I was again surrounded by South African voices for whom a person like me is the proverbial pot without a lid, only half a person until married. I know there is only one road for me. I want to walk it till the end. Our proverb is in any case completely unbiblical and places so much pressure on young men and women. In Christ, I am a whole person and if I wanted to marry someone, I want a whole person, not simply the lid on my pot!

Not too long after this, at the beginning of 2020, right before the Coronavirus hit I drove to Cape Town to staff the next Master’s class. I went home to visit family and low and behold... who came to visit me? A friend that really wanted to date me right after school. My brothers were sorely disappointed when I said that I would not date this lovely guy. Once again I asked them: “Which part of ‘called to singleness’ do you not understand?” I do get it. This guy is beyond Mr. Nice. He is a deeply committed Christian and he has a heart for missions. What was there not to like? Yet I knew that I knew, I was not to engage in relationships for the sake of marriage. Friends are where it ends for me.

The second reason is that Jesus made it clear not to marry a divorced person. I take this literally, regardless of my church culture that forces the ‘grace upon grace’ and forgiveness sermon down my throat. Yes, God did forgive you for your divorce but it does not change what God said in Malachi and what Paul emphasized about marrying someone who is divorced and forgiven. We make too lite of this, too lite of divorce, and too lite of grace. We butcher the image that God has placed on earth as a reflection of the greater reality in the spirit between us and Him: The marriage of the Lamb with his bride. The marriage excludes the word divorce. God will never divorce me, his bride. I will forever be grateful to my parents for not walking the road of divorce.

“And this again you do. You cover the LORD’s altar with tears, weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favour at your hand. You ask, “Why does he not?” Because the LORD was witness to the covenant

between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. Has not the one God made and sustained for us the spirit of life? And what does he desire? Godly offspring. So take heed to yourselves, and let none be faithless to the wife of his youth. <sup>16</sup>“For I hate divorce, says the LORD the God of Israel, and covering one’s garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So take heed to yourselves and do not be faithless” Malachi 2:15 RSV.

While I was still running one of the discipleship training schools, one of my older students who loved God already had three divorce certificates in hand. Her very young children came along on the journey. One day, the eight-year-old girl made a comment that I am sure ripped through God’s heart. It surely did mine at that moment. She said, “Oh if I do not like my husband I will just divorce him.” Violence was already part of her worldview when it came to marriage. As humans we do not follow what we hear our parents tell us, we act out what we see our parents model to us. Parents are our first interaction with God. What we believe about God can be traced back to our parents when we were children. You want to tell me you do not know what is going on with this godless world today – this is one of the major reasons. There is more divorce today in the church than outside of the church. Satan is not ignorant on this point.

Right after Mr. Nice guy came my way, Corona came and I knew what I had to do. I was going to write about my journey to singleness. Not singleness for the sake of singleness but the singleness was very specifically mentioned by Paul the Apostle and by Jesus. This is what was recorded to us by Matthew.

“Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?” “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.” “Why then,” they asked, “did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?” Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and

marries another woman commits adultery.” The disciples said to him, “If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry.” Jesus replied, “Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and some eunuchs have been made eunuchs by others—and ***some choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.***”

Matthew 19:3-12 NIV. Emphasis mine.

The NLT version says

“Some are born as eunuchs,  
some have been made eunuchs by others,  
and some choose not to marry for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven.  
Let anyone accept this who can.”  
Some get to choose to stay single for the Kingdom of Heaven.

Paul, in his letter to the church in Corinth, writes about marriage. The interesting thing is, that when I do speak about this passage I often get a strong reaction from friends who are married. It is as if marriage is a given. I was simply mesmerized by the number of divorced friends who strongly encouraged me to get married.

Apart from my one aunt, I know of no Christian that has encouraged me to listen to Paul when he said not to marry a divorced person. This for me is an interesting dynamic in the church of today. The church is quick to judge a gay person but is completely silent on the topic of remarriage.

Everyone can make their own choice and yes there is grace, but I believe there is a place to go deeper with God – but then this will also be debated. I am tired of debates that have never been debated in the Bible.

**41****ROOM FOR THE CALL**

Is there still a place to be called to live a celibate lifestyle for the sake of The Call? Can we at least give a man or a woman an option equal to the other choice? Can we allow young people to consider this as strong as we consider marriage seeing that both Jesus and Paul addressed this? Can we give ROOM FOR THE CALL?

If we are honest with ourselves and read without our cultural bias lenses, we can see that Jesus and Paul were very much pro-singleness for the sake of the Kingdom yet never against marriage. Paul wrote, "I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that. Now to the unmarried and widows, I say this: It is good for them to remain unmarried, as I am." 1Cor 7:8 Paul encourages a choice. Love gives a choice. I would like to invite you to imagine with me for a moment. Imagine you meet someone and they tell you that they sense they are called to marriage. How do we respond? We say, yes, of course. "One of these days you will meet your spouse. Every pot has a lid. Just wait." You tell them to be patient. God will show them who to marry. Now you meet someone who tells you, "God spoke to me about singleness. I strongly feel I have the gift Paul talks about and Jesus said if I can accept it, I accept it." Do we respond with, "Good for you?" No, we do not. We say, "You will get over this phase" "You have daddy issues" and "You are too young to know for sure." "Perhaps you were abused. See a counselor." "You are only half a person without your spouse." "You will meet someone and the first thing that will happen is you will ask, 'I wonder how our children will look like.'" "You have no idea what you're missing out on." We tell them about loneliness and quote Genesis to them. We remind them how unnatural it is not to marry. Do we take a moment to consider that God might be asking people in the Kingdom to be single? It is generally known that there are quite a few more women than men in full-time missions. Statistics show up to 80% of missionaries are women. It might be because it is natural for men to want to work to sustain a family. They are naturally wired this way. It is hard for men to join an organization that does not pay. It feels unnatural. By sheer default, many of the lovely godly ladies will not marry. In YWAM we have over 25 000 full-time staff. You can imagine how many single women live

together and form deep bonds of intimate friendship. The same goes for the men. This is a good thing. Living life in faith through sponsorship is hard enough. Sponsors come and go, but being seasoned by others with burning accusations like “there is something wrong with you” or “soon they will come out of their closet” is hard. It is not a surprise to me that we find this strong statement in the book of love in the Bible, “...jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame” (Song of Solomon 8:6). I went to visit a friend. My mother was a witness to what took place. She was the one that nudged me and said, ‘it is time to go.’ When we got into the car, I thanked her for being so observant. My innocence and perhaps lack of self-awareness due to innocence that day reminded me of a problem we singles face. It is the problem of the other spouse. We live in a time where cheating is accepted as the norm. I do not blame the insecurity of many but in my circle where most couples do not divorce, and where they know I am called to a single life, it is still hard to think I have to consider the following, “oh, she is jealous of me when I talk to her husband!” I have seen how women start to cling and kiss their husbands, or their husbands kiss their wives after they had a long conversation with me. Needless to say, I am much more self-aware now. The very first time I encountered someone who became jealous of me simply for who I was taught me a lot. We were really good friends and hung out a lot. We lived in the same house while doing a YWAM course together. Suddenly she changed. She was distant. Aloof. I had no idea what happened. I decided to give her space. She was dealing with something. Two weeks passed and I asked her if we could talk. “What is wrong? I have no idea what I did. Could you explain what happened so that I have an understanding? Do I need to ask forgiveness?” I was completely shocked at her response and the humility that came with it. “I am so jealous of you,” she said. I could not believe what I just heard. “Jealous of what?” It is many years later, and we are still friends because I chose a relationship over what I felt. In his book *Rare Leadership*, Warner observes, “If Kingdom is all about people, then learning how to stay in a relationship, through thick and thin, has got to be something we excel in.” He continues with a very good question, “How do we learn to stay relational and continue to act like ourselves, like the person God made us to be, during suffering?” (p. 16). It is suffering to be misunderstood and to keep fighting for relationship. I learned a valuable lesson that time. People make choices on how they deal with their insecurities.

Once you get to know jealousy, you can spot it. It is ugly and it is rooted in pride and pain. When I sense it, I immediately choose to forgive and try from my side to stay relational because God stays relational with us. Years later this type of jealousy caused a third party to spread a story about me and my best friend at the time. I entered this large friendship circle when I joined a base for a YWAM course. I had no idea I would be accused of 'stealing a friend, let alone of perhaps being a lesbian hiding in some closet.' According to the story that went around, I suddenly was the one who had needy relationship issues. Years later I told an older YWAM friend that knew me well what happened. She laughed! "Do you know how many of us go through the same thing?" I said WHAT? She started naming the 'YWAM couples', all incredible international speakers who share houses with a friend, and some of them very good acquaintances of mine. She simply said that the shame around the topic is so great that no one talks about it. Pressure from international sources on the whole LGBT movement is another big factor for not being outspoken about this. Will YWAM be persecuted for its stance on same-sex marriages? Yes, and we are not even talking about how we will deal with trans-humanism yet. Even just to say, we love the person but disagree with the LGBT movement can get us into court in some countries. Who wants that? No one. What these accusers of mine did not know is that God spoke to me about this specific new friendship and said, "Fight for this one because it is not for friendship's sake but the sake of the Kingdom and the Gospel going out to the nations." This came so clear from God that it gave me a lot of grace to walk through the years of accusation. It was a direct demonic attack on my calling, my friendship, my identity. Years later I can see why the attack was so severe and painful. We did a lot of damage in the enemy's camp with the films we made for unreached people groups. Friendship is what brought us through making films in places like Muslim Hezbollah territory, and Hindu and Buddhist strongholds. Can you imagine Paul being accused of being gay because of his relationship with Timothy? It is unthinkable. Think about the disciples sent out by Jesus, two by two. Imagine they arrived in a city, stayed there for weeks and suddenly the rumors started surfacing.

I understand why God gave David a friend that loved him more than woman. It saddens me that some see this as a gay issue. I wonder if some readers by now ask the question, "...but Sarah, have you never considered that you might be a lesbian?"

The honest answer is no. In the same breath of saying no, I want to touch on a topic that I have only heard Jim Wilder & Michel Hendrics talk about in their most excellent book, "The Other Half of Church." Sometimes when we become close to friends, we can feel it in our bodies, and for many this is where confusion creeps in. 'I feel it therefore it means I must be gay.' What we call fatal attraction, is not fatal attraction at all.

Unhealthy bonding, and lust is what causes fatalities that could have been avoided. In Hosea 4:6 God makes a statement, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge..." (KJV). Without a good biblical foundation as a safety net, many can fall into LGTBQ behavior simply because they have no idea how their brain function when they sense acceptance and love.

Jim Wilder is known as a neurotheologian. Using brain science, Wilder identified that there are two halves of the church: the rational half and the relational half. And when Christians only embrace the rational half, churches become unhealthy places where transformation doesn't last. He goes on to write how "God designed our brains to seek joy through eyes and facial expressions." This joyful reaction in the brain is felt in the body. This is where I think, many who feel attraction and joy strongly in their bodies sadly assume they are gay or lesbian.

In Chapter 3 under the heading, Losing our Bodies, he writes: "Words that are strongly connected to sensations in our bodies are translated in ways that are more cerebral and conceptual... Jesus saw two blind men pleading for help, and His stomach ached with compassion. Compassion is felt in our bodies just like joy. The right hemisphere is where the internal and spatial sensations of our body are brought together and coordinated to give an integrated sense of the body (p. 57). "Feeling joy in our bodies indicates that our right brain is functioning smoothly. When we lose this bodily connection it is a sign that our brain is not running well. (Wilder and Hendricks 2020, p. 58).

God wants to give us deep-deep relationships of the same sex and Satan is so jealous that he attacks it viciously in this area with lies. If we are really honest, then we will notice that most of us when we see a deep girl to girl relationship or boy to boy relationship, we immediately stamp it as "there goes a gay issue that will soon climb out

of the closet.” The demonic attack on me was so intense that it manifested in one of the most horrible ‘visions of the night’s experiences.

As I wrote earlier in this book, I have had many a time where demons came to strangle me while I sleep. This time, it was intense. A spirit in the form of a very seductive blond person with unnatural blue eyes came to me and grabbed me from behind. It was a reptilian spirit with green scales on the lower part of the body. The moment it tried to rape me, its human-like body turned into a big green snake. I woke up while shouting and rebuking it in Jesus’ Name. God showed me in the spirit who sat behind the actual attack. Indeed, my spiritual warfare was “not against flesh and blood, it was not against the person who spread stories about me but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” Ephesians 6:12.

What did I do when all of these accusations started to happen to me? I ran to God! I asked Him, “Lord, how do I respond to this?” I clearly remember asking Him what I was to say. In a vision, He showed me a newspaper and asked me what I would do if there was an article about me in the newspaper that was not true. I said, “nothing?” He said, “Yes, do nothing. I will fight for you. You do not have to fight. The battle belongs to Me, not to you.” He reminded me of a story my mother used to tell me when I was a kid. She often told me “Truth and Lie are in a race. Truth has long legs and the lie has short legs. Sometimes it might look like the lie is winning, but give it time. The truth will always outrun the lie and win!” It finally did in my case. I can tell you, it is true. God fights for me. As long as I am obedient, I have nothing to fear. There is also the principle of ‘no reputation’ in Philippians 2:7-9. Jesus ‘made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name...’ My reputation is not important. What is important to me is that on That Day, when I see Him face to face, I will be able to say “Lord, I was obedient to that which you have called me.” ***My goal in life is to say, “I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.”*** Philippians 3:12 NIV. This couple, in the name of marriage never took a hold of that for which Christ called them. I strongly believe that God wants

to call young people to singleness but our worldview of marriage stands in the way. We make it too hard for girls and boys to hear God on singleness for the sake of the Kingdom.

I would like to ask you to consider making it easier for them. I would like to ask you to consider giving up your rights to grandchildren if you are the parent of such a person. As much as marriage is wonderful, we know that so many divorce today, and scripture is clear on not getting married to someone who has been divorced. This does not mean there is no grace. This simply means we have to consider the seriousness of saying YES, I DO.

The 2017 divorce statistics reported by Stats SA are based on 25 390 finalized divorce forms and processed by the end of 2018. In 2017, 11 309 (44,5%) of the 25 390 divorces were from black African population group followed by white 6 048 (23,8%), coloured 4 517 (17,8%) and India/Asian 1 401 (5,5%). We need to reconsider the fear of God and the influence and impact Scripture have on our sacred marriages because it is a sign and symbol of our unique relationship with God. We are the Bride of Christ. He does not divorce us. As single people, we are in a covenant relationship too. As a body, we are part of the Bride of Christ and He will not divorce us. If you know God is calling you to singleness, STICK TO IT. If he called you to marry and you made a vow, STICK TO IT. You will fall in love at some point. Your emotions will cause you to seriously doubt your call. Did you know that for the first two years of 'being in love' a hormone gets released that stops after roughly two years? (Harvard.edu, Love Actually, 2017). Science shows us that you will literally 'fall out of love.' Love is not a feeling, it is an act of the will. How many books must be written before we 'get' it? Never trust yourself. This was the hardest lesson of all... I cannot trust myself. I trust Holy Spirit in me to remind me of His call on my life. He confirmed it enough times. If it was not for that, I would have married by now. Paul wrote, "But thanks be to God, who always leads us triumphantly as captives

in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him.”

2Cor2:14. I wonder about the Apostles. Do you think when Jesus sent them out two by two they encountered people telling them that they were gay and dysfunctional in their relations with others? Paul and Barnabas were very close. They worked together, traveled together. Do you think they had to hear how co-dependent they were? The topic of dependent, co-dependent and independent is valid but we cannot brand a good friendship under co-dependent too quickly. I am aware that I tend to be very independent. I am an eight on the enneagram test and ENTJ /INTJ on Myers Briggs. Female E/INTJs are one of the rarest type-gender combinations. 0,8% of all women are INTJ and less than 2% ENTJ. Yes, we can be quite independent. I am a work in progress. I believe I am called to be dependent on God and those he brings into my life. We should find help if we tend to be co-dependent because of past wounding, yet, I find we very quickly brand friendships with this concept. Some people are married and deeply struggle with both co-dependence and independence. Sometimes couples divorce simply because of this issue. Imagine one of the parties receiving healing in an area of their life that caused co-dependence. One day this person realizes that they do not have to do everything with their spouse only. They can release their spouse to have more deep and meaningful relationships with others. The problem comes in when only one person receives this healing. The other co-dependent party will become jealous, envious, and accuse their life partner of betrayal that is simply not true. Divorce is now around the corner. This is a big reason I encourage young people to wait before they marry too soon. Find a place where you can do a gap year that will help you to walk through issues of the past. Ask yourself why you have the relationship you have with those you have it with. I have to conclude

that our society is in so much pain. The church as it relates to covenant relationships is a stunt in its growth and maturity. Its understanding of covenant between God and individuals, God and His bride, and friendships like David and Jonathan, Paul and Barnabas are shallow, to say the least, and it is causing pain where joy and intimacy could have been. How do we move forward? Awakening to awareness of my tacit belief system. What is a tacit belief? It is something you don't formally learn. It is something you believe that you don't even think about. A spider walks next to you and you jump before thinking. You see a person of another race walking toward you and you walk to the other side of the road without 'thinking' about your action. You hear someone say they will not marry and without thinking you say, "no way!" You cannot transfer this knowledge by talking about it. You cannot transfer this belief by writing about it. It is tacit, implicit, and implied. We need to wake up to our tacit belief in singleness that is deeply rooted in culture. We need to leave ROOM FOR THE CALL.

## 48

### **Seeing the single life through my eyes.**

Someone asked me that if God suddenly told me that I am released from my vow of singleness, would I want to marry. Today I can say with honesty, no. I want to stay single. If you consider singleness or if you sense God is calling you in that direction, here are two more cents to think about.

Often I have people sleepover at my house. I have noticed that if I have not been alone in my house for a while, a few things go out the window. This is not the "alone time" introverts need. I can go sit in my car at the beach for this. This is the alone time that gets cultivated when living alone. There is a difference. Kids are another ball game altogether.

I write the following as an extrovert that usually verbalizes with words to know what is in my head, and as a person who had to share a house for four years with 11 other girls from various nations – and 1 bathroom between us all. I write this as one who happily, after the four years of the 12 in 1 house situation, then shared a house with one friend for another eight years.

I had to make space for reflection, introspection, and prayer in the early hours of the day when I shared a house with 11 other girls. I often left the house and walked down the street to a place where I could be alone – knowing that anyone could still walk by. When I had my room, this changed. When I had my flat – everything changed and it hurts my heart that accusations of “becoming selfish as a single” get thrown around so glibly.

The base where I lived with 11 other girls in 1 house took years to come to the point of recognizing that singles, like married couples, really needed a bit more room. Today that base allows for friends to share flats whereas before it was ‘base-law’ for singles to be cramped together. It was a worldview issue. The moment two people got married they suddenly had a flat and space and time. It use to drive me nuts but there was no place for me to say anything – because I was single and perceived as selfish needing more space! Super spiritual leaders would quote; “The only right you have is to lay down your rights” Yes, this is true, but not always right.

When hosting people in my house, extended Bible reading with the type of reflection that causes the tissue box to be refilled often is what was thrown out first. When we practice daily reflective quiet times in the Lord’s presence, tears are present. Tears of thankfulness. Tears of gratefulness. Tears of pain. Tears of forgiveness felt or of repentance deeply experienced. I dare to say that if tissues are not present with your bible, you don’t dig deep enough to hit the well of his beautiful Presence, and/or the tear-less Christian needs counseling to soften the hard wall of the heart brought about by culture and pain. Men are taught not to cry from a very young age but when Jesus enters their hearts, they cry. Crying is one of the most beautiful gifts we received and I believe Satan hates tears. Why do I believe this? Because God specifically mentions that he stores each one for us!

You have collected all my tears in your bottle.

You have recorded each one in your book. Psalm 56:8b

In my view, there is nothing more beautiful than a man and a woman that tears up in the presence of God.

When I have a house filled with visitors for a few days, I always think of the verse that Paul the Apostle mentions in 1 Corinthians 7:34. The Amplified Bible says it like this, “The unmarried woman or the virgin is concerned about the matters of the Lord, how to be holy *and* set apart both in body and in spirit; but a married woman is concerned about worldly things, how she may please her husband.”

Being single gives you the space to know your desires. You get to know yourself and what you like and dislike on a deeper level. I have seen how one relationship can end up in coffee shops and malls every Saturday, and another on the beach and sun. There is a place for both. My very best friend is a mall girl. For years, this is what we did, until our paths due to visa regulations split. I made new friends. I was suddenly a beach bum. I had no idea how much I have missed out by default, simply because I was so happy and enriched in the relationships that I had. I took up sports and hiking and my life was very different. Living alone caused me to explore this at a much deeper level.

Another point that I would be keenly aware of if I were to consider marriage is the fact that I go to bed early. I literally cannot stay up late. When I was sharing a house, it was sometimes hard to see my friend up and awake, wanting to chat or watch a movie while I could barely keep my eyes open at 8:30 pm. I realized that this too is something to consider in earnest. When I get up, I am very talkative. Oh my, this can be a point of heartache for many! Make sure, if you are giving up your singleness, that you look into this – cause it is for life!

When you do figure out what you want, you learn how to forge your way. It's called self-leadership. You become strong but always need to watch out not to turn selfish and open as to what God is requiring of you in your season of singleness. As a single one must at all costs stay connected with a community where there is a place to grow in

relationships. Find a way to put yourself amid people where iron will sharpen iron. Invite friends to stay over. Don't keep your house for yourself. This is humility and biblical.

Unfortunately, our Western society prioritizes romantic relationships over strong friendships and we are brainwashed to a great extent through media and films. Invite people into your life, especially into your house. Practice vulnerability that is right for the age of the friendship. Have healthy boundaries, and healthy discussions, and allow your friends to simply be themselves in your presence. Have opinions. Agree to disagree and let it be.

As I have stated early in the book, some married couples do not know how to handle singles and some even feel threatened. Be self-aware. Never come between a married couple. They are bound by oath before God and if you do become attached to one of the spouses, deal accordingly. You are the one that must leave. There are many other friends out there. We must fight for marriage like never before. This includes us as singles. I had a very good friend and he often came to conferences in Asia without his wife. We appropriately chatted and laughed for hours but the moment his wife realized we were good at chatting... one immediately saw that she felt uncomfortable. I never chatted with him again.

It was the price tag for singleness.

It is normal to feel that you have a lot less time for yourself when you are in a relationship. From quiet times with God to reading, practicing hobbies, or watching the show you want to watch, the amount of time for yourself cannot be overemphasized. While I was sharing my house with my friend, we both practiced a healthy lifestyle of boundaries which resulted in the fact that we always had time for ourselves. From what I can figure, most marriages simply do not function this way. In my culture, the husband needs his food on time and once again 1 Corinthians 7:34 rings a bell... the woman takes care of the man. Apart from God calling me to a lifestyle of singleness, I am personally so grateful I do not have someone calling me daily for food. This drives me completely bonkers because I care so little for food. I eat to live, I do not live to eat.

I feel sorry for couples who are at war over the simple things in life. Shall we go out? Shall we eat now or later? Camping in tents or bungalows? Forrest or ocean? Fish or steak? Vegetarian or vegan? Every relationship comes with a certain amount of compromise, but when you're single, you get to call the shots. If I don't want to eat, I simply don't eat. Seeing that I have a healthy circle of friends, both married and single, I can choose who to call for what I feel like! It sounds ridiculous... but it is what it is when you're single. You have more freedom and if you don't struggle with loneliness your life becomes a bonus around every corner. Sometimes we feel lonely but so do married couples. Loneliness and being alone are two very different things. You can be alone and not feel lonely.

Don't want to grow old alone? Sorry, this is one of the most invalid reasons for marriage ever. My brother died at age 37. His wife is alone. Many partners today die of cancer at an early age. You have no idea what is going to happen. Changes that you will be a woman without a husband later in life statistically is an unfortunate reality. This is the very last reason to marry.

There is a season in life when most of our friends marry. Between with ages of 25- and 35, most of us will be married. My heart goes out to my friends who always dreamt of marriage but had to sit through the wedding after the wedding without getting married themselves. The shame and anxiety are real. Feeling like the odd one out is real. Feeling rejected is real, but is it the truth? No. We need to learn, to focus on our single friends, perhaps way more than on "finding the one." If you are God's child, then we can know that He knows and this should be enough for us. I have a friend who wanted children. She never got married. This was the price tag for choosing to become a missionary where around 7 out of 10 missionaries are a woman. I love the way she kept choosing to lay it before her Father at heaven's feet. She never blamed Him. She chose to believe that He knew best. She chose to give up feeling the loss of not having children. She chose to keep her joy in Him. This is Christian maturity. I admire her for this and I am sure God is proud of her too.

To be a happy single we need to know how to connect with others. Go out of the way to schedule into your calendar time to join groups and classes that you will enjoy. I did this when I ended up in Stilbaai. Once I was settled I wanted to walk and joined the walking group. This finally took me into the mountains I love. I met someone who loved swimming in the ocean and from one small decision came friend after friend, fun day after fun day! Winter came and swimming in the river was over. I joined the badminton group. We cannot play tennis regularly due to wind and rain in the Western Cape – so indoors hitting an object that looks like plastic feathers it was! I met more people.

I started a Sand Box Bible study group and my single life became the most incredible blessing! I met my friend, a mom of four that became like a sister over time.

I learned to set goals, both for friendship, work, and fun. I have a married friend who invited me to “Come to dine with me” evenings. We are two couples that are married and two of us that are still single – 3 teams. Each month one of us three teams gets a chance to cook an amazing gourmet meal for the other two teams. I know that at least once a month, I get to go out and have a lovely meal with 5 other friends.

Enjoy your freedom while it is there because statistically speaking, you're likely to get into a relationship at some point anyway. Being in a relationship requires a lot of sacrifices so enjoy the freedom while you can, and if it is given you to accept a single lifestyle as Paul said... you do better.

Paul forgot to tell us how difficult it is to be friends with married people... but this might be a book for another day.

**CHAPTER 5****43. PRACTICE IMMANUEL JOURNALING & LECTIO DIVINA  
IMMANUEL JOURNALING**

IJ is a writing exercise or practice that helps us to explore our life events, especially our interior life including our thoughts, feelings and body sensations with our GOOD God, Immanuel. It is a simple process to help you become aware of God's compassionate presence in the painful as well as mundane moments of your life. Slowing down enough to pause, give thanks (if you are able) and then follow an elegant process of sensing God's response has been transformative to people across the nation and the world. People continue to share stories of peace and transformation as well as reconciling relationships.

**STEP ONE** - Interactive gratitude

Write anything I appreciate and then write God's response to my gratitude.

**STEP TWO** - I can see you

Write from God's perspective what he observes in you right now, including your physical sensations. Example: I can see you at your desk. Your breathing is shallow and your shoulders are tight....

**STEP THREE** - I can hear you

Write from God's perspective what he hears you saying to yourself. Example: You are wondering if I will speak to you and how you would ever know. You are discouraged and tired....

OR: You woke up full of energy this morning. You are ready to take on the world. Your mind is buzzing ....

**STEP FOUR** - I understand how big this is for you

How does God see your dreams, blessings or upsets and troubles? Example: I want you to know that I care about what matters to you. Your desire to honor me brings me great pleasure....

OR: I understand how intimidated you feel. This situation feels all-consuming to you as if you are about to sink....

**STEP FIVE** - I am glad to be with you and treat your weakness tenderly

How does God express his desire to participate with your life? Example: Your dreams are precious to me. I fill you with life each day and really enjoy your desire to....  
OR: I see your discouragement after yelling again. Times when you are frustrated and tired are when I want to be closer to you....

**STEP SIX** - I can do something about what you are going through

What does God give you for this time? Example: Come away with me. I offer you times of refreshing, new energy and vision....

OR: I will strengthen you. Remember how your friend encouraged you last week? With me you are not alone....

**STEP SEVEN** - Read what you have written aloud (preferably to someone)

Joyful Journey by Wilder, Kang, Loppnow and Loppnow ©2015 and used by permission. Permission granted to duplicate for personal or group use. [lifemodelworks.org](http://lifemodelworks.org) (Wilder et al., 2015)

**44.****LECTIO DIVINA**

Read the Bible story slowly, either silently or aloud.

Close your eyes and breathe deeply, slowly, until you are relaxed and calm.

Picture the scene. Begin with the details in the text.

Let your imagination fill in the blanks.

Let the scene come alive.

Who is there? What's happening? What are the sounds? Smells? Actions?

Place yourself in the scene.

Where are you? Why? What are you doing? feeling?

Focus on Jesus. Watch him carefully.

What is he doing? Saying? How is he feeling.

Choose a sentence to dwell on—something Jesus says or does.

See him turn toward you. Rest in the company of Jesus.

Breathe slowly, deeply. Let this be your prayer

“...it does not treat scripture as texts to be studied, but as the living word. Opening to God: Lectio Divina and Life as Prayer by David G. Benner 2010, p. 47–53

**45.****FREE MASONARY Renunciation PRAYER**

Prayer with someone. Not alone.

"Father God, Creator of heaven and earth, I come to You in the name of Jesus Christ. I come seeking forgiveness and cleansing from all sins committed against You through me or my family's involvement with Freemasonry. I forgive all my ancestors for the effects of their sins on me (and my children).

I confess all sin as a result of my or my ancestor's involvement in Freemasonry or any other lodge or craft from the 4<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and my generation on my father and my mother's side in Jesus name.

I renounce witchcraft, the principal spirit behind Freemasonry, and I renounce Baphomet, the spirit of Antichrist and the curse of the Luciferian doctrine. I renounce the idolatry, blasphemy, secrecy and deception of Freemasonry at every level. I renounce the kundulini snake spirit and its attachment to my spinal cord. I renounce all the fears which helped them in Freemasonry, the fears of death, fears of man, and fears of trusting in the name of Jesus Christ.

I renounce every position held in the lodge by any of my ancestors, including "Tyler", "Master", "Worshipful Master", or any other. I renounce the calling of any man "Master", for Jesus Christ is my only master and Lord and He forbids anyone else having that title. I renounce the entrapping of others during the rituals. I renounce the effects of Freemasonry passed in to me through any female ancestor who felt distrusted and rejected by her husband as he entered and attended any lodge and refused to tell of his secret activities.

**1st Degree**

I renounce the oath taken and the curses involved in the First or Entered Apprentice degree, their effects on the throat and tongue. I renounce the Hoodwink, the blindfold, and its effects on emotions and eyes, including all confusion, fear of the dark, fear of the light, and fear of sudden noises. I renounce the secret word, BOAZ, and all it means. I renounce the mixing and mingling of truth and error, and the blasphemy of this degree of Freemasonry. I renounce the noose around the neck, the fear of choking and

also every spirit causing asthma, hay fever, emphysema or any other breathing difficulty. I renounce the compass point, sword or spear held against the breast, the fear of death by stabbing pain, and the fear of heart attack from this degree. In the name of Jesus Christ I now pray for healing of... (throat, vocal cords, nasal passages, sinus, bronchial tubes, etc.) for healing of the speech area, and the release of the Word of God to me and through me and my family.

### **2nd Degree**

I renounce the oaths taken and the curses involved in the second or Fellow Craft degree of Freemasonry, the curses on the heart and chest. I renounce the secret words JACHIN and SCIBBOLETH and all that these mean. I cut off emotional hardness, apathy, indifference, unbelief, and deep anger from me and my family. In the name of Jesus Christ I pray for the healing of ... (chest/lung/heart area) and also for the healing of the emotions, and ask to be made sensitive to the Holy Spirit of God.

### **3rd Degree**

I renounce the oaths taken and the cursed involved in the third or Master Mason degree, the curses on the stomach and womb area. I renounce the secret words MAHA BONE, MACHABEN, MACHBINNA and TUBAL CAIN and all that they mean. I renounce the spirit of death from the blows to the head enacted as ritual murder, the fear of death, false martyrdom, fear of violent gang attack, assault, or rape, and the helplessness of this degree. I renounce the falling into the coffin or stretcher involved in the ritual murder. I renounce the false resurrection of this degree, because only Jesus Christ is the Resurrection and the Life! I also renounce the blasphemous kissing of the Bible on a witchcraft oath. I cut off all spirits of death, witchcraft and deception and in the name of Jesus Christ. I pray for the healing of ... (stomach, gall bladder, womb, liver, and any other organs of my body affected by Freemasonry), and ask for a release of compassion and understanding for me and my family.

### **Holy Royal Arch Degree**

I renounce and forsake the oaths taken and the curses involved in the Holy Royal Degree of Freemasonry, the oath regarding the removal of the head from the body and the exposing of the brains to the hot sun. I renounce the Mark lodge, and the mark in the

form of squares and angles which marks the person for life. I also reject the jewel or talisman which may have been made from this mark sign and worn at lodge meetings. I renounce the false secret name of God., JAHBULON, and the password, AMMI RUHAMAH and all they mean. I renounce the false communion or Eucharist taken in this degree, and all the mockery, scepticism and unbelief about the redemptive work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. I cut off all these curses and their effects on me and my family in the name of Jesus Christ and I pray for ... (healing of the brain, the mind, etc.)

### **18th Degree**

I renounce the oaths taken and the curses involved in the eighteenth degree of Freemasonry, the Most Wise Sovereign Knight of the Pelican and the Eagle and Sovereign Prince Rose Croix of Heredom. I renounce and reject the Pelican witchcraft spirit, as well as the occultic influence of the Rosicrucians and the Kabbala in this degree. I renounce the claim that the death of Jesus Christ was a "dire calamity", and also the deliberate mockery and twisting of the Christian doctrine of the Atonement. I renounce the blasphemy and rejection of the deity of Jesus Christ, and the secret words IGNE NATURA RENOV ATUR INTEGRA and its burning. I renounce the mockery of the communion taken in this degree, including a biscuit, salt and white wine.

### **30th Degree**

I renounce the oaths taken and the curses involved in the thirtieth degree of Freemasonry, the Grand Knight Kadosh and Knight of the black and white Eagle. I renounce the password, "STIBIUM ALKABAR", and all it means.

### **31st Degree**

I renounce the oaths taken and the curses involved in the thirty-first degree of Freemasonry, the Grand Inspector Inquisitor Commander. I renounce all the gods and goddesses of Egypt which are honoured in this degree, including Anubis with the ram's head, Osiris the sun god, Isis the sister and wife of Osiris and also the moon goddess. I renounce the Soul of Cheres, the false symbol of immortality, the chamber of the dead and the false teaching of reincarnation.

### **32nd Degree**

I renounce the oaths taken and the curses involved in the thirty-second degree of Freemasonry, the Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret. I renounce Freemasonry's false

trinitarian deity AUM, and its parts: Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver and Shiva the destroyer. I renounce the deity of AHURA-MAZDA, the claimed spirit or source of all light, and the worship with fire, which is an abomination to God, and also the drinking from a human skull in many Rites.

### **York Rite**

I renounce the oath taken and the curses involved in the York Rite of Freemasonry, including Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master, Royal Master, Selected Master, Super Excellent Master, the Orders of the Red Cross, the Knight of Malta, and the Knights Templar degrees. I renounce the secret words of JOPPA, KEB RAIOTH, and MAHER-SHALAL-HASH-BAZ. I renounce the vows taken on a human skull, the crossed swords, and the curse and death wish of Judas of having the head cut off and placed on top of a church spire. I renounce the unholy communion and of drinking from a humans skull in many Rites.

### **Shriners (USA only - Doesn't apply in other countries)**

I renounce the oath taken and the curses and penalties involved in the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine. I renounce the piercing of the eyeballs with three-edge blade, the flaying of the feet, the madness, and the worship of the false god Allah as the god of our fathers. I renounce the hoodwink, the mock hanging, the mock beheading, the mock drinking of the blood of the victim, the mock dog urinating on the initiate, and the offering of urine as a commemoration.

### **33rd Degree**

I renounce the oath taken and the curses involved in the thirty-third degree of Freemasonry, the Grand Sovereign Inspector General. I renounce and forsake the declaration that Lucifer is God. I renounce the cable-tow around the neck. I renounce the death wish that the wine drunk from a human skull should turn to poison and the skeleton whose cold arms are invited if the oath of this degree is violated. I renounce the three infamous assassins of their grand master, law, property and religion, and the greed and witchcraft involved in the attempt to manipulate and control the rest of mankind.

### **All other degrees**

I renounce all the other oaths taken, the rituals of every other degree and curses involved. I renounce all other lodges and secret societies such as Prince Hall Freemasonry, Mormonism, The Order of Amaranth, Odd Fellows, Buffalos, Druids, Foresters, Orange, Elks, Moose and Eagle Lodges, the Ku Klux Klan, The Grange, the Woodmen of the World, Riders of the Red Robe, the Knights of Pythias, the Mystic Order of the Veiled Prophets of the Enchanted Realm, the women's Orders of the Eastern Star, and the White Shrine of Jerusalem, the girls' order of the daughters of the Eastern Star, the International orders of Job's Daughters, and of the Rainbow, and the boys' Order of De Molay, and their effects on me and all my family.

I renounce the ancient pagan teaching and symbolism of the First Tracing Board, the Second Tracing board and the Third Tracing Board used in the ritual of the Blue Lodge. I renounce the pagan ritual of the "Point within a circle" with all its bondages and phallic worship. I renounce the occultic mysticism of the black and white mosaic chequered floor with the tessellated border and five-pointed blazing star. I renounce the symbol "G" and its veiled pagan symbolism and bondages. I renounce and utterly forsake the Great Architect of the Universe, who is revealed in the higher degrees as Lucifer, and his false claim to be the universal father of God. I also renounce the false claim that Lucifer is the Morning Star and Shining One and I declare that Jesus Christ is the Bright and Morning Star according to Revelation 22:16.

I renounce the All-Seeing Third Eye of Freemasonry or Horus in the forehead and its pagan and occult symbolism. I renounce all false communions taken, all mockery of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, all unbelief, confusion and depression, and all worship of Lucifer as God. I renounce and forsake the lie of Freemasonry that man is not sinful, but merely imperfect, and so can redeem himself through good works. I rejoice that the Bible states that I cannot do a single thing to earn my salvation, but that I can only be saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and what He accomplished on the Cross of Calvary.

I renounce all fear of insanity, anguish, death wishes, suicide and death in the name of Jesus Christ. Death was conquered by Jesus Christ, and He alone holds the key of death and hell, and I rejoice that He holds my life in His hands now. He came to give me life abundantly and eternally, and I believe His promises.

I renounce all anger, hatred, murderous thoughts, revenge, retaliation spiritual apathy, false religion, all unbelief in the Holy Bible as God's Word, and all compromise of God's Word. I renounce all spiritual searching into false religions, and all striving to please God. I will burn all objects in my possession which connect me with all lodges and occultic organisations, including Freemasonry, Witchcraft and Mormonism, and all regalia aprons, books of rituals, rings and other jewelry. I renounce the effect these or other objects of Freemasonry, such as compass, the square, the noose or the blindfold have had on me or my family, in Jesus Name.

*(All Participants should be invited to sincerely carry out the following:*

1. *Symbolically remove the blindfold (hoodwink) and give it to the Lord for disposal;*
2. *In the same way, symbolically remove the veil of mourning;*
3. *Symbolically cut and remove the noose from around the neck, gather it up with the cable-tow running down the body and give it all to the lord for His disposal;*
4. *Renounce the false Freemasonry marriages covenant, removing from the 4th finger of the right hand the ring of this false marriage covenant, giving it to the Lord to dispose if it;*
5. *Symbolically remove the chains and bondages of Freemasonry from your body;*
6. *Symbolically remove all Freemasonry bondages of Freemasonry from the Apron;*
7. *Invite participants to repent of and seek forgiveness for having walked on all unholy ground, including Freemasonry lodges and temples, including any Mormon or other occultic/Masonic organisations.*
8. *Symbolically remove the ball chain from the ankles.*
9. *Proclaim that Satan and his demons no longer have any legal rights to mislead and manipulate the person/s seeking help.)*

I NOW CUT THE CONNECTION BETWEEN *ME* AND THESE UNGODLY RITUALS, OBJECTS, MECHANISMS OR SYMBOLS IN THE NAME OF JESUS. I CUT MYSELF FREE FROM EVERY EVIL SPIRIT THAT WAS INVOKED IN THESE RITUALS IN JESUS NAME

I NOW RENOUNCE EVERY UNGODLY DEDICATION, INITIATION, OATH, VOW AND COVENANT I HAVE MADE OR THAT WAS MADE ON MY BEHALF BY MY ANCESTORS IN JESUS NAME. I NOW BREAK IT AND CUT MYSELF FREE FROM ITS AFFECT IN JESUS NAME.

WHERE I OR MY ANCESTORS HAVE INVITED EVIL SPIRITS FOR GUIDANCE OVER MY LIFE, I NOW RENOUNCE ALL FALSE DEITIES, DEMONS, MEDIATORS, SPIRITUAL GUIDES, ANGELS, ANCESTRAL AND FAMILIAR SPIRITS IN JESUS NAME. I NOW BREAK THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ME AND THE SUN, MOON AND STARS, THE EARTH AND ANY SOURCE OF WATER AND EVERY EVIL SPIRIT ASSOCIATED WITH IT IN THE NAME OF JESUS. I NOW CUT MYSELF FREE FROM THESE DEMONIC OR UNGODLY CONNECTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH FREEMASONRY IN JESUS NAME.

I NOW BREAK EVERY GENERATIONAL CURSE OVER MY LIFE FROM THE 4<sup>TH</sup>, 3<sup>RD</sup>, 2<sup>ND</sup> AND IN THIS GENERATION FROM MY MOTHER AND FATHER'S AS A RESULT OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT WITH FREEMASONRY IN THE NAME OF JESUS. I BREAK EVERY CURSE OF SICKNESS, DEATH AND DESTRUCTION OVER MY LIFE IN JESUS NAME. I NOW CUT *MYSELF* FREE FROM THE EFFECT THESE GENERATIONAL CURSES IN JESUS NAME. I SEVER THE SPIRITUAL GENERATIONAL BLOODLINE BETWEEN ME AND MY ANCESTORS IN JESUS NAME.

I NOW SPEAK TO EVERY EVIL SPIRIT OVER MY LIFE AS A RESULT OF MY ANCESTORS' INVOLVEMENT WITH FREEMASONRY. I HAVE CONFESSED OUR

SINS AND RENOUNCED YOU. YOU HAVE THEREFORE NO MORE LEGAL CLAIM OVER THEIR LIFE.

I NOW COME AGAINST THE FOLLOWING SPIRITS: BAPHOMET, KUNDULINI, DEATH, AND EVERY EVIL SPIRIT ASSOCIATED WITH FREEMASONRY. I COMMAND YOU TO GO FROM ME NOW IN THE NAME OF JESUS. I COMMAND EVERY EVIL SPIRIT OF Sickness, infirmity, curse, affliction, addiction, disease or allergy associated with Freemasonry to go from me in Jesus name.

I NOW CLOSE AND SEAL OFF EVERY SPIRITUAL PORTAL, PSYCHIC DOOR, THE OPENING OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> EYE AND EVERY OTHER SPIRITUAL ENTRY POINT INTO MY LIFE IN THE NAME OF JESUS. I APPLY THE BLOOD OF JESUS TO THESE ENTRY POINTS TO SEAL AND GUARD IT SO THAT IT WILL NEVER BE RE-ESTABLISHED AGAIN. I STRIKE ALL OF THESE SPIRITS WITH DEAFNESS, DUMBNESS AND BLINDNESS SO THAT THEY WILL FIND *ME* ANYMORE IN THE NAME OF JESUS. I PRAY, JESUS, COME AND FILL EVERY VOID THAT WAS LEFT IN ME. TOUCH ME NOW WITH YOUR PEACE IN THE NAME OF JESUS, AMEN.

