



Kingdom
Pearls and
The Pearl of *YOU*





The Kingdom Chronicles

Short Studies into the
Secrets of the Kingdom

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The Kingdom Chronicles

Kingdom Pearls

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The Pearl of You





A WORD FROM THE AUTHOR

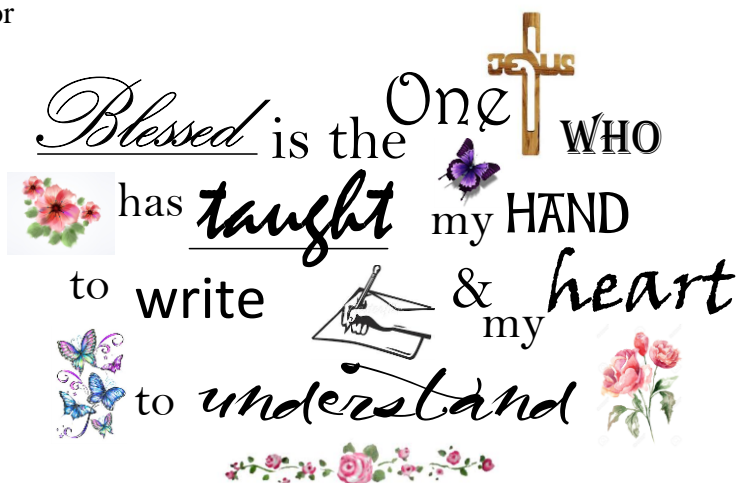
What you are about to read is a combination of pieces of my testimony and glimpses into what the Lord has laid on my heart over the years. It truly has been a long time in the making and so it is personal to me.

We all have questions for God ... I have had a lot of them. I found out by experience that God does answer our prayers. Sometimes he answered my prayers within a few moments of being spoken (when the situation dictated a timely answer), but some answers waited until I was ready, or mature enough to deal with the answer, some as long as 35 years (Isa.40:31), but the answers did come. So in this writing, perhaps you will (as I did) find answers to questions long ago asked. Prepare your heart and your mind and then do as the Lord said, "Come and let us reason together..." (Isaiah 1:18).

When you really stop for a moment and get focused on the Lord. When you can quiet your spirit and your thoughts, and meditate on Jesus, He will begin to open your mind's eye to the wonders He has for you and you will find your answers. You will discover as I did, that in all of the heavens above, you are a special and unique individual and there is no other like you.

God smiles when He looks on you. I have spent so much time learning how God sees me that I am touched and my heart is humbled. I hope you enjoy this study into what I believe God has shown to me. We are all Pearls of Great Price to God. You need to believe that because Jesus does.

The Author





Part 1

The Miracle of *You*







The Miracle of You



The Miracle of YOU

(Being happy with who you are)



Genesis 1:26 (KJV), “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:”



Whether you are, and no matter what you do for a living, or have done in the past, whether good or bad, you should know that the God who created you, loves you very much. You are special in His eyes. He has a message of love for you. I hope you will receive it as it is given and meant to be. This message is all about you from your creator with love. I hope it will refresh your memory of who you were created to be. You are unique and one of a kind.

ONE OF A KIND

A few years ago one of my daughters gave me a DNA kit and wanted me to give the sample of saliva to have my DNA and family history determined. As I was waiting for the results to come back, I set up a family tree on the company website. I started doing some reading on the subject and found out some interesting things.

Apparently, DNA is a strange thing. The make-up of you can be so different than the make-up of a brother or sister. I am by no means an expert, but by just reading on the subject, I understand some things better.

Your particular DNA chain is made up of both your mother and father and their parents, and so on down the DNA chain. Just how it all falls in line to create you is not the same for your sister or brother. Some things you do share with your siblings, such as nationality or ethnic characteristics. Your body type, hair color, if your hair is straight or curly, eye color, and height, big or small hands and feet, your personality and disposition. All of this wrapped up in a small little bundle, that in a few years, your family will begin to discover all the mysteries of you. They will begin to see your similarities as a family member and your uniqueness as an individual. There's not another you in all the universe. You are special in God's sight and on many levels.



The Miracle of You



WONDERFULLY AND GRACIOUSLY MADE

You are wonderfully and miraculously made in the image of God. There is more to this miracle of you than you will ever know until you get to the other side. All of heaven's secrets concerning you will be made known. Look at what the Psalmist says.

Psalm 139:13-16 (NASB), ¹³For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well. ¹⁵My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; ¹⁶Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them.



You are my handy work ...
love God



Ephesians 2:10 (NIV), "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

FAMILY



How can you not fall in love with God, the one who created you? By create, I mean in those moments when He formed your "inward parts." There was that one special moment when He breathed into that little fetus the eternal you. It becomes the time for each of us when the eternal is woven together with a temporal physical human form.



The Miracle of You



Science cannot tell us how or when God knits the soul to that little fetus, safely tucked away in its mother womb. It is my opinion (until proven otherwise) that a sign that this has happened is when the heart takes its first beat. It tells the outside world what is happening in the womb. A sure sign someone is home, someone is in there, and a sign that you have arrived. The eternal you is the final piece of a great gift of God, the gift of life, the gift of you. Like the Psalmist said, “You were fearfully and wonderfully made.

Your soul came from God who is in heaven. Your soul is eternal and everlasting. That small little ball of flesh that you were miraculously woven into has an expiration date attached to it, but praise God ... the eternal you does not.

NOT OF OUR CHOOSING



here are some things that we all have in common. When you think about it, it can speak volumes about God’s will concerning you.

By the time God breathes a life into every mother’s womb, He has already seen every day of that person’s life. He sees the first beat of their heart to their last breath. God knows the number of days given to every person and the record of it all is written in a book.

“The Book of You,” it kind of sounds eternal doesn’t it? In the book is written every day of your life. He saw the day you either rejected, or accepted Him as your savior. He saw the events that would shape your life and mold your thinking. He saw the times of your deepest hurts, and you might not have been aware of it, but He did reach out to comfort you. He has seen your times of great joy and it caused Him to smile because He likes giving good things to those who love Him. There is a book of each of us, and inside it is the story of how we lived our lives.

Sometime when I was younger, I asked God “exactly what was the plan here God?” My life was anything but exemplary. It was so ordinary and non-eventful that I truly did not understand how God could ever use me. We are all born into a family that was not of our choosing and at a time in history that was not of our choosing. I don’t remember ever being asked if this place, time, or family was okay with me.

One day we all wake up and this is where we found ourselves, and our great journey of life has begun. There has to be a reason for the place and time of our beginning. One day I believe God showed it to me.



The Miracle of You



A WORD FROM THE APOSTLE PAUL

From Paul's message on Mars Hill

Acts 17: 24-36 (NASB), ²⁴ The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; ²⁵ nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all *people* life and breath and all things; ²⁶ and He made from one *man* every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, **having determined *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation,**

LIFE FOR A PURPOSE

It was God who decided the place of your beginnings and the family heritage that would be yours. I believe He knows to what end and to what purpose you fit into His greater plan of the future. All I can tell you right now is how much He loves you and how wonderfully and gloriously you were brought into this world.

Here is a Pearl of Truth that I'd like to share with you because it is so true. "You were created to make a difference," right where you are. For some of you, you are the only sparkle of light that God has in a family that desperately needs Jesus. There is a reason why you are where you are.

God does answer prayers and there is a reason for you. When God answers your prayers, it will be in His time. When you are able to handle the answer. Only in His timing will another pearl drop, another answer realized.

During my teenage years I constantly asked God the same question over and over. "Why was I born into this family Lord, there is so much that is wrong here. They say they love you, but I hear in private what they say and see how they act. I don't think they love you." I think God smiled while listening to me complain. Then He said to me, **"THAT'S EXACTLY WHY YOU'RE THERE."**

He says the same to you also,

If that's why you're there, then be the example of love that has been given to you.

If that's why you're there, then show them the grace that God has given to you.

If that's why you're there, then show them the Kingdom of God in the person of you.



The Miracle of You



For you were fearfully and wonderfully made. Now it's your turn. God's timing is upon you, what will you do? Will you make a difference? Will you stand in the gap for someone else? Will you take your place and be counted with those who simply loved God? Will you be God's hands and His voice for such a time as this?

There is a reason and a purpose for you. Don't let Satan steal it away from you.

CHOSEN¹

God chose you first, such a simple truth with a glorious outcome. He knew you long before you took your first breath, and long before you had an understanding of Him. How special is it that the God of all things desires a relationship with you? He chose you because you are special to Him.

When I was in the war in Vietnam, there were times I felt God had forgotten me. I would often wonder where He was. If I knew it, I certainly wasn't feeling it, but God had a plan. Many years passed before I saw where God had been and that He had never left me. No, I had not been forsaken ... Satan you are such a liar. He was fulfilling the promise He made to me when I first got saved.

Hebrews 13:5 (NASB) ... for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,"

Sometimes it feels like your life is being shaken and an ocean of trials are raging in all around you. When you are the one who has to wear a dozen hats of various responsibilities, and none of them were of your choosing. When no one else will rise to the occasion and again it falls to you, know that there is a peace that only comes from the Lord and you can find that peace in the times of your storm. God hears your prayers; He knows what you go through. Remember that you have not been forsaken. He cares for you.

Strength of character and of faith is tested in times of a storm. The storms of life are all around us and they will truly come. In those times of personal shaking, remember what God says to you,

"I am your refuge² in the midst of the storm. I am your provider,³ I am your strength.⁴ I will be your peace, your hope, your light. I am

¹ Excerpts from the album by Steve Swanson and Julie Meyer: "Chosen, You are my desire."

² Psalm 46:1

³ Matthew 6:31-33

⁴ Psalm 28:7; 2 Cor. 12:9-10; Phil. 4:13



The Miracle of You



your anchor when your sails are torn, your confidence, to sing in the midst of a storm, for I am all around you. I chose you first, you are my desire.”

Believe me, you are special to God and you are here by design. The enemy would have you think that your life means nothing, that you are a failure. That is a lie from hell to deceive you so that you never realize God’s plan for you.

To those who are sold out to God, then listen to me. There is an awakening happening in you. That “New Man” is coming alive in you with boldness for this time in history that you have been placed in. Be like the blind man who received his sight and proclaimed to everyone. “I see men as trees walking. I’m beginning to see.”

Jesus has already started His work in you. It has begun, and your eyes are opening into the things God has for you. You are beginning to see.

It’s time to open the door and show the world you’re pearl.

A Prayer: “I just want to be yours God, even in the tiniest of things and moments. I want to be like you Jesus and by-the-way Lord, I’m in it for the long haul, not just when things are going my way. Open the eyes of my heart Lord for I have begun to see.” Amen.

There are some answers that come in time, after we are mature enough to grasp the answer. The answers sometimes come as “lessons learned” along the way. All those questions I had so long ago, they did get answer along the way ... not sure how God did that either.

“I understand better now Lord. Thank you for that Pearl of understanding, it will not be wasted. Heaven has a lot of Pearls to give; I’d like to have a few more Lord, if I may.”



Love



Self-Control



Gentleness



Kindness



Peace



The Mission of Life



The Mission of Life



IN TIMES OF CRISES ... THE REASON FOR YOU



here are certain truths that we can never change, that we just have to deal with, good or bad. We were born at this time and place in history because God wanted us here, not five hundred years ago, or 100 years into the future. He placed you in a family of His choosing, because He sees the future and you have a role to play in it. Only God knew all the particular yanks and pulls that would come to this family. It will not be perfect, but then again no family and no one person is going to be perfect until we meet again in the Kingdom. You are that unique and wonderfully made person that God needed for that family for this time in history.

Many a marriage has stayed the course because they found out she was pregnant and so the expectant parents wanted to give their marriage another try for the sake of the baby. That baby has already made a difference.

You might have been born into a large family that desperately needed a change. A friend invited you to church on Sunday and so you went. There you met Jesus and you took him home that day. Years of being an example, of standing up for your new faith pays off as the last of your family accepts Jesus. You are being used right where you were planted and that was where God put you. His will for you started in your birth family, and then moved into a family of your own.

You won't know it for many years down the road, but a leader will rise up from you and many will find the Lord. I'm sure the mother of Moses was shocked when it was her son who led a nation out of Egypt and into freedom.

RISE UP ... FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

If I have learned anything then it is the idea to simply "Rise up" and be the person you were created to be. Rise up above the critical thoughts the enemy puts into your head, and when you speak, rise up and choose words that lift up and never tear down.

When those times of shaking come, you should never say "Why is this happening to me?" Remember you were created for this time, for these days. You



The Mission of Life



were chosen to be here for the shaking and surely the shaking will come and the people will cry out WHY? God says to you, “You were created for these times. God says He has a purpose in you being here. You were created to have an answer. You were created to be the one that arises, for such a time as this.”

You have to say “I was created for this, I was created for these times. I was created to have an answer and to be a voice for such a time as this. It’s who I was brought into this world to be.” It is time for you to rise up for God and make a difference, for such a time as this.

If God is the God of your life, then you must know that He is the one who directs your life and it started before you were born. He put you into a family who needed you more than even they knew.

A PERSONAL AWAKENING

John was part of a music group. Their music was enjoyed by thousands and record sales were fantastic. He made more money than he had ever seen in one concert. The girls were plenty and the drugs and booze flowed without end. One night after a concert, it all caught up to John and the next thing he knew he was in the E.R. fighting for his life.

Before he knew it he was in surgery. His heart had failed him. All the years of abusing his own body had suddenly caught up to him. Sometime during that surgery John heard his name called. He found he could look around and even stand up. He saw the doctors working on him, but a greater mystery now stood before him. There was a great light and within it was the image of a man. That man in the light was Jesus and he was reaching out towards him.

John remembered the words of his praying grandmother and realized it really was all true. JESUS! he shouted, and that’s all he remembered. The next thing John knew he was waking up in ICU but, he knew something was different. John had been changed from the inside out. He would learn later about the presence of a **NEW MAN** that had been awakened in him.

As time went by his desire to run with the crowd and be like the crowd began to wane until he didn’t want to join in. Suddenly his “want-to,” didn’t “want-to” anymore. This became so evident to me when I was in the military. I could not join in with the other guys for my heart just wasn’t into doing what they wanted to do and it never would be. Later my Father told me about that ... “You are not one of them. You have been called out for another purpose, a calling not of this world, but of the Kingdom.”



The Mission of Life



For those who have truly fallen in love with Jesus, you need to know that you have a new home and your heart is already there. Until you can catch up with your heart, you will struggle to become more like Jesus.



The Mission of Life





JUST LIKE YOU

When you look into the mirror every day, who do you see? What you see is a reflection of you, but over the years I have come to learn that's not what God sees. Yes it is you, but it is also His Son in you and God really loves His Son. Remember greater is He that is within you than he that is in the world.⁵

Jesus in you, what an awesome thought. Jesus has promised that He will complete the work He has started in you until one day you look into the mirror and you begin to see reflections of Him in you, and your words begin to sound like His. What's even more awesome is that you will realize you have His joy. You have become that new man, a new you has emerged like a butterfly born again from the cocoon. Do you like the new you that you see in the mirror? Jesus smiles when he looks at you. You belong to Him.

Jesus longs for the day when He takes you by the hand and leads you to the throne of His Father where He will present you to the Father. You will hear Him say on your behalf, "Father, this one's with Me, he's part of the family. I paid the price for him, he's one of the reasons I died on Calvary." Then there shall be rejoicing in all of heaven as each one is welcomed by the Father because they had faith in His Son, believing even though they had not seen.

Well, those are good thoughts of another time and another place, but for now as I lean forward and look in that mirror every day. What do I see? Is Jesus really there?

"Are you in there Jesus? Are you really in me ... I don't see Him? How's the world going to see Him if I can't see Him? I see only me. Actually I think I look older today, and I'm tired too. I see bags under my eyes ... Too bad."

What you can't see by looking in the mirror is found elsewhere. Look where Jesus is and where God looks ... look inward, look in your heart. In your heart you will find the "New Man" in you. The world will see and hear Jesus in your many acts of kindness and gentleness of spirit.

⁵ 1 John 4:4



The words you speak don't tear down in jest or in anger. Your words lift up. Those around you can see that you're different in a good kind of way. They may be self-indulged and all about themselves, but they are not blind. Believe me, they see a change in you. You are different now. Somehow you don't fit in their group anymore.

All of this is because you are not one of them now, you have been called out from among them.⁶ This is no longer your home, for you have a new home that was prepared for you in a distant place, a Kingdom called Heaven. Your old friends take notice of the new you, they are watching. They see your acts of kindness and good deeds are not for yourself, but for others. That is a good thing. You're beginning to look more like Jesus everyday now.

A Prayer: "One day Lord as I look into the mirror, my hope, my desire is that the best the world sees in me ... is you," Amen



⁶ [Ekklesia] – The Greek term for “church.” The called out ones (found 114 times in the New Testament)
<https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/1500-what-is-the-meaning-of-ekklesia>

Part 2



GROWING

WITH GOD





WHAT'S THAT INSIDE ME?

It's kind of beautiful if you think about it, that the creator of all things can take up residence in your heart. The process of transforming you into His image has begun.⁷ I will admit that I have had my ups and downs as I suppose everyone has, but to be really honest, I will tell you that somedays I still struggle with the promise of what Jesus said in His word.⁸

I try so hard to truly follow Jesus. I want to go where Jesus is. I want be where Jesus is, because where Jesus is, is righteous and holy. Truly as I look inside my own heart, I have to ask who is in there? I feel Him in my life and I hope it never ends.

John 14:16-17 (NASB), ¹⁶I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper [*Comforter*], that He may be with you forever; ¹⁷*that is* the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, *but* you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

Those who have by faith stepped out of their old life and into that new man, that new life in Christ can now show the world around them what the Kingdom of God looks like. It is inside them and their actions will speak louder than their words and an unbelieving world is watching.

Today may your friends and family see Jesus in you. May the hope that is in your heart be contagious and infect them also. Today, will you show the world Jesus? If you are wondering how you can do that, then may I suggest that it start with simple acts of kindness, and acts of love that come from the heart. Can you give without expecting anything in return? Can you help others without lording it over them? In doing of these things is when we demonstrate that we have learned the simplest lesson anyone can learn ... that **LIFE IS NOT ALL ABOUT US.**⁹

⁷ Called Sanctification

⁸ Mt. 6:33; Psalm 37:39; Jn. 3:16; Ro. 10:9, 13;

⁹ I Cor. 13:4



A HEART WITH A HOME

There is nothing worse, or can hurt so bad as a broken heart. We all have had them to one degree or another. More than one life has been changed because of rash and reckless words sworn in moments of deepest hurt *“This will never happen again,”* or *“I’ll never let them hurt me anymore.”* Whatever the words were, they were words connected to pain and a heart that was breaking. The thing about those broken hearts is that they tend to go running home when they hurt. For me, that running home was always to my friend Jesus. When a heart goes running home, it does so because Jesus is there. Where Jesus is, is where your heart needs to be especially when it hurts.

ON ASSIGNMENT

You are on assignment and for some it has been a wild ride. At times it will be scary and uncertain, but grace makes a way and His love has helped you to weather the storms that came with it.

God chose the place of your beginnings because He had a reason. God doesn’t need more presidents, or astronauts or the great and mighty. There is a shortage of people who just love Him enough to keep His commandments. Who will stand up and be counted for Him? When those who love God rise up then great things happen.

Abraham started out as a pagan, born in the place called Ur, in the land of the Chaldeans.¹⁰ He had faith and it pleased God.¹¹ Because of Abraham’s faith, God rose up a people for himself that through them, His Son, the savior of the world would be born.

Moses was born in Goshen,¹² in the land of Egypt and in a time when Israel was enslaved by a new Pharaoh who did not know Joseph. Moses had faith in God and God used him to lead all of Israel out of bondage ... he made a difference.

King David was just a teenage sheep herder who took a stand for his God and killed a giant. David rose to be the King of Israel. Don’t ever despise small humble beginnings.

¹⁰ Genesis 11:27–28

¹¹ Genesis 15:6; Ro. 4:22; Gal. 3:6

¹² Genesis 47:1–6



Abraham, Moses, King David and you were all fearfully and wonderfully made and clear evidence of the handy work of God.

You and me Lord ... forever



here was a time when all I knew of this world was what touched my life on a daily basis. I didn't really realize it, but I was living life like everyone else, looking out for and planning for me. I hadn't realized the blessings and out-right miracles God had already done in my life just to get me where I was. I was blessed in life and I hadn't yet realized it.

I was not perfect and certainly had a lot of baggage that I would later have to deal with. I must say God is so good. I found out by experience the spirit of the 23rd Psalm in which King David declares the Lord is his shepherd.

¹The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. ²He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.

