

When God Writes Your Story: Key Insights to a life well-lived

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Chapter 1

When God asks for your Isaac

The story of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac highlights the importance of trusting God, even in the face of difficulties and uncertainty. God's call for Abraham to leave everything behind and embark on an unknown journey was a test of faith, as was the request to sacrifice Isaac. However, Abraham's willingness to obey God's call demonstrates the trust we should have in God. We can find blessings that we could never have imagined by surrendering our most valuable possessions to God. As we go through life, we should trust in God's plan and believe He will never lead us astray.

Chapter 2

When God elevates you like Joseph

The chapter delves into Joseph's story in the book of Genesis, highlighting how God blessed him in his work for Potiphar. The author stresses the communal aspect of God's blessings and how we are created to be a blessing to others. In this chapter it is discovered that our unique gifts or "light" can be challenging. It emphasizes using our talents to serve God and others and how we need to work together, regardless of the gift we have received, for the whole body of Christ to function correctly. The author also notes the importance of understanding the breadth of gifts given by the Spirit and that God has arranged all body parts according to His design.

Chapter 3

When God Blesses You with an Amazing Partner like Priscilla and Aquila

This chapter is about the partnership and ministry of Priscilla and Aquila, highlighting their willingness to support each other and their vocational interests. The author notes that their work in tent-making allowed them to connect with the Apostle Paul, who became their spiritual mentor. Through their example, the author encourages readers to be open to mentorship opportunities and to seek solutions to the challenges in their lives actively. The chapter emphasizes the importance of partnership in ministry and the value of using our God-given gifts and talents to serve others.

Chapter 4

When God Births your Manasseh and Ephraim

Chapter Four of this book discusses the story of Joseph from the Bible, specifically his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. In this chapter we found the cultural and societal nuances of naming a child and how names were given to honor God's intervention in the person's life. The birth of Manasseh represents forgetