Glory and Miracles

~ A Christian Testimony

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Glory and Miracles - A Christian Testimony

Written by Vicki Dinnel

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This book is dedicated To the Glory of God.

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Chapter One: In the Beginning



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When I was a little girl, I started reading the Bible. Not having any clue where to begin, I started in Genesis. I had questions about the Garden of Eden. Why did God put a tree there that no one was supposed to touch? I could only figure that for some reason, man needed a test.

Mankind began happy. They lived in a garden. What changed? What was the test that man failed? What exactly was the sin that started it all? Let's look at Genesis 3:5 in the *New International Version*¹ (NIV¹) of the Bible:

"For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

This is what Satan said to Eve to tempt her to eat fruit from the tree of good and evil, the tree they were not supposed to touch. It was a temptation to disobey God and to have the jealous selfish desire to be

like God, which was **Satan's own** downfall. **Let's** look at Romans 5:14-21 in *The Message Version*² (MSG²) of the Bible. It is an excerpt from the letter Paul wrote to the Roman Christians at about 57 A.D.:

You know the story of how Adam landed us in the dilemma we're in—first sin, then death, and no one exempt from either sin or death. That sin disturbed relations with God in everything and everyone, but the extent of the disturbance was not clear until God spelled it out in detail to Moses. So death, this huge abyss separating us from God, dominated the landscape from Adam to Moses. Even those who didn't sin precisely as Adam did by disobeying a specific command of God still had to experience this termination of life, this separation from God. But Adam, who got us into this, also points ahead to the One who will get us out of it.

Yet the rescuing gift is not exactly parallel to the death-dealing sin. If one man's sin put crowds of people at the dead-end abyss of separation from God, just think what God's gift poured through one man, Jesus Christ, will do! There's no comparison between that death-dealing sin and this generous, life-giving gift. The verdict on that one sin was the death sentence; the verdict on the many sins that followed was this wonderful life sentence. If death got the upper hand through one man's wrongdoing, can you imagine the breathtaking recovery life makes, sovereign life, in those who grasp with both hands this wildly extravagant life-gift, this grand setting-everything-right that the one man Jesus Christ provides?

Here it is in a nutshell: Just as one person did it wrong and got us in all this trouble with sin and death, another person did it right and got us out of it. But more than just getting us out of trouble, he got us into life! One man said no to God and put many people in the wrong; one man said yes to God and put many in the right.

All that passing laws against sin did was produce more lawbreakers. But sin didn't, and doesn't, have a chance in competition with the aggressive forgiveness we call grace. When it's sin versus grace, grace wins hands down. All sin can do is threaten us with death, and that's the end of it. Grace, because God is putting everything together again through the Messiah, invites us into life—a life that goes on and on and on, world without end.

The test they failed separated them from God. The wonderful fellowship they had with God in the garden was gone. We are all born with that

separation. However, God had a plan to get us back together. It was His Son Jesus. The previous verses bring us to the exciting possibility of erasing all the sin any of us have ever done or ever will do in our lifetime and reconnecting with God. This is called grace. **It is an acquittal of sin's** sentence of death. We obtain that grace when we experience what is called being born again. Let us go to John 3:1-21 (MSG²). John wrote this book to explain who Jesus was and what Jesus said. John was a disciple of Jesus and wrote from his own personal experience.

There was a man of the Pharisee sect, Nicodemus, a prominent leader among the Jews. Late one night he visited Jesus and said, "Rabbi, we all know you're a teacher straight from God. No one could do all the Godpointing, God-revealing acts you do if God weren't in on it."

Jesus said, "You're absolutely right. Take it from me: Unless a person is born from above, it's not possible to see what I'm pointing to—to God's kingdom."

"How can anyone," said Nicodemus, "be born who has already been born and grown up? You can't re-enter your mother's womb and be born again. What are you saying with this 'born-from-above' talk?"

Jesus said, "You're not listening. Let me say it again. Unless a person submits to this original creation—the 'wind-hovering-over-the-water... ...creation,' the invisible moving the visible, a baptism into a new life—it's not possible to enter God's kingdom. When you look at a baby, it's just that: a body you can look at and touch. But the person who takes shape within is formed by something you can't see and touch—the Spirit—and becomes a living spirit.

"So don't be so surprised when I tell you that you have to be 'born from above'—out of this world, so to speak. You know well enough how the wind blows this way and that. You hear it rustling through the trees, but you have no idea where it comes from or where it's headed next. That's the way it is with everyone 'born from above' by the wind of God, the Spirit of God."

Nicodemus asked, "What do you mean by this? How does this happen?"

Jesus said, "You're a respected teacher of Israel and you don't know these basics? Listen carefully. I'm speaking sober truth to you. I speak only of what I know by experience; I give witness only to what I have seen with my own eyes. There is nothing secondhand here, no hearsay. Yet instead of facing the evidence and accepting it, you procrastinate with questions. If I tell you things that are plain as the hand before your face and you don't believe me, what use is there in telling you of things you can't see, the things of God?

"No one has ever gone up into the presence of God except the One who came down from that Presence, the Son of Man. In the same way that Moses lifted the serpent in the desert so people could have something to see and then believe, it is necessary for the Son of Man to be lifted up—and everyone who looks up to him, trusting and expectant, will gain a real life, eternal life.

"This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again. Anyone who trusts in him is acquitted; anyone who refuses to trust him has long since been under the death sentence without knowing it. And why? Because of that person's failure to believe in the one-of-a-kind Son of God when introduced to Him.

"This is the crisis we're in: God-light streamed into the world, but men and women everywhere ran for the darkness. They went for the darkness because they were not really interested in pleasing God. Everyone who makes a practice of doing evil, addicted to denial and illusion, hates God-light and won't come near it, fearing a painful exposure. But anyone working and living in truth and reality welcomes God-light so the work can be seen for the God-work it is.

In the beginning, before man sinned, there was a connection between God and man. They had fellowship. When man sinned, that connection was lost because God cannot fellowship with sin.

We have a chance to start over. We don't have to pay the price for sin, Jesus paid it for us. We can start over as a new creature, born from above. II Corinthians 5:17 in the Amplified³ (AMP³) version:

Therefore if any person is [engrafted] in Christ (the Messiah) he is a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old [previous moral and spiritual condition] has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come!

The question of why Jesus had to die haunted me for a large part of my life. After reading extensively in the Bible I came to the conclusion that the penalty for sin is death. All humankind is sentenced to death, because all have sinned. Jesus paid that penalty for any person who believes in Who He is and what He has done, repents for their sins and desires to have God in control of their life. Along with the release from the death sentence, comes reconnection with God through the gift of the Holy Spirit which comes and lives inside a born-again believer. Jesus asked if there was any other way when He prayed in the garden of Gethsemane just before His arrest and crucifixion. Jesus submitted His will to God His Father. That is the requirement to become born again; submission and the desire to obey the will of God.

When we obtain a new reborn spiritual body, we become a new creature. Something new is born inside of us. It is a Godly nature; just the almost exact opposite of our Human Nature. Jesus called people dead who had the old spiritual body. What does that new spirit within us mean in our every day life? It gives us a connection to God. The Holy Spirit comes to live inside of us and just like the blood that pumps through our veins, the Holy Spirit pumps through our spirit.

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Chapter Two: The Journey

I had the blessing of being abused under the age of eight. It was a blessing because it made me withdraw by myself and hide away. I read the Bible during that time and found out how to talk with God. Looking back now, I can see that my spiritual nature was just a baby. God came so close to me during that time. He was so vivid and real and showed



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me many miracles. He fed me on the milk of His word, the Bible. discovered that when we are born again as a new Christian, we are born as a spiritual baby. Just like a baby, we need spiritual milk to mature. What is that spiritual milk? It is the Word of God, the Bible. What we feed grows. If we feed our spiritual nature, that grows. If we feed our human nature, that grows. 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 (AMP³):

However, brethren, I could not talk to you as to spiritual [men], but as to nonspiritual [men of the flesh, in whom the carnal nature predominates], as to mere infants [in the new life] in Christ [unable to talk yet!] I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not yet strong enough [to be ready for it]; but even yet you are not strong enough [to be ready for it], For you are still [unspiritual, having the nature] of the flesh [under the control of ordinary impulses]. For as long as [there are] envying and jealousy and wrangling and factions among you, are you not unspiritual and of the flesh, behaving yourselves after a human standard and like mere (unchanged) men?

Hebrews 5:12 (AMP³):

For even though by this time you ought to be teaching others, you actually need someone to teach you over again the very first principles of God's Word. You have come to need milk, not solid food.

1 Peter 2:1-3 (AMP³):

So be done with every trace of wickedness (depravity, malignity) and all deceit and insincerity (pretense, hypocrisy) and grudges (envy, jealousy) and slander and evil speaking of every kind. Like newborn babies you should crave (thirst for, earnestly desire) the pure (unadulterated) spiritual milk, that by it you may be nurtured and grow

I had a great time when I got into high school and started studying biology. I learned about DNA and how it is the building blocks of who a person is, or their potential. DNA is a combination of the mother and fathers DNA. The child grows to have certain characteristics of the parents. When we become a born again Christian, in like manner, God becomes the father of our spiritual nature and we carry **God's DNA!** Wow! I studied then to determine how spiritually old I was. I did that by comparing the fruit of a mature spirit with my own fruit. On the next page is a chart of the fruits of the spirit taken from Galatians 5:22 on the right, and correlated with human nature fruit on the left.

Up to ten years old, I did not have any friends. Even in later years I kept my few friends at a distance. I was constantly thinking, thinking, and thinking. After learning that I had two natures, human and Godly, I realized that I switched between them within a split second. My thinking determined my emotions. I knew I needed to control my thinking. Jesus explained to His disciples the meaning of a parable about thinking in Mark 7:20-22 (NIV¹):

He went on: "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.' For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly.

When Paul was in prison, he wrote a letter to the young church in Philippi exhorting them to control their thinking in Philippians 4:8 (NIV¹):

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Human Nature +	Godly Nature
Hate - unforgiveness, gossip, anger	Love - forgiveness, understanding
Sorrow - irritation, regret	Joy - happiness, satisfaction
Agitation - worry, fear	Peace - quietness
Impatience - envying, jealousy	Patience - endurance
Unkindness - rude	Kindness - polite, compassionate
Selfish - immoral	Goodness - benevolent, unselfish
Undependable - inconsistent	Faithfulness - dependable, consistent
Conceited - competitive	Gentleness - meek, humble
Out of Control - addictions, quick to speak	Self-Control - good habits, slow to anger

Paul wrote about what to set our minds on in Romans 12:2 (NIV¹):

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

And in Colossians 3:1-3 (NIV¹):

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

With these verses in mind, I began my quest to develop my spiritual nature. I couldn't seem to control myself, so I thought at the time I needed a Christian husband who could keep me in line. I had been abused as a child so I had low self-esteem. With that, I was the perfect prey for a con man. Why didn't God protect me? I had asked myself that question many times. However, now in the autumn years of my life, I know that it was a blessing to be connected to an unbelieving and extremely abusive man for 22 years. During that extensive trial, I learned how to walk with God through all circumstances, and I continually grew my spiritual nature. I share now the verses that helped me through those years of spiritual development.

Developing the Spiritual Nature

As we exercise our muscles, they grow stronger. In the same way, if we exercise our spiritual muscles, they will grow stronger. Here are some verses I used to exercise the various fruits of my spiritual nature.

LOVE

Matthew 5: 43-48 (NIV^{1}):

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Exercise: Write down a prayer to bless someone you consider to be an enemy of yours, or someone who has done something wrong to you. Put that paper in your Bible. Every time you open your Bible (which should be often), read that prayer to God. You will be exercising your love for your enemies.

Joy

John 16:24 (NIV¹):

Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

This is what Jesus told his disciples. If we ask for good things, we will receive them. Keep in mind that a child that asks for the candy store will not get it. It is good to ask for things for other people who may not ask for themselves.

James 1:2-3 (NIV¹):

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.

Keep in mind that trials accomplish something. It is sometimes a hard sacrifice to take an educational class. It may be required to study or

memorize facts to get a good grade. That sacrifice is something we don't mind doing because we know the outcome is worth it. In the same way we need to look at the trials in our lives and keep our thoughts focused on the outcome, even if we're not sure what that outcome is, trusting God that it will be good. Even Jesus at His last hour when He was facing the cross, counted it joy because He looked beyond His circumstance to the future.

Practice: Write down a list of things from God that gives you joy. Go to the concordance of the Bible and look up the word joy. Write down the Bible verses you find and repeat them whenever you are tempted to lose your joy.

Peace

Just before He was arrested Jesus told His disciples in John 16:33 (AMP³):

I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace and confidence. In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.]

Peace is a side effect as we conform our thoughts to God's thoughts.

James 3:17-18 (AMP^3):

But the wisdom from above is first of all pure (undefiled); then it is peace-loving, courteous (considerate, gentle). [It is willing to] yield to reason, full of compassion and good fruits; it is wholehearted and straightforward, impartial and unfeigned (free from doubts, wavering, and insincerity).

And the harvest of righteousness (of conformity to God's will in thought and deed) is [the fruit of the seed] sown in peace by those who work for and make peace [in themselves and in others, that peace which

means concord, agreement, and harmony between individuals, with undisturbedness, in a peaceful mind free from fears and agitating passions and moral conflicts].

We can be confident that God is always ready to help us. No matter what we do, He is always firmly attached to us. Hebrews 13:5-6 (MSG²):

Don't be obsessed with getting more material things. Be relaxed with what you have. Since God assured us, "I'll never let you down, never walk off and leave you," we can boldly quote, God is there, ready to help; I'm fearless no matter what. Who or what can get to me?

Worry is the enemy of peace. Philippians 4:6-7 (AMP³):

Do not fret or have any anxiety about anything, but in every circumstance and in everything, by prayer and petition (definite requests), with thanksgiving, continue to make your wants known to God.

And God's peace [shall be yours, that tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and being content with its earthly lot of whatever sort that is, that peace] which transcends all understanding shall garrison and mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

If we have peace in our hearts, we will have peace in our thoughts. Jesus has given us the opportunity to have the same peace that He had. **Let's not** dwell on what may happen in the future. Keep focused on the present and count our blessings.

John 14:27 (AMP³):

Peace I leave with you; My [own] peace I now give and bequeath to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. [Stop allowing yourselves to be agitated and disturbed; and do not permit yourselves to be fearful and intimidated and cowardly and unsettled.]

Exercise: Set aside 15 minutes during each day this week to be your worry time. Think of everything you may be worried about. End by praying about your worries, and then release them to God. Attempt to not worry at all the rest of the day.

Patience

Trials are like classrooms. We learn through them. James 1:12 (AMP³):

Blessed (happy, to be envied) is the man who is patient under trial and stands up under temptation, for when he has stood the test and been approved, he will receive [the victor's] crown of life which God has promised to those who love Him.

Romans 5:3-5 (MSG 2):

There's more to come: We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles, because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us, and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue, keeping us alert for whatever God will do next. In alert expectancy such as this, we're never left feeling shortchanged. Quite the contrary—we can't round up enough containers to hold everything God generously pours into our lives through the Holy Spirit!

Exercise: When you go shopping this week, stand in the longest line you can find. Notice others in line. See if you can help in any way. Be sweet and smile. Exercise your patience.

Kindness

Being kind to someone who is not kind to you can be a challenge.

Luke 6:35 (AMP³):

But love your enemies and be kind and do good [doing favors so that someone derives benefit from them] and lend, expecting and hoping for nothing in return but considering nothing as lost and despairing of no one; and then your recompense (your reward) will be great (rich, strong, intense, and abundant), and you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind and charitable and good to the ungrateful and the selfish and wicked.

2 Timothy 2:23-24 (AMP³):

But refuse (shut your mind against, have nothing to do with) trifling (ill-informed, unedifying, stupid) controversies over ignorant questionings, for you know that they foster strife and breed quarrels.

And the servant of the Lord must not be quarrelsome (fighting and contending). Instead, he must be kindly to everyone and mild-tempered [preserving the bond of peace]; he must be a skilled and suitable teacher, patient and forbearing and willing to suffer wrong.

Many of our attitudes are just habits. It is hard to break the habit of a loose tongue. We often jump into an argument without thinking. Stopping to think, controlling our thoughts is something we mature into as we study the Bible and grow our born again spirit.

Exercise: Send an anonymous gift to someone you don't like. If you do this often enough, you will feel a fresh breeze blow through your life. You will release any ill feelings such as anger, regret or vengeance.

Goodness

Ephesians 5:9 (AMP³):

For the fruit (the effect, the product) of the Light or the Spirit [consists] in every form of kindly goodness, uprightness of heart, and trueness of life.

Goodness is a natural by-product of the new nature within a born again believer. Here Paul is writing to believers in Rome. Romans 5:14 (NIV¹):

I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another.

Exercise: Write down three names of people you think are good. Then write the reason you think so.

Faithfulness

God as our Father will give to us what we will be faithful with. He can trust us with more and more as we mature.

Luke 16:10 (NIV¹):

Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.

Being faithful in small ways can be things such as not taking paper clips at work. Pretend someone is always watching you, because They are.

<u>Gentleness</u>

As we mature spiritually, we will be able to help those less mature. It is human nature to sin. Don't overburden new believers with rules. They will adopt more of a Christ like life as they grow spiritually. Love them and be

gentle with them. We mature in different areas at different rates. Just like in the physical world, some adults are immature in certain areas; it is the same in the spiritual world. Be careful not to judge too harshly, nobody's perfect, not any of us. We need to exhort and encourage each other. We don't always have to be specific, but pray for each other.

Galatians 6:1 (AMP³):

Brethren, if any person is overtaken in misconduct or sin of any sort, you who are spiritual [who are responsive to and controlled by the Spirit] should set him right and restore and reinstate him, without any sense of superiority and with all gentleness, keeping an attentive eye on yourself, lest you should be tempted also.

Ephesians 4:1-3 (MSG 2):

In light of all this, here's what I want you to do. While I'm locked up here, a prisoner for the Master, I want you to get out there and walk—better yet, run!—on the road God called you to travel. I don't want any of you sitting around on your hands. I don't want anyone strolling off, down some path that goes nowhere. And mark that you do this with humility and discipline—not in fits and starts, but steadily, pouring yourselves out for each other in acts of love, alert at noticing differences and quick at mending fences.

Exercise: Think of something you need to improve in your spiritual nature. Find someone who needs that same improvement and say something nice to them. Don't even mention what they need to improve.

Self-Control

2 Timothy 1:7 (AMP³):

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear), but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love and of calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control.

When you look at a small child, they don't have much self-control. In the same way, self-control is a challenge to a spiritual child. Self-control is developed as we mature spiritually. The way we mature is through reading the Bible. What we feed is what grows. If we feed our human nature, that part of us will control our lives. If we feed our born again spiritual nature, that nature will grow and control our lives. We will naturally develop self-control.

Exercise: Think of something that makes you mad. Jump up and down and flail your arms. Now tell yourself, "I won't get mad about that again!"

Conclusion

Spiritual maturity comes as we grow. We are not alone; we have God as our Father watching every step we take, just like a loving father who holds on to our bike as we learn to ride, He steadies our way.

Hebrews 12: 4-11 (MSG²):

In this all-out match against sin, others have suffered far worse than you, to say nothing of what Jesus went through—all that bloodshed! So don't feel sorry for yourselves. Or have you forgotten how good parents treat children, and that God regards you as His children?

 M_V child. don't shruq off God's discipline, dear either. but don't be crushed by it He It's the child loves disciplines; that He the child Не Не corrects. embraces. also

God is educating you; that's why you must never drop out. He's treating you as dear children. This trouble you're in isn't punishment; it's training, the normal experience of children. Only irresponsible parents leave children to fend for themselves. Would you prefer an irresponsible God? We respect our own parents for training and not spoiling us, so why not embrace God's training so we can truly live? While we were children, our parents did what seemed best to them. But God is doing what is best for us, training us to live God's holy best. At the time, discipline isn't much fun. It always feels like it's going against the grain. Later, of course, it pays off handsomely, for it's the well-trained who find themselves mature in their relationship with God.

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Chapter Three: Connected



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Connected to God

No matter how mature our spiritual self is, after we are born again, we are continually connected to God. We are connected by the Holy Spirit that comes to reside within us. Our bodies become the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. I Corinthians 6:19-20 (AMP³):

Do you not know that your body is the temple (the very sanctuary) of the Holy Spirit Who lives within you, Whom you have received [as a Gift] from God? You are not your own,

You were bought with a price [purchased with a preciousness and paid for, made His own]. So then, honor God and bring glory to Him in your body.

That Holy Spirit is first a teacher. Jesus spoke to His disciples as recorded in John 14:25-27 (NIV¹):

"All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with

you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Jesus taught His disciples for 40 days after He rose from the dead. He told them to wait until they received power. The Holy Spirit is power as recorded in Luke 24:49 (AMP³):

And behold, I will send forth upon you what My Father has promised; but remain in the city [Jerusalem] until you are clothed with power from on high.

Ten days later, on the Jewish Feast of Pentecost, the disciples were together and received the Holy Spirit. Then Peter stood and spoke to the crowd that had gathered. It is recorded in Acts 2:38-39 (NIV¹):

Peter replied, "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. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

The Holy Spirit is a connection to God as Father. It is life changing. Romans 8: 5-14 (MSG²):

Those who think they can do it on their own end up obsessed with measuring their own moral muscle but never get around to exercising it in real life. Those who trust God's action in them find that God's Spirit is in them—living and breathing God! Obsession with self in these matters is a dead end; attention to God leads us out into the open, into a spacious, free life. Focusing on the self is the opposite of focusing on God. Anyone completely absorbed in self ignores God, ends up thinking more about self than God. That person ignores who God is and what he is doing. And God isn't pleased at being ignored.

But if God himself has taken up residence in your life, you can hardly be thinking more of yourself than of him. Anyone, of course, who has not welcomed this invisible but clearly present God, the Spirit of Christ, won't know what we're talking about. But for you who welcome him, in whom he dwells—even though you still experience all the limitations of sin—you yourself experience life on God's terms. It stands to reason, doesn't it, that if the alive-and-present God who raised Jesus from the dead moves

into your life, he'll do the same thing in you that he did in Jesus, bringing you alive to himself? When God lives and breathes in you (and he does, as surely as he did in Jesus), you are delivered from that dead life. With his Spirit living in you, your body will be as alive as Christ's!

So don't you see that we don't owe this old do-it-yourself life one red cent. There's nothing in it for us, nothing at all. The best thing to do is give it a decent burial and get on with your new life. God's Spirit beckons. There are things to do and places to go!

The Holy Spirit is not just for the benefit of those of us who have experienced it, but the Holy Spirit is given so that we might share with others the good news of what God has done. The Holy Spirit is like rivers of living water, meant to flow out from us. John 7:38-39 (AMP):

He who believes in Me [who cleaves to and trusts in and relies on Me] as the Scripture has said, From his innermost being shall flow [continuously] springs and rivers of living water. But He was speaking here of the Spirit, Whom those who believed (trusted, had faith) in Him were afterward to receive. For the [Holy] Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified (raised to honor).

The Holy Spirit is a counselor that prompts us to action. He speaks to us. The Holy Spirit spoke to Philip, one of the apostles in Acts 8:27-30(AMP³):

An Ethiopian, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure, had come to Jerusalem to worship. And he was [now] returning, and sitting in his chariot he was reading the book of the prophet Isaiah. Then the [Holy] Spirit said to Philip, Go forward and join yourself to this chariot. Accordingly Philip, running up to him, heard [the man] reading the prophet Isaiah and asked, Do you really understand what you are reading?

The Holy Spirit spoke to Peter after he had a vision in Acts 10:19 (AMP):

And while Peter was earnestly revolving the vision in his mind and meditating on it, the [Holy] Spirit said to him, Behold, three men are looking for you!

The Holy Spirit spoke to the early church at Antioch through some unnamed individual. Acts 13:2 (NIV¹):

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Separate now for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

The Holy Spirit gives us glory. John 17:20-23 (MSG²):

I'm praying not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me Because of them and their witness about me. The goal is for all of them to become one heart and mind— Just as you, Father, are in me and I in you, So they might be one heart and mind with us. Then the world might believe that you, in fact, sent me. The same glory you gave me, I gave them, so they'll be as unified and together as we are— I in them and you in me. Then they'll be mature in this oneness, and give the godless world evidence that you've sent me and loved them in the same way you've loved me.

Connected to Each Other

Something I have been working on as I have gotten older, is a connection to other Christians. I've known for a long time that it is what God wants us to do. Actually putting that into practice has been a challenge for me. The following are scriptures about the connection we are suppose to have with each other:

Romans 12:4-8 (MSG²):

In this way we are like the various parts of a human body. Each part gets its meaning from the body as a whole, not the other way around. The body we're talking about is Christ's body of chosen people. Each of us finds our meaning and function as a part of his body. But as a chopped-off finger or cut-off toe we wouldn't amount to much, would we? So since we find ourselves fashioned into all these excellently formed and marvelously functioning parts in Christ's body, let's just go ahead and be what we were made to be, without enviously or pridefully comparing ourselves with each other, or trying to be something we aren't.

If you preach, just preach God's Message, nothing else; if you help, just help, don't take over; if you teach, stick to your teaching; if you give encouraging guidance, be careful that you don't get bossy; if you're put in charge, don't manipulate; if you're called to give aid to people in distress, keep your eyes open and be quick to respond; if you work with the disadvantaged, don't let yourself get irritated with them or depressed by them. Keep a smile on your face.

Ephesians 4: 7-13 (MSG²):

But that doesn't mean you should all look and speak and act the same. Out of the generosity of Christ, each of us is given his own gift. The text for this is,

He climbed the high mountain,

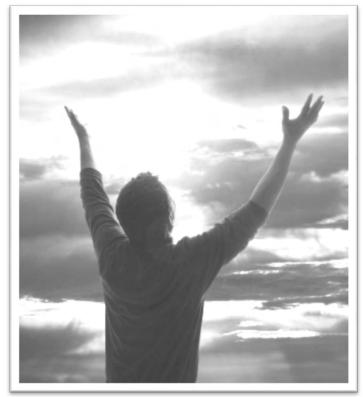
He captured the enemy and seized the booty,

He handed it all out in gifts to the people.

Is it not true that the One who climbed up also climbed down, down to the valley of earth? And the One who climbed down is the One who climbed back up, up to highest heaven. He handed out gifts above and below, filled heaven with his gifts, filled earth with his gifts. He handed out gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor-teacher to train Christ's followers in skilled servant work, working within Christ's body, the church, until we're all moving rhythmically and easily with each other, efficient and graceful in response to God's Son, fully mature adults, fully developed within and without, fully alive like Christ.

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Chapter Four: The Value of One



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The most amazing thing about Christianity is that it is not a set of rules. It is not a philosophy. It is a relationship; a relationship with God as Father, Jesus as brother and King and the Holy Spirit as an individual connection. God looks at the individual, a single person. God will train someone their entire life to say that one sentence that will turn that other single individual back to God. Luke 15:1-7 (MSG²):

By this time a lot of men and women of doubtful reputation were hanging around Jesus, listening intently. The Pharisees and religion scholars were not pleased, not at all pleased. They growled, "He takes in sinners and eats meals with them, treating them like old friends." Their grumbling triggered this story.

"Suppose one of you had a hundred sheep and lost one. Wouldn't you leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the lost one until you found it? When found, you can be sure you would put it across your shoulders, rejoicing, and when you got home call in your friends and neighbors, saying, 'Celebrate with me! I've found my lost sheep!' Count on it—there's more joy in heaven over one sinner's rescued life than over ninety-nine good people in no need of rescue.

Matthew 18:12-13 (NIV¹):

What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray and gets lost, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountain and go in search of the one that is lost?

And if it should be that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices more over it than over the ninety-nine that did not get lost.

Matthew 10: 29-31 (NIV¹):

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

Abraham asked God to spare Sodom and Gomorrah from destruction. Genesis 18:32-33 (MSG²):

He wouldn't quit, "Don't get angry, Master—this is the last time. What if you only come up with ten?"

"For the sake of only ten, I won't destroy the city."

When God finished talking with Abraham, he left. And Abraham went home.

Genesis 19: 27-29 (MSG²):

Abraham got up early the next morning and went to the place he had so recently stood with GoD. He looked out over Sodom and Gomorrah, surveying the whole plain. All he could see was smoke belching from the Earth, like smoke from a furnace.

And that's the story: When God destroyed the Cities of the Plain, he was mindful of Abraham and first got Lot out of there before he blasted those cities off the face of the Earth.

Jeremiah 5:1 (NIV¹):

"Go up and down the streets of Jerusalem, look around and consider, search through her squares.

If you can find but one person who deals honestly and seeks the truth, I will forgive this city."

Genesis 6:7-8 (AMP³):

So the Lord said, I will destroy, blot out, and wipe away mankind, whom I have created from the face of the ground--not only man, [but] the beasts and the creeping things and the birds of the air--for it grieves Me and makes Me regretful that I have made them.

But Noah found grace (favor) in the eyes of the Lord.

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Chapter Five: Knowing the Enemy



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Most of my life, I thought that the enemy was Satan the devil. I thought the evil that he did was destructive and to be avoided at all cost. I thought he was behind all the bad things that happen to good people. But, now I see all the good that came from the bad things that happened to me. God said that all things work together for those who love Him. Even though Satan caused evil, God meant it for good. I have learned from my mistakes. I have learned from attacks I have suffered from the enemy.

Romans 8: 28 (AMP³):

We are assured and know that [God being a partner in their labor] all things work together and are [fitting into a plan] for good to and for those who love God and are called according to [His] design and purpose.

I count it a blessing that I was abused as a child. I withdrew from people around me and huddled close to God. I read the Bible constantly

and talked with God through my day. I was isolated up to the 8th grade. Then, I moved from Los Angeles to a small mountain community called Paradise. It is a very clicky town, meaning that kids had their circle of friends and was not letting in any outsiders, especially flat-landers. I had a couple friends who were also on the outs, but I never got too close to them. I had built a sturdy wall around myself. This was when I started writing Bible studies. I wrote studies for my teen group at a community church and sermonettes for special occasions. As God would teach me a lesson, I would be compelled to write them down. So, looking back I can see how being abused kept me close to God.

Psalm 69: 17-19 (AMP³):

Hide not Your face from Your servant, for I am in distress; O answer me speedily!

Draw close to me and redeem me; ransom and set me free because of my enemies [lest they glory in my prolonged distress]!

You know my reproach and my shame and my dishonor; my adversaries are all before You [fully known to You].

When I got to college, God gave me Christian songs. I would hear them in my head while driving, while studying and at any time at all. I began to sing in coffee shops and to witness about what God had taught me. I hooked up with two secular song writers and began doing about three concerts a week. At a talent contest that drew a crowd of 5,000, I was approached by Columbia Records with a contract offer. I turned it down because I felt it would turn my witness into a commercial endeavor.

I appeared to be living an ideal Christian life, but it was not so. I was leading a double life. Because of the sexual abuse of my youth, I was out

of control. I knew the dark side of the life I led was wrong. I went into a deep depression.

That summer, I married a man I had known only a week. I thought he was a Christian, which I needed in order to get myself under control. It wasn't long until I learned that he was a con man. I didn't believe in divorce, so I had the blessing of being married to a con man for 22 years. Matthew 5:10 (MSG²):

"You're blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God's kingdom."

There is an enemy that seeks to destroy. I Peter 5:8 (AMP³):

Be well balanced (temperate, sober of mind), be vigilant and cautious at all times; for that enemy of yours, the devil, roams around like a lion roaring [in fierce hunger], seeking someone to seize upon and devour.

But, what the enemy had meant for destruction, God meant for good. Genesis 50:20-21 (AMP³):

As for you, you thought evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring about that many people should be kept alive, as they are this day.

Now therefore, do not be afraid. I will provide for and support you and your little ones. And he comforted them [imparting cheer, hope, strength] and spoke to their hearts [kindly].

It is good to learn the ways of the enemy. To know what he can whisper in our thoughts. John 13:2 (AMP³):

So [it was] during supper, Satan having already put the thought of betraying Jesus in the heart of Judas Iscariot

We can hear God's voice. Job 26:13-14 (AMP³):

By his breath the skies became fair; his hand pierced the gliding serpent.

And these are but the outer fringe of his works; how faint the whisper we hear of him! Who then can understand the thunder of his power?"

I am not afraid that the enemy can ever draw me away from my salvation. Ephesians 1:11-14 (MSG²):

It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, he had his eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone.

It's in Christ that you, once you heard the truth and believed it (this Message of your salvation), found yourselves home free—signed, sealed, and delivered by the Holy Spirit. This signet from God is the first installment on what's coming, a reminder that we'll get everything God has planned for us, a praising and glorious life.

John 10:27-29 (AMP³):

The sheep that are My own hear and are listening to My voice; and I know them, and they follow Me.

And I give them eternal life, and they shall never lose it or perish throughout the ages. [To all eternity they shall never by any means be destroyed.] And no one is able to snatch them out of My hand.

My Father, Who has given them to Me, is greater and mightier than all [else]; and no one is able to snatch [them] out of the Father's hand.

Chapter Six: Hearing God's Voice



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John heard God's voice when he baptized Jesus. Matthew 3:16-17 (AMP³):

And when Jesus was baptized, He went up at once out of the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he [John] saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on Him.

And behold, a voice from heaven said, This is My Son, My Beloved, in Whom I delight!

Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led

them up on a high mountain by themselves. Matthew 17:4-6 (AMP³):

Then Peter began to speak and said to Jesus, Lord, it is good and delightful that we are here; if You approve, I will put up three booths here--one for You and one for Moses and one for Elijah.

While he was still speaking, behold, a shining cloud [composed of light] overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, This is My Son, My

Beloved, with Whom I am [and have always been] delighted. Listen to Him!

John 5: 24-25 (AMP³):

I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, the person whose ears are open to My words [who listens to My message] and believes and trusts in and clings to and relies on Him Who sent Me has (possesses now) eternal life. And he does not come into judgment [does not incur sentence of judgment, will not come under condemnation], but he has already passed over out of death into life.

Believe Me when I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, the time is coming and is here now when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear it shall live.

John 5:30 (AMP³):

I am able to do nothing from Myself [independently, of My own accord-but only as I am taught by God and as I get His orders]. Even as I hear, I judge [I decide as I am bidden to decide. As the voice comes to Me, so I give a decision], and My judgment is right (just, righteous), because I do not seek or consult My own will [I have no desire to do what is pleasing to Myself, My own aim, My own purpose] but only the will and pleasure of the Father Who sent Me.

John 5:37-38 (AMP³):

And the Father Who sent Me has Himself testified concerning Me. Not one of you has ever given ear to His voice or seen His form (His face--what He is like). [You have always been deaf to His voice and blind to the vision of Him.]

And you have not His word (His thought) living in your hearts, because you do not believe and adhere to and trust in and rely on Him Whom He has sent. [That is why you do not keep His message living in you, because you do not believe in the Messenger Whom He has sent.]

John 10: 2-4 (AMP³):

But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

The watchman opens the door for this man, and the sheep listen to his voice and heed it; and he calls his own sheep by name and brings (leads) them out.

When he has brought his own sheep outside, he walks on before them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

John 10: 26-28 (AMP³):

But you do not believe and trust and rely on Me because you do not belong to My fold [you are no sheep of Mine].

The sheep that are My own hear and are listening to My voice; and I know them, and they follow Me.

And I give them eternal life, and they shall never lose it or perish throughout the ages. [To all eternity they shall never by any means be destroyed.] And no one is able to snatch them out of My hand.

John 12:23-30 (AMP³):

And Jesus answered them, The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified and exalted. I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains [just one grain; it never becomes more but lives] by itself alone. But if it dies, it produces many others and yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it, but anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. [Whoever has no love for, no concern for, no regard for his life here on earth, but despises it, preserves his life forever and ever.]

If anyone serves Me, he must continue to follow Me [to cleave steadfastly to Me, conform wholly to My example in living and, if need be, in dying] and wherever I am, there will My servant be also. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him. Now My soul is troubled and distressed, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour [of trial and agony]? But it was for this very purpose that I have come to this hour [that I might undergo it].

[Rather, I will say,] Father, glorify (honor and extol) Your [own] name! Then there came a voice out of heaven saying, I have already glorified it, and I will glorify it again. The crowd of bystanders heard the sound and said that it had thundered; others said, An angel has spoken to Him! Jesus answered, This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sake.

John 18:36-37 (AMP³):

Jesus answered, My kingdom (kingship, royal power) belongs not to this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My followers would have been fighting to keep Me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, My kingdom is not from here (this world); [it has no such origin or source].

Pilate said to Him, Then You are a King? Jesus answered, You say it! [You speak correctly!] For I am a King. [Certainly I am a King!] This is why I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the Truth. Everyone who is of the Truth [who is a friend of the Truth, who belongs to the Truth] hears and listens to My voice.

Acts 9:1-19 (MSG²):

All this time Saul was breathing down the necks of the Master's disciples, out for the kill. He went to the Chief Priest and got arrest warrants to take to the meeting places in Damascus so that if he found anyone there belonging to the Way, whether men or women, he could arrest them and bring them to Jerusalem. He set off. When he got to the outskirts of Damascus, he was suddenly dazed by a blinding flash of light. As he fell to the ground, he heard a voice: "Saul, Saul, why are you out to get me?"

He said, "Who are you, Master?"

"I am Jesus, the One you're hunting down. I want you to get up and enter the city. In the city you'll be told what to do next."

His companions stood there dumbstruck—they could hear the sound, but couldn't see anyone—while Saul, picking himself up off the ground, found himself stone-blind. They had to take him by the hand and lead him into Damascus. He continued blind for three days. He ate nothing, drank nothing. There was a disciple in Damascus by the name of Ananias. The Master spoke to him in a vision: "Ananias."

"Yes, Master?" he answered.

"Get up and go over to Straight Avenue. Ask at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus. His name is Saul. He's there praying. He has just had a dream in which he saw a man named Ananias enter the house and lay hands on him so he could see again."

Ananias protested, "Master, you can't be serious. Everybody's talking

about this man and the terrible things he's been doing, his reign of terror against your people in Jerusalem! And now he's shown up here with papers from the Chief Priest that give him license to do the same to us."

But the Master said, "Don't argue. Go! I have picked him as my personal representative to non-Jews and kings and Jews. And now I'm about to show him what he's in for—the hard suffering that goes with this job."

So Ananias went and found the house, placed his hands on blind Saul, and said, "Brother Saul, the Master sent me, the same Jesus you saw on your way here. He sent me so you could see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." No sooner were the words out of his mouth than something like scales fell from Saul's eyes—he could see again! He got to his feet, was baptized, and sat down with them to a hearty meal.

Hebrews 3:7-8 (AMP³):

Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as [happened] in the rebellion [of Israel] and their provocation and embitterment [of Me] in the day of testing in the wilderness

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Chapter Seven: Anatomy of a Christian



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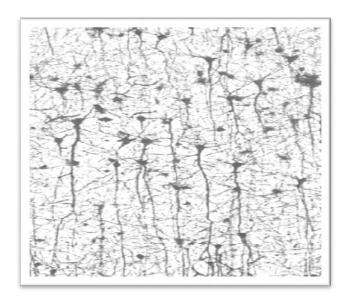
Let us now look at the scientific aspect of what is in the Bible. The basic core of who we are begins with our thoughts. Romans 8:5-7 (NIV¹):

Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

In 2006, a neurosurgeon named Dr. Itzhak Fried⁴ conducted experiments that had a remarkable result. Dr. Fried was focused on curing epilepsy. He was able to place probes inside a conscious person's

brain to take scans. Using a computer, he was able to create a 3-dimensional picture of how our thoughts function.

In an experiment, he gave volunteers an activity, and then had them remember that activity. The scans he took showed that when the volunteers remembered, they actually would re-experience the activity in their minds. The scans, illustrated below, are pictures in great detail that show that memories are shaped like microscopic trees.



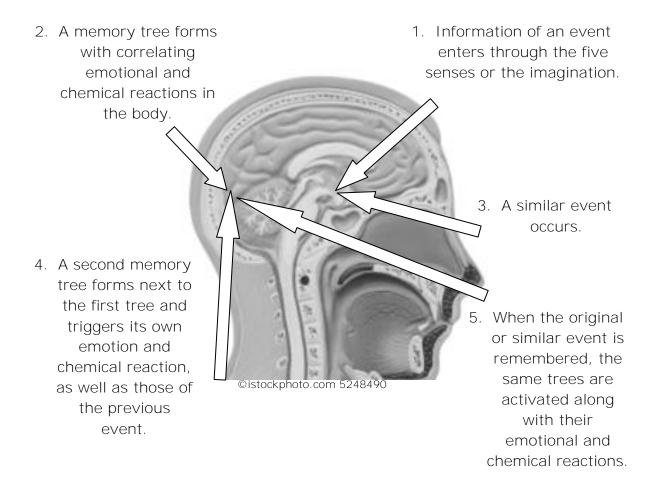
Dr. Marian Diamond⁵ co-authored a book called *Magic Trees of the Mind*. You can see where she got her idea.

Here is a rendition of a single memory tree. The branches are the intricate details of the memory. Dr. Diamond studied environmental effects on these trees as a person went from birth to old age.

Dr. Candace Pert⁷ is a neuroscientist that has discovered that emotions are molecules that course through our whole body and attach themselves to various cells.

Dr. Caroline Leaf⁶ specializes in neuro-metacognative© learning. She studied how to unlock the untapped potential of thinking correctly. In the book *Who Switched off My Brain*, she explains how each of the memory trees has electrical triggers that send messages to the chemical factory of the brain, which in turn sends molecules of emotion and chemicals into the body to cause physical reactions in various locations.

Here is a simplified version of what these scientists have discovered happens when a person thinks and remembers.



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Chapter Eight: Renewing the Mind



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Romans 12:2 (NIV¹)

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.

What we think about has a direct connection to how we feel and react in our bodies. Philippians $4:6-8 \; (NIV^1)$

...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

We can control which of our natures, human or Godly is in control by what we think.

Romans 8: 5-6 (NIV¹):

Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;

It is human nature to be selfish. When we think selfish thoughts, we bring toxic emotions and chemicals into our bodies and our life.

Galatians 5:19-21 (MSG²):

It is obvious what kind of life develops out of trying to get your own way all the time: repetitive, loveless, cheap sex; a stinking accumulation of mental and emotional garbage; frenzied and joyless grabs for happiness; trinket gods; magic-show religion; paranoid loneliness; cutthroat competition; all-consuming-yet-never-satisfied wants; a brutal temper; an impotence to love or be loved; divided homes and divided lives; small-minded and lopsided pursuits; the vicious habit of depersonalizing everyone into a rival; uncontrolled and uncontrollable addictions; ugly parodies of community. I could go on.

If we think about developing the fruits of the spirit and living God's

way, we bring healthy emotions and chemicals into our bodies and life.

Galatians 5: 22-23 (MSG²):

But what happens when we live God's way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like: affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely.

There is another influence at work when we think. It is what happens while we sleep. There are little worker cells that prune and tidy up our memory trees while we are dreaming. If during the day we have casual thoughts that are fleeting, they become wavy branches on our memory trees. When we sleep, these branches are pruned off. If we have strong thoughts, thinking them many times over, they become strong branches on our memory trees. When we sleep, these branches become permanently attached.

Therefore, if we have events that we don't want to remember, we shouldn't dwell on them. If we keep them brief in our thinking, when we sleep, they will be pruned off. If we have events we want to remember, we must concentrate on them and not be distracted so that they become firmly attached.

Ephesians 4: 26-27 (MSG²):

Go ahead and be angry. You do well to be angry—but don't use your anger as fuel for revenge. And don't stay angry. Don't go to bed angry. Don't give the Devil that kind of foothold in your life.

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Chapter Nine: Healing Bad Memories



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According to Dr. Caroline Leaf⁶, memory trees have tiny protrusions that signal the chemistry producing area of our brains to send emotion molecules and chemicals into our bodies. She goes on to explain that good and healthy memories have rounded protrusions, much like leaves on a green tree. Bad memories have protrusions that are thorn like. The molecules and chemicals that go into our blood stream from these bad memories have a toxic affect on our bodies. They reach out branches and effect trees around them like a spreading weed.

How can we counteract these bad trees? In the secular world we have counseling, which can help to a certain degree. But, we have an added resource as a born again Christian which is the Holy Spirit.

These following verses have changed my memories and have changed my life. I pray they give you a new perspective and change your life also. Looking up the name of a bad memory, such as sorrow or pride, in a concordance (a word index usually found at the back of a Bible), can help you find additional Bible verses that can heal bad memories.

Let's take a closer look at an example of one of my bad memories called failure. I didn't just have a single tree called failure; I had a large forest of trees called failure. These memories were a stronghold that held me in a grip, lacking the incentive to step out and try anything new. Here is my experience with failure.

The Trees of Failure

I began with a failure to stand against abuse. I was abused for years as a young child. This was my original failure tree. I felt it was my fault I was abused because I had failed as a good person. I felt I was abused because I deserved it and that I was a wicked child. This occurred often between the age of five and seven. I had never dealt with that toxic memory tree until just recently.

The tree of failure did not stand alone for long. I failed to learn to ride a bike. I failed at learning math. I failed to keep my room clean. I failed to learn to play the violin. I failed at making friends at school and I failed at completing my homework. I failed at contests I entered. I failed at selling fund raising products door to door. I failed to keep my hair brushed or my teeth clean. There were many, many more.

Let's review the thinking process. An event occurs and enters our brain through our five senses or our imagination. The event blows through our memory looking for associated trees. The new memory is planted next to similar trees and triggers all of the emotion molecules and chemicals that are on all the associated trees. From a single small event, an emotional and toxic tsunami floods our body. We often overreact without knowing why. We don't realize that associated trees have been triggered.

The way to heal a bad memory is to knock off the protrusions that trigger the response in the body. How is that done? The secular answer is to look for the original tree and change our attitude towards it through intensive counseling. Drugs can also block the toxins in our body. But, God has designed a better way. When we have the Holy Spirit inside of us, we have the potential to heal all of our toxic trees. It is accomplished by the Word of God, the Holy Bible.

The following Bible verses knocked the toxic protrusions off my toxic trees of failure.

Seriously, is the failure of my human nature such a big deal compared to my spiritual nature? Isaiah 51:6 (NIV¹):

Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies. But my salvation will last forever, my righteousness will never fail.

I had never intended to fail. It was not my purpose. Proverbs 16:2-4 (AMP³):

All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirits (the thoughts and intents of the heart).

Roll your works upon the Lord [commit and trust them wholly to Him; He will cause your thoughts to become agreeable to His will, and] so shall your plans be established and succeed.

The Lord has made everything [to accommodate itself and contribute] to its own end and His own purpose--even the wicked [are fitted for their role] for the day of calamity and evil.

Activities done by human nature are not lasting. They are not important in the eternal realm. Ecclesiastes 1:13-15 (AMP³):

And I applied myself by heart and mind to seek and search out by [human] wisdom all human activity under heaven. It is a miserable

business which God has given to the sons of man with which to busy themselves.

I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity, a striving after the wind and a feeding on wind.

No one can be perfect all of the time. But, we are not judged by our human perfection, but by the faith that is in our spiritual selves. Romans 3:27-28 (AMP):

Then what becomes of [our] pride and [our] boasting? It is excluded (banished, ruled out entirely). On what principle? [On the principle] of doing good deeds? No, but on the principle of faith.

For we hold that a man is justified and made upright by faith independent of and distinctly apart from good deeds (works of the Law). [The observance of the Law has nothing to do with justification.]

My failures, whether real or imagined are all forgiven and gone. Romans 4:5-7 (AMP³):

But to one who, not working [by the Law], trusts (believes fully) in Him Who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited to him as righteousness (the standing acceptable to God). Thus David congratulates the man and pronounces a blessing on him to whom God credits righteousness apart from the works he does: Blessed and happy and to be envied are those whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered up and completely buried.

Everything in my life works together for good because I love God. I am no surprise to God. Romans 8:28-29 (NIV¹):

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. I realize that my failures are training me to do better both humanly and spiritually. I Timothy 4:8 (AMP³):

For physical training is of some value (useful for a little), but godliness (spiritual training) is useful and of value in everything and in every way, for it holds promise for the present life and also for the life which is to come.

I remind myself that some of my failures I had no control over. I release those. I have learned many things from my failures. I embrace that knowledge. I change my forest of failure trees to learning and training trees. Hebrews 12:5-11 (MSG²):

God is educating you; that's why you must never drop out. He's treating you as dear children. This trouble you're in isn't punishment; it's training, the normal experience of children. Only irresponsible parents leave children to fend for themselves. Would you prefer an irresponsible God? We respect our own parents for training and not spoiling us, so why not embrace God's training so we can truly live? While we were children, our parents did what seemed best to them. But God is doing what is best for us, training us to live God's holy best. At the time, discipline isn't much fun. It always feels like it's going against the grain. Later, of course, it pays off handsomely, for it's the well-trained who find themselves mature in their relationship with God.

How happy I am that God has created in me a new spiritual self; an incorruptible part of me, a part that He will develop as I feed my spiritual self and I will grow more and more like Jesus.

As I took in the previous scripture, the toxic thorns of failure trees turn into the green leaves of training trees and I am exhilarated at the reminder that I am **in God's hand**s and all is as it should be. I cannot fail because He watches my steps so that I cannot stumble.

On the following two pages is a list of toxic trees and the correlating Bible verses that have helped me turn my toxic trees to leafy green trees.

Failure...... Proverbs 21:2 (MSG²) We justify our actions by appearances; God examines our motives.

Guilt........... John 3:17-18 (AMP³) For God did not send the Son into the world in order to judge (to reject, to condemn, to pass sentence on) the world, but that the world might find salvation and be made safe and sound through Him. He who believes in Him [who clings to, trusts in, relies on Him] is not judged [he who

trusts in Him never comes up for judgment

Luke 6: 20-21 (MSG²) You're blessed when you've lost it all. God's kingdom is there for the finding. You're blessed when you're ravenously hungry. Then you're ready for the Messianic meal. You're blessed when the tears flow freely. Joy comes with the morning.

Addictions.... II Corinthians 10:3-4 (NIV1) For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

Depression... Colossians 3:2-4 (AMP³) And set your minds and keep them set on what is above (the higher things), not on the things that are on the earth. For [as far as this world is concerned] you have died, and your [new, real] life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, Who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in [the splendor of His] glory.

Sorrow...... Psalm 16:9-11 (MSG²) I'm happy from the inside out, and from the outside in, I'm firmly formed. You canceled my ticket to hell— that's not my destination! Now you've got my feet on the life path, all radiant from the shining of your face. Ever since you took my hand, I'm on the right way.

Fear........... Romans 8: 30-32 (AMP3) And those whom He thus foreordained, He also called; and those whom He called, He also justified (acquitted, made righteous, putting them into right standing with Himself). And those whom He justified, He also glorified [raising them to a heavenly dignity and condition or state of being]. What then shall we say to [all] this? If God is for us, who [can be] against us? [Who can be our foe, if God is on our side?] He who did not withhold or spare [even] His own Son but gave Him up for us all, will He not also with Him freely and graciously give us all [other] things?

Anger....... James 1:19-21 (MSG2) Post this at all the intersections, dear friends: Lead with your ears, follow up with your tongue, and let anger straggle along in the rear. God's righteousness doesn't grow from human anger. So throw all spoiled virtue and cancerous evil in the garbage. In simple humility, let our gardener, God, landscape you with the Word, making a salvationgarden of your life.

Illness......

Isaiah 25:8 (AMP3) Then shall your light break forth like the morning, and your healing (your restoration and the power of a new life) shall spring forth speedily; your righteousness (your rightness, your justice, and your right relationship with God) shall go before you [conducting you to peace and prosperity], and the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

Pride.........

Jeremiah 13:17 (NIV1) But if you do not listen, I will weep in secret because of your pride; my eyes will weep bitterly, overflowing with tears, because the LORD's flock will be taken captive.

Unbelief..... Mark 9:23 (MSG²) Jesus said, "If? There are no 'ifs' among believers. Anything can happen." No sooner were the words out of his mouth than the father cried, "Then I believe. Help me with my doubts!"

 $\textbf{Isolation}..... \textbf{ I Peter 4:7-11 (MSG2) Everything in the world is } \\$ about to be wrapped up, so take nothing for granted. Stay wide-awake in prayer. Most of all, love each other as if your life depended on it. Love makes up for practically anything. Be quick to give a meal to the hungry, a bed to the homelesscheerfully. Be generous with the different things God gave you, passing them around so all get in on it: if words, let it be God's words; if help, let it be God's hearty help. That way, God's bright presence will be evident in everything through Jesus, and he'll get all the credit as the One mighty in everything—encores to the end of time. Oh, yes!

Handicap...... I Corinthians 15: 42-44 (MSG²) This image of planting a dead seed and raising a live plant is a mere sketch at best, but perhaps it will help in approaching the mystery of the resurrection bodybut only if you keep in mind that when we're raised, we're raised for good, alive forever! The corpse that's planted is no beauty, but when it's raised, it's glorious. Put in the ground weak, it comes up powerful. The seed sown is natural; the seed grown is supernatural—same seed, same body, but what a difference from when it goes down in physical mortality to when it is raised up in spiritual immortality!

Chapter Ten: Nutrition and the Brain



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It is easy to understand that we are what we eat. But, if you are like me, that saying doesn't register when I sit down to a meal. I am distracted by the smell, look and taste of what's on my plate. I only consider what I have eaten when I am standing on the scale.

With that said, we all know we should be eating good, wholesome and pure food. Our brains function on chemical and electrical circuitry. If we don't supply it with the proper nutrition, the brain cannot function to its optimum potential. I can't seem to relate the long named nutrients that are listed in many books to what I am eating. There are a few of you out there that are able to translate that information into your diet, but I am not one of you. Therefore I am including in this book a chapter that is a simplified and doable list of ways to improve the function of our brains through nutrition.

The study of how nutrition affects the brain and behavior is relatively new. Scientists have just begun to understand how changes in particular nutrients affect the brain and intelligence, mood, and the way people act. Experiments that investigate nutrition-brain interaction are difficult for

several reasons. There are environmental factors that can affect the brain, such as chemicals in the work place or in the home. It is hard to test separate nutrients on people because they cannot just eat one nutrient at a time to evaluate results. Also, different bodies require different nutrients; genetics play a part. There can also be a placebo effect in that a subject might act more alert by just the suggestion they have received a nutrient to help their thinking.

Here is a simple list to improve our brain and our thinking:

1. WATER

I was surprised to learn that 90% of our brain is water! I'm thinking it must look something like a watermelon inside. It is easy to understand that not drinking enough water could hamper our thought life! There are various recommendations about how much water a day is a good amount. Most doctors recommend taking your weight, dividing by two and drinking that many ounces of water a day. For instance, if you weighed one hundred, half of that is fifty, so you would need to drink fifty ounces of water a day. That seems like a lot, doesn't it? That makes me think that most of us are walking around dehydrated. Doctors confer, that when you have the sensation of being thirsty, you are already dehydrated.

2. Calories

I was surprised to learn while researching information for this book, that too many calories can actually damage the brain. I knew it could make me sleepy, but I didn't know it could slow down the production of nerve trees. Too few calories can also damage the brain. It is important to listen to our body's feedback and as soon as we feel full, STOP eating! Simple, yes? But I have a hard time doing just that. The balance between too much and too little is only achieved by diligent awareness of our body reactions.

3. Fats and Oils

The brain uses fats and oils for cell membranes and cell functioning. A diet too low in fats and oils can hamper thinking. Too much fats and oils can cause problems in blood circulation, which the brain also needs. Again, balance is the key.

4. Antioxidants

When a cell converts oxygen into energy, tiny molecules called free radicals are made. Free radicals can rid the body of harmful toxins, but too many free radicals can result in cell death and tissue damage. Eating food that contains antioxidants lowers the amount of free radicals.

5. Protein and Carbohydrates

Eating protein at every meal balances blood sugar levels. It also slows the absorption of carbohydrates, preventing that brain fog after a meal.

That is the simple formula for keeping the brain in tip top shape. There are more complex theories out there, but this is a good place to start. Following is a chart of basic foods that contain the above recommendations. This is a list compiled by Dr. Daniel G. Amen⁸, author of *Making a Good Brain Great*, as well as other books and articles.

The American Cancer Society recommends five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables a day. Mixing colors - eating from the rainbow - is a good way to think about healthy fruits and vegetables. Strive to eat red things - strawberries, raspberries, cherries, red peppers and tomatoes, yellow things - squash, yellow peppers, small portions of bananas and peaches, blue things - blueberries, purple things - plums, orange things - oranges, tangerines and yams, green things - peas, spinach and broccoli, etc.

Lean Protein

- 1. **Fish** Salmon (especially Alaskan Salmon caught in the wild farmed fish is not as rich in omega-3-fatty acids, tuna, mackerel, herring (also listed under fats)
- 2. **Poultry** chicken skinless, and turkey skinless
- 3. **Meat** lean beef and pork
- 4. **Eggs** enriched DHA eggs are best
- 5. **Tofu and Soy products** whenever possible choose organically raised
- 6. **Dairy products** low fat cheeses and cottage cheese, low fat sugar free yogurt and low fat or skim milk
- 7. **Beans**, especially garbanzo beans and lentils also listed under carbohydrates

8. **Nuts and seeds, especially walnuts** - also listed under fats **Great recipe** - soak walnuts in water and sea salt overnight, drain and sprinkle with cinnamon - natural blood sugar balancer - and low roast 4 hours at 250 degrees -- makes them easier to digest.

Complex Carbohydrates

- 1. **Berries** especially blueberries brain berries, raspberries, strawberries, blackberries
- 2. Oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit
- 3. Cherries
- 4. Peaches, plums
- 5. Broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts
- 6. **Oats, whole wheat, wheat germ** oatmeal needs to be the long cooking kind as instant has a higher glycemic index since the manufacturer has broken down the fiber to speed cooking time and basically make it a refined carbohydrate. Same goes for bread, look for at least 3 grams of fiber. Remember unbleached wheat flour is white flour, it must say whole wheat.
- 7. **Red or yellow peppers** (much higher in Vitamin C than green peppers)
- 8. Pumpkin squash
- 9. **Spinach** works wonderfully as a salad, or a cooked vegetable, adds fiber and nutrients
- 10. **Tomatoes**
- 11. **Yams**
- 12. **Beans** also listed under proteins

Fats

- 1. Avocados
- 2. Extra virgin cold pressed olive oil
- 3. Olives
- 4. **Salmon** also listed under protein
- 5. **Nuts and Nut Butter**, especially walnuts, macadamia nuts, Brazil nuts, pecans and almonds also listed under protein

Liquids

- 1. Water
- 2. Green or black tea

Chapter Eleven: Questions

Here are a few questions I have struggled with:

Who is God?

5. Genesis 1:26 (AMP³) God said, Let Us [Father, Son, and Holy Spirit] make mankind in our image, after Our likeness, and let them have complete authority over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the [tame] beasts, and over all of the earth, and over everything that creeps upon the earth. How does God the Father differ from the Son and Holy Spirit?
Who is Jesus?
1. John 3:16 (AMP³) For God so greatly loved and dearly prized the world that He [even] gave up His only begotten (unique) Son, so that whoever believes in (trusts in, clings to, relies on) Him shall not perish (come to destruction, be lost) but have eternal (everlasting) life. What did it mean that Jesus was begotten?
2. Mark 10: 43-45 (NIV ¹) Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. How is Jesus an example to us?
3. Mark 13:25-27 (AMP³) And the stars will be falling from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great (kingly) power and glory (majesty and splendor). And then He will send out the angels and will gather together His elect (those He has picked out for Himself) from the four winds, from the farthest bounds of the earth to the farthest bounds of heaven. What is the next thing the Jesus is going to do?

Who is the Holy Spirit?

. Isaiah 63: 11-12 (NIV1) Then his people recalled the days of old, the
lays of Moses and his people—where is he who brought them through the
ea, with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he who set his Holy Spirit
mong them, who sent his glorious arm of power to be at Moses' right
nand? How did the Holy Spirit interact with man in the Old
Testament?
Testament?
Testament?

2. Acts 1:8 (NIV¹) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Why did the apostles have to wait to receive the Holy Spirit at Pentecost?
3. Matthew 3:11-12 (MSG²) "I'm baptizing you here in the river, turning your old life in for a kingdom life. The real action comes next: The main character in this drama—compared to him I'm a mere stagehand—will ignite the kingdom life within you, a fire within you, the Holy Spirit within you, changing you from the inside out. He's going to clean house—make a clean sweep of your lives. He'll place everything true in its proper place before God; everything false he'll put out with the trash to be burned." Why doesn't the Holy Spirit have a name?
4. John 14:26 (AMP³) But the Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengthener, Standby), the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name [in My place, to represent Me and act on My behalf], He will teach you all things. And He will cause you to recall (will remind you of, bring to your remembrance) everything I have told you. What are the roles of the Holy Spirit?
5. Luke 11:13 (AMP³) If you then, evil as you are, know how to give good gifts [gifts that are to their advantage] to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask and continue to ask Him! How does a Christian receive the Holy Spirit?

Who is Man?

receive g	tions 4:11(Kings James Version) Thou art worthy, O Lord, to lory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, by pleasure they are and were created. Why was man
the garde trees of t	s 3:8 (MSG ²) When they heard the sound of God strolling in en in the evening breeze, the Man and his Wife hid in the he garden, hid from God. What was missing that man had eginning?
ground an	s 2:7 (NIV ¹) Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the odd breathed into his nostrils the breath or spirit of life, and man living being. What is the difference between man and?
(spirituall person w second do of God ar	tion 20:6 (AMP ³) Blessed (happy, to be envied) and holy ly whole, of unimpaired innocence and proved virtue) is the ho takes part (shares) in the first resurrection! Over them the eath exerts no power or authority, but they shall be ministered of Christ (the Messiah), and they shall rule along with Himad years. What is the Christian's future?
female to mother, a longer tw this organ	6-9 (MSG ²) In the original creation, God made male and be together. Because of this, a man leaves father and and in marriage he becomes one flesh with a woman—no to individuals, but forming a new unity. Because God created nic union of the two sexes, no one should desecrate his art by nem apart." Why is there male and female?

How Are We Reborn?

These are the steps to becoming a born again Christian. Look up the verses to find the answers.

1. Heard Why did Jesus have to die? Romans 6:23, Hebrews 9:27, Hebrews 2:9, Hebrews 10:10
2. Believe
What do we have to believe? I John 5:1, John 3:16, James 2:19
3. Repent
How many times do we have to ask forgiveness? Matthew 3:1-2, Matthew 4:17, Mark 6:12, Acts 2:38, Matthew 6:15
4. Receive
What is involved in receiving? John 1:12, Revelation 22:17
5. Baptism
Is Baptism a requirement? Romans 6:3-4, I Corinthians 12:13-14

6. Born Again
How is the final step accomplished? II Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15, John 3:3-7, I John 3:9
7. Can we lose our salvation? I Peter 1:1-5, I Corinthians 12:3
8. Will Christians be judged? Matthew 7:1-2
9. Why did Jesus describe some living people as dead? Matthew 8:22, Matthew 22:32, Matthew 23:27, Mark 12:27, Luke 9:60, Luke 20:38, John 11:25, Romans 5:15, Romans 6:13, Romans 8:10, Colossians 2:13, I Peter 4:6

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Chapter Twelve: Glory and Miracles



The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is inside every one of us who are born again. When my life was desperate and trauma had overtaken me, it was at those moments that God drew close to me. I had a choice when evil times came; a choice to run away, or to run to God. I am so thankful that I ran to God. I am going into my senior years and as I look back on my life, I thought I would have regrets. God brought this study to my mind and as I walked through the information I gathered, it slowly dawned on me that God's strong hand was always on me. I don't regret the failures I've had, because they have taught me wisdom. I don't regret the losses I've endured, because they showed me the eternal riches I have solidly embedded within me. I would like to now share with you some of the Glory and Miracles that have blessed my life.

Healing

I was in college and lived in the dorms at Chico State in California. My roommate left on weekends. I had come down with pneumonia and on a Friday evening, alone and lying on my bed, my breathing became labored and I was drifting into unconsciousness. It was then I heard a loud voice inside my thoughts. It seemed a very natural occurrence, it wasn't something weird.

It said, "Be still."

At that moment I felt a warm blanket cover me. I thought I was dying. Instead, I slipped out from my shoulders and up on the wall above my headboard. I stood there with my feet touching just above my head. I could see myself lying there below me. The feelings I had are hard to describe. I felt great joy, peace and comfort beyond reasoning. I sensed that I had the same shape as when inside my body, but my body was not visible to me. Things were so clear that I felt like I had waked from a dream. I glanced above me and saw a billion stars in a wide and brilliant canopy, so clear and vibrant. At the same time I could see the ceiling of my dorm room, just as clearly. I glanced down to my right, and could see over the top of my desk and bookshelves, to my door which was slightly ajar; I knew my roommate had forgotten her room key and might return at any time. I had the knowledge that everything in the universe was ok. It was and is perfectly just as planned. Nothing is out of order. I also had the knowledge that time didn't really exist. How can I describe that? I just knew that time was a biological mechanism that didn't exist in eternity. I am reminded now of that verse that says that with God a thousand years is as a day and a day as a thousand years. Is this how God knows the end from the beginning? Is this how He is in complete

control? I am always asking questions. I have no idea how long I was out of my body, but eventually I slid down and when I opened my eyes, my lungs were completely cleared. My sinuses were clear and my throat was healed. I felt new and exhilarated. I did not ask to be healed; I had been ready to die.

When I was in college, I led a double life. Because of my abuse as a child, I was out of control. I felt I needed a good Christian husband to keep me in line. In the summer of my junior year, I married a man I had only known one week. I was sure this was the one because he believed every thing I did. He could quote the Bible forwards and backwards. He worked at a Christian conference center and was applauded by Christians there as an upstanding individual. I had very low self esteem then which made me ripe for a con man to take advantage. It was only three weeks until I discovered that I had married a con man. I stayed married because I did not believe in divorce. During that marriage I had five more near death experiences where God healed me. None were out of body, but just as dramatic. One of those healings happened this way: my husband Jimmy (not his real name) was selling Blue Ribbon Meats. We were in Minneapolis, Minnesota in the dead of winter. It was 25° below zero. He never let me out of his sight, and so I was laying on the front seat of our old car, while he was in a residence for a four hour sales pitch. I was six months pregnant and had Jason, my six month old son, wrapped in six blankets on the floorboard of the car for warmth. I began to miscarry. I was bleeding profusely, and was feeling light headed. I was ready to die, but I was worried about my son, Jason. I prayed that God would take care of him. Then I heard that same loud voice.

It said, "Be still."

I felt two hands come in from my sides and pull everything back into place. The bleeding immediately stopped. I was completely healed.

Knowledge

I was abused as a child, followed by a double life, followed by a twentytwo year abusive marriage. God delivered me at the age of forty-one from that marriage. I have now been married to a wonderful Christian man for seventeen years. There were many times during my life that God gave me knowledge about circumstances that saved my life. Times I held back, or went forward and missed a deathly blow. He also gave me information on how to do things when I was stuck for answers. When I was in my fifties, I was the set designer for productions at my church. (This was during A.D.-after divorce) I was to design a back drop thirty foot high of a night sky with stars, with room behind it for a cross holding a live person, and design that drop so it could be quickly let down to show the cross, then quickly go back up. I had no idea how to do it, so I prayed for wisdom. God then sent me a complete vision with step by step directions on how to construct, assemble and work the drop. It was a great success and God only knows how many souls were inspired by that production. I am not boasting that God gave me a vision, rather I am reminded of those Bible verses that say "ask and you shall receive", and "whosoever asks in my name, I will answer." This blessing of knowledge is for anyone and everyone; whoever will ask, even if our belief and faith are low, the more we do it, the more we are assured of God's response. But, we are only people, just like the Israelites were only people. After the miracles they witnessed, they still lost their faith in the wilderness. We all do from time to time.

Glory

The most important thing I would like to share with you is my experiences with God's Glory. The infilling of the Holy Spirit is God's Glory coming inside every born again believer.

When I was seven, I found a Bible. My family members were not Christians and did not go to church. I asked my Dad what this fascinating black leather-bound book was. He told me it was a book about God and there were places where people studied it. I was thrilled and wanted to go study it. He checked with our neighbors and arranged for me to go to church with them. I will never forget my first encounter with the Holy Spirit. After every service the small congregation held hands and sang Blessed Be the Tie That Binds. I remember standing, holding hands with strangers on either side of me with my head not reaching higher then the pew in front of me, while I had the most wonderful warm sensation of thrilling power course through my body. I didn't know what it was at that time. It made me cry uncontrollably with joy. I remember people beside me looking down at me and smiling.

During my trial of an abusive marriage, there was one night I remember clearly. Jimmy was out with one of his girlfriends, and I was in bed, seven months pregnant again and our five month old puppy had just left his calling card on the floor. I was too sick to get up.

I cried out to God. "I cannot handle this."

And no sooner had the words left my lips than I was lifted up into the bluest of skies and I was flying! The sun was warm on me and there was nothing but blue sky and the warmth of love all around me. I was there for a long time. When I came down, I was healed and filled with comfort

and happiness, regardless of my circumstances. I am reminded of that verse that says "we will fly like eagles."

Whenever I am low and discouraged, I remember these experiences and relive the joy they brought me. How His Glory renews my mind, body and life.

Prophecy

I don't claim to be a prophet. But, I believe God places in each of His children a certain knowing. Many of us believe we are living in the last days; the days just before our savior Jesus returns. There is controversy about how and when He will exactly return, but there is no controversy that He is coming. He is returning to earth to rule for a thousand years, then for eternity. He is coming back for His children. After this life, whether in rapture, translation or resurrection, born again believers will receive a new physical body. It will be like Jesus' body after he rose from the dead. Right now born again believers have an incorruptible Godly nature residing in a corruptible human nature body. We have the choice now to grow our Godly nature, or grow our human nature. But, after this life, the human nature will be gone. Then, how mature will our Godly nature be? That is our choice. I run hard after maturity, but God reminds me, "precept upon precept." I ask "how long God?" He says, "There is no such thing as how long, because eternity is dwelling inside you. Time does not exist. There is only now."

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- ⁴ Dr. Itzhak Fried, M.D., Ph.D.—Professor and Director of the Epilepsy Surgical Program at U.C.L.A. in southern California. Dr. Fried's research and clinical work is dedicated to the treatment of intractable seizure disorders and epilepsy. Fried was born and raised in Israel. Using brain scans of conscious subjects, he was able to locate the area of the brain that is active when a subject has an experience. When the experience was recalled by the subject, the exact same location was active with the same accompanying symptoms, thus the subject actually relived the experience.
- ⁵ Dr. Marian Diamond—Wrote the book Magic Trees of the Mind with co-author Janet Hopson. Dr. Diamond's research includes neuroanatomy, environment, immune functions, and hormones. In particular, she is interested in studying the effects of the external environment, aging, and immune responses on the cerebral neocortex. She is on staff at the University of California at Berkley.
- ⁶ Dr. Caroline Leaf—Researched the human brain with particular emphasis on unlocking its vast untapped potential. She is a brain and learning specialist from South Africa. Dr. Leaf has worked extensively with children and adults alike for 20 years, dealing mainly with learning techniques to aid the education system in South Africa. She has a PhD in communication Pathology with a specialization in neuro-matacognative learning. She is effective in helping the visualization of an actual neural structure.
- ⁷ Dr. Candace Pert—Like light (which quantum physics reveals has a dual energetic and particulate nature), Candace has explained in popular lectures throughout the world how emotions exist both as energy and matter, in the vibrating receptors on every cell in the body. Molecules of emotion course through the body with each thought.
- ⁸ Daniel G. Amen, M.D., is a clinical neuroscientist, psychiatrist, and brain-imaging expert who heads up the world-renowned Amen Clinics. He is a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association and has won numerous writing and research awards. He writes a monthly column in Men's Health called "Head Check" and has published nineteen books, numerous professional and popular articles, and a number of audio and video programs. His books include "Making a Good Brain Great", "Preventing Alzheimer's", "Healing Anxiety and Depression", "Healing the Hardware of the Soul", "Healing ADD" and "Change Your Brain, Change Your Life."

Glory and Miracles – A Christian Testimony

- Practical Understanding and Application to Live a Happy Life
- Answers to Difficult Questions
- Healing Bad Memories
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- Knowing the Enemy
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