³He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. ⁴Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. ⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows. ⁶Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

David speaks of the closeness of the Lord. Like a shepherd, the Lord leads him and guides him. God leads us. I think that's what's important to understand. I have never known anything ahead of its time; I didn't know the end before the beginning, but then who does? We all get only one shot at this life, and I think it is better to follow than to lead. I believe that what David describes in the 23rd Psalm is a relationship with God which was a lifetime in the making.

Like a young child that will one day become aware of the world around him, there does come a time, for those who seek,¹³ that the Lord will lead them and they will find their way, and it will be pleasing to the Lord.

¹³ Mt. 7:7



A Prayer:

“Father, open our eyes while we are young enough to give you our whole life. Do with me Lord as you will for it is better than a thousand lives lived for self. Open my mind’s eye that I may see you, open my heart that I may feel you and Lord if it be your will, open my understanding to your eternal secrets.”

“My life is an open book waiting for the hand of the Father to write my story into being. Where is it written Lord what I should be. Before me, there are so many eternal possibilities. You know my story and you have seen my end. It is written in the book you have ordained of me before it all began.

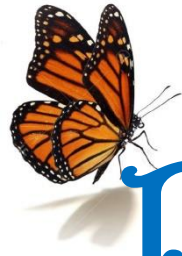
I look in the heavens and I search for you. I see your handy work, not one star is out of its place. They are like eyes looking back at me. What ones are yours so I may see your face.”

“Father in heaven, you are the one who gave me life. You are the keeper of my soul. Your light illuminates me and turns my nights into day. You lift me up and I stand on my own two feet. You teach me your ways, it is You that I seek. You give my heart its words. Blessed is the One who has taught my hand to write and my heart to understand ... today.”

“Each day you guide my path. You see my destination and its outcome before I have taken even one step. You see me and may today I make room in my heart for you.”

Growing in the Lord is simply a relationship, a long time ... Continued.





Part 3

The Rest of the Story
Now it's Personal





The Rest of the Story

Now it's Personal



Step into a New Day

You Can Start Over



OLD SOURCE ... NEW MESSAGE

I really love music and over the years I believe the Lord has used it to teach me, to help me grow and maybe even open some windows of understanding within me. It is an amazing thing, this unspoken “rule of duality” that God sometimes hands us. Sometimes God uses an old song, old lyrics or even a movie to get a message across. I can’t tell you how many times, when in the middle of a song or a movie, I suddenly saw or heard a God-thing and I quickly wrote it down. It is crazy that from the likes of Star Wars, Wonder Woman, or Thor I heard an eternal message spoken. It always makes me smile a little to think that Darth Vader, Wonder Woman or Thor had something to say to me. No matter what the source, God can and will sometimes use anything to get your attention, whatever it takes, His message will get through to you. Finally we understand a new thing from the Lord.

The pop singer Lady Gaga sings a song with a catchy tune, but the message it gives troubles me every time I hear it. There are five words that stick in my head, being sung over and over concerning a particular lifestyle ... “*I was born this way.*” I thought of the times I have stood for the Lord, through the good times and the bad. Those words were not true for me. None of us were born Christian; we are not saved because of family heritage, or a particular church affiliation. The Lord gave me a new word and suddenly real truth rang true for me. I am a Christian by choice. I was not born this way as the song would suggest. The truth of the matter is ... that I was **REBORN** this way. Suddenly the angels sang and heaven rejoiced, saying, “He finally got it.”



The Rest of the Story

Now it's Personal



A MAN NAMED NICODEMUS

John 3:1-7 (NASB), ¹Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; ²this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You have come from God *as* a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.” ³Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” ⁴Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?” ⁵Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the **Spirit** he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’

Re-Born

THERE IS SOMETHING NEW in YOU

It happens every day, someone meets Jesus and a life is changed. The new you is growing and beginning to look like Jesus with every lesson learned. You took the punches this world has, but you got back up, none the worse for the wear. You got back up a stronger person for the lesson learned. The new you is proof of your salvation. You were changed by an encounter with the Son of God.

Like the caterpillar that sheds its old self, the butterfly that emerges looks nothing like the caterpillar it used to be. In a very simple way the caterpillar teaches us an eternal truth, life can come from death. There is nothing in a caterpillar that tells you it’s going to be a butterfly. Dying to self-awakens the new person in you, just ask any butterfly.

Step out into a new life, a new way of living, a new way of thinking and a new outlook.

Don’t let Satan take you back down memory lane with thoughts of the old life. Let those old memories go, that they may die with the old man you used to be. The butterfly can never go back to being what it once was. Be that butterfly God





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has transformed from out of the old and brought into a new life. For you, it is time to look ahead, not back. Set your sights on the future, not on your past. Turn that page of your life and move on. Jesus can heal the memories that bind you and you can be set free. It's time you leave the past in the past, no more talk of what was once true for you, Jesus has changed that now. It's time to dry the tears and wave good-bye. Burn the ship you sailed in on and step out into a **NEW DAY** and a **NEW LIFE** in Jesus Christ.

Jesus made you a promise to, "... never leave you or forsake you."¹⁴ Remember you are never alone and He will be with you till the end. What a promise He has made to you. Isn't it time to leave the old you behind and step through the open door,¹⁵ and into a brighter tomorrow? You have been **BORN AGAIN**.



Isaiah 49:15-16 (NASB), ¹⁵ "Can a woman forget her nursing child And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you. ¹⁶ "Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of *My hands*;"

¹⁴ Heb.13:5

¹⁵ Rev. 4:1



A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE (What I have Learned)

It has been a while since I looked back over the years that I have known Jesus. I can truly say ... He answers prayers. Sometimes the answers come even before I ask. Other answers to prayer have come not in my time frame, but at a time when I was mature enough to receive and understand the answer.

In all of my years and walk with God, I have come to understand what I can only describe as "An attitude of Heaven." I know that now, and I try my best to live it.

CAN GOD USE YOU?

I truly don't deserve to be where I am today, for what have I ever done for God that would justify the blessings I have received from Him? Why He ever chose me has always been a bit of a mystery, for I have not given all my money to the poor; I have not given years of service to the mission fields, or gone to some of the most lost and remote continents of this world for the sake of the Gospel.

Why then would God use me? The fact is I don't hold a bachelor's degree or PhD of any kind; I'm not a scientist, an inventor, or anyone this world would look up to and recognize. I'm not a pastor or evangelist and I will tell you there are still days when I feel I must not have any faith at all and wonder if God still hears my prayers. So for all the things I did not achieve, that I did not accomplish in life, and to the things the world lifts up and honors which have eluded me, to these things I will only say, "... *with God all things are possible*" (Mat. 19:26).

In my early days of going to school and the military and through the war, I called Him my friend. I didn't think about it then, but now I realize that I had a relationship with Jesus and that He had always been there for me. He has proven over and over again that He sticks closer than a brother and He will go the distance with you, even when you doubt Him. There was a time (and we all have done it and go through it) when all I could see was a guy "not quite good enough." I was believing the message of the world that I was not "good-enough." Would I ever measure up and be accepted. I concerned myself with what other people thought more than what God thought of me.



The Rest of the Story

Now it's Personal



Everyone at one time or another has doubt and their own type of “darkness of belief,” in themselves. The true darkness of life and of spirit is not in believing there is darkness, but believing that the light will never return. I had spent too much time worrying about what had been taken from me instead of what has been given to me.

Trust in the one who loves you. If you will take the first step, you will find that your father will take it from there. You need to read and re-read this statement, “You are already everything you need to be, to be used of God.” In your own special and unique way, God wants to use you just as you are. You are of a different kingdom with different rules. Things work differently in the Kingdom of God and in Heaven, for the Spirit of God reveals interesting character traits in you that shine in the kingdom.

The “not-quiet, never-get-it-right, back-of-the-line” group is where all the action is. There you find a wonderful gathering of the meek and humble of heart, which is often misunderstood by the world. There have always been those who didn't feel that they measured up. If this is you, then maybe you need to be reminded of a few people like yourself who came before you.

You remember **Moses**? He argued with God that he was not the right man for the job, that he was not good enough. He was afraid to speak out in front of people because he spoke with a stutter. **David** was a sheep herder by trade and of all the things a person could bring, he brought a handful of rocks to a sword fight. He found five smooth stones and then he stepped out to face the giant, the enemy of Israel. Then one of the greatest miracles of God, He took twelve outsiders who would otherwise make no difference in history ... and He changed the world.

In just the everyday living of your life, you will find that God brings opportunities to shine for Him and be that witness you always wanted to be. By simple acts of kindness, you can bless people. With your words you can lift up or tear down. What will you choose to do today? The Kingdom of God is waiting. The angels are ready to record what you do today and the words you speak will be recorded in the book of you.

The Kingdom of God needs those who are willing to step out at just the right spontaneous moment and be Jesus to somebody. You can be Jesus to one person at a time, and in so doing you fulfill the words of Jesus.

Matthew 10:42 (NASB), "And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."



You can give that cup of water, in whatever form it may come. One person at a time, one cup, one loaf of bread, one meal cooked. Out of your abundance you can give when the time comes.

You may not feel like a somebody that the world looks up to, but then neither did the prophets and the disciples of Jesus. Jesus taught them how to fish one soul at a time and He makes you the same offer.

“... Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.”

(Mark 1:16-20, Matthew 4:18-22, Luke 5:2-11, John 1:40-42)

I WANT TO BE A FISHERMAN

Let's face it; we are not called to be another Billy Graham or a Moses and we are not expected to be. Understand though, there will be those days when you will be tested and those times come when you least expect it. Here is one example out of many.

The Hamburger Story

One day I had what I thought was just a chance encounter with a homeless man at a fast food restaurant, but it proved to be one of those Moedim's (Appointed times) from God.

I was on my way home from the VA hospital and thought I would stop at a burger restaurant and get a drink for my trip back home. As soon as I walked in the door, I heard an exchange of words that caught my attention. There was a homeless man trying to get some water from the woman working behind the counter, she would not give him anything. At that moment, somehow God put a picture in my mind's eye of what I should do. Without any need of talking about it or group prayer for guidance; I just did what I felt was the right thing to do.

I walked up to the homeless man and put my arm around him and started talking to him like we were long lost buddies who were there to have lunch. To the total surprise of the women (cashier/order taker) behind the counter, I asked my new friend if he was hungry. He said nothing but eagerly shook his head yes. So I went up to the counter and placed an order, “I will have two of your largest burgers and fries ... wait a minute, make that supersize fries, both of them. I also want two large drinks and give the order to my friend right there,” as I pointed to the homeless man. Suddenly the woman had a change of heart and got busy putting my order into her computer causing and the people in the kitchen to quickly get the order ready. Then the sales girl asked me if there was anything



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else. I thought for a second, “oh ya! I almost forgot, I’ll have a small diet coke to go. That’s all.”

Now as I was paying for the order, I saw out of the corner of my eye a woman who had apparently overheard all this, get up out of her seat and came up behind me and whispered in my ear, “You are a good man,” then she kept on walking and I lost track of her. I never got a look at her or knew who she was, or where she went.

The homeless man took his pile of hot food to the booth by the front window and sat down. I can only imagine what must have been going through his mind at that moment. I left the restaurant and got back in my truck with my drink in hand. As I was starting the truck and getting the seat belt on, I looked out front window of the truck, I could see the homeless man sitting at his table, but he wasn’t eating, he was crying. I said to Lord in a soft voice, “Enough said Lord ... lesson learned.”

Maybe I wasn’t called to preach to the nations, or have great oratory skills, but I can reach out to a single person that God puts in front of me. This encounter had all the makings of the hand of God, then I remembered what I heard the homeless man asking the girl behind the counter for, “I just want a glass of water ... please.” I was reminded of what Jesus said in Matthew 25:40, “... when you do it to the least of these, you have done it unto me.” Well, he got his glass of water and I drove off down the freeway thanking God that He allowed me to be at this place and at this time. I get the message Lord ... be Jesus to the world around you, one person at a time and that we can all do.

I can look back now over my life and though I have made mistakes along the way, I can also see where my prayer “To be used by God,” has been answered and is being answered. If I would be faithful in a small thing, then just maybe, He will use me in a bigger thing. Let me share with you these three short examples.



NEPAL

In God's timing, opportunities have presented themselves. A way was made, a door opened and three times I found myself on the other side of the world speaking to people who wanted to hear what God can do for them. They wanted to hear that God, who is in heaven, loves them.

The first time I was in the far corners of Eastern Nepal with a small group of pastors. We were taken to a remote area behind a grove of banana trees where there was a small concrete building with open holes for windows and a grass roof.

I sat all day and listened to the pastors preach and pray and many Nepalese people responded to their messages. Towards the end of the day, I was finally given a chance to say a few words to the people who had come and spent the entire day to hear what these strangers had to say. I was told I had only 15 minutes.

As I was standing to my feet, I could feel the anxiety creeping in (I knew what Moses must have felt). How would I say all that I felt compelled to say in so little time? I can only say I believe the Spirit of the Lord came over me and I forgot about the anxiety (not being about me, but Jesus), I found myself asking for a wash bucket and towels for I was going to wash the feet of the two pastors who had walked for 3 days to be at this meeting.

The pastors came forward and sat down in the front for all to see. With my very Jewish prayer shawl, on I bent down on my knees and proceeded to wash their feet as Jesus had done, He was our example. Suddenly the village people were all around me. I looked up to see our van driver (who was a Buddhist Priest) looking into the window watching. All eyes, for that moment, seemed to be on me and cameras were taking pictures. I do remember looking up at the pastors and saying to them, "What I do for you, do also for your people in your church."

I don't know how long all this lasted, but the people eventually sat back down. I read the scripture about being a Bond Servant to the Lord. I quickly ended with a question, "Who will stand and say, 'I want to be a bond servant of the Lord?'" With that, everyone in the building, 100% of the Nepalese village people stood to their feet. I was overwhelmed to see what the Lord was doing. The "no-body" that I thought I was, was being used by God. I did not need a degree for this, I just needed to allow God to use me.

When the meeting was over, those two pastors grabbed onto one of the translators and came to me. They told me "We want to be like you," those word



The Rest of the Story

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humbled me and at the same time I was shocked; all I could simply say back to them was ... “Be like Jesus.”

My Father in heaven has opened a door for me to walk through so many times. Every time, I can hear Moses with his stuttering voice telling God why he was not the right man for the job and every time God responded that he was His choice and therefore he was the right man for the job.

The Lord knows who I am. He knows the things I have seen and heard that still haunts my memories. I have no delusions of who I am. I realize God is not sending a PhD, or the college professor, the preacher or the evangelist. He was sending me. God sends me, then that makes me qualified, I have become God's man for that moment in that place.

Yes, I found out that I can and have been used by God, even if it's just a simple prayer spoken. Let me share just two times God used a prayer from a guy feeling like a no-body.

Saint-Laurent-du-Pont, France

Again at a pastor's conference in the French Alps. I was asked to be the first speaker on Sunday morning. Learning to speak through an interpreter can really mess you up, since it was my first time, I was extremely nervous. The things I was trying to share that Sunday morning was on the Grace of God and on forgiveness. I did not know it at the time, but this message was for a specific person and the reason I was there.

I was thankful when the end came and we prayed, but when I raised my head and opened my eyes, I saw an elderly woman coming slowly down the aisle towards me. As I watched her, I heard the voice of God say to me to “Put your prayer shawl over her” (earlier that day I had felt that the wearing of the prayer shawl was something I should do). When she got to me, she began speaking in French so several interpreters came over and told me what she was asking.

It turns out she was German and had escaped the war and fled to this small village in France. She said she wanted forgiveness for herself and for the German people for their treatment of the Jews. Someone told me later that I was the first official looking Jewish person to visit their village and so she came to me.

I did as the Lord had told me. I took off my very Jewish prayer shawl and put it over her so that the Jewish prayer fell over her head and she could see the



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Hebrew words. Just as I covered her head with the shawl she broke down, fell against my chest and began crying. I began to pray and the pastors interpreted. That day she received what her heart had been seeking for all these years ... forgiveness. Another soul set free. When I was finished, I looked up and to my surprise, the rest of the church had lined up behind this woman, all of them wanting a chance to be prayed for under the prayer shawl. When was the last time you met the Lord under the prayer shawl? I am reminded once again ... one person at a time Lord.

Sofia, Bulgaria

It came as an invitation from a pastor who had stayed in our home a few days. He had invited me to come to his country. His church was in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. I made the long trip and when I arrived, the pastor told me he had a friend who was in the war (Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992-95.) and still suffered the after effects of the war. Although he had since found salvation through Jesus Christ, he still carried the guilt of his actions. Guilt and shame can be a heavy burden even for God's people. The pastor asked if I would talk to this veteran. To make this long story short, I will say I didn't have a chance to meet with him until the trip was over, but God had a plan.

It was the same hour as we were about to head out for the airport when the pastor's phone rang and it was his friend, the war veteran. He was headed to the church, but had only two minutes to stop. It turned out that the man's entire income was from delivering pizzas and the tips he got. Again, the warning was not to be long winded or preach a sermon ... I was ready for anything.

While we waited, the pastor shared a few things with me. His friend had finished his military service and was on his way to meet his brother who was also in the military. When he got to the village, he found his brother had been killed in a most gruesome way. He went crazy with rage and anger and killed many people as they had killed his brother.

Eventually he came to this small church in Sofia and found the Lord and forgiveness, but there was still one matter he could not run away from. He still was haunted by what he had done and the people he had killed. He wanted to speak to another veteran. He knew I would understand and now I know why I was there.

Within a few minutes I heard his car pull up and the door shut and in he came. I don't remember a lot of what was said, only that I asked if he was this



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soldier I was told about and he said (in his rough Bulgarian voice) that he was. It then seemed logical to ask him if he had accepted Jesus as his savior, and he said yes.

It was at that moment the Holy Spirit revealed to me the problem, and suddenly my heart went out to this man for I was once this man. There was a time when I too was in his position. So with boldness and assurance that can only come from the Holy Spirit, I told him, "I know your problem."

God had forgiven him, but he had not **forgiven himself** and evil used it against him, keeping him in bondage for many years. I don't know how I ever started to pray, but suddenly my mouth started speaking the words of forgiveness and telling my veteran brother that he needed to forgive himself as God had already done. Tears came down his face and then just that fast, he was gone again.

We put my bags in the car and we headed off to the airport, but God had one more surprise for me before I left. Again the pastor's phone rang and it was his friend. Pizza had been delivered, but He called to tell the Rabbi veteran from America ... "I FEEL FREE!" What a difference just two minutes in prayer can make. It has the power to change a life ... I remember Lord, one person at a time.



The Bible is full of "types" and "shadows" of things to come and what will be. It teaches us through its stories of those who have come before us. It teaches us by examples in pictures of what is true and right and close to the heart of God.

It has been my experience, and so I pass it on to you. Something that the patriarchs knew, Moses, King David and certainly the 12 disciples, the blind, the lame, a woman at a well and a thief on a cross, and even the dead. Everything changes when the Son of God steps into the room and into a life. Suddenly the impossible, becomes possible and even doable. When, in God's good timing the moment comes and the circumstances suddenly call your name, it means God is calling and that makes you the most qualified at that time.

In all of our wildest dreams, could any of us have imagined what God would do and how He would use us? He has a plan and it includes you, for you were wonderfully and gloriously made for such a time as this.



The Rest of the Story

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TESTIMONY ... The Story of You

What is your life all about? If your desire is to serve God, then you must first understand a new thing, as I have said ... it's not about you. Your life is suddenly about the one who created you. In the big picture as Jesus said "store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where no one can break in and steal them ..." We are not eternal, Jesus is. Therefore, I care that God knows my name and what is written in the books of Heaven concerning me. The one who sees what no one else sees, who understands what no one else does. I may not care if you ever remember me, but I do however care that you remember Jesus! Heaven is full of life stories that were all about Jesus.

What I care about is that you see Jesus in every story I tell and testimony I share. Can the world see Jesus in me? In 1 Peter 2:9 we are called a "Peculiar people" and surely we are (some more than others). Does God the Father see reflections of His Son in me? "You Lord I have known all of my life. You are my rock, my sword, my shield. You bless me and my family. You have been my friend all my life. In the war all my friends abandoned me and I yelled at you, you were there. When I had little faith for the job I desperately needed ... you were there. When temptation comes ... you don't leave me ... you are here for me." May the testimony of me, be all about You.

"I understand now Lord and I'm okay with it. You reached down from above and you lifted me up and made me stand on my own two feet, you gave me purpose. In the eyes of the world I may never be good enough and will always be at the end of the line. I found out there is a lot of great people with hearts for You Lord ... at the end of the line.

May my life and my words always be true to you Lord." For all you have done and all that you are to me, I am truly thankful.

"God, my heavenly Father who is in heaven. Only you know the desires of my heart, for they are towards you and in you do I find my delight. May your love illuminate my life and my soul as it does the stars in your heavens above." Amen

THE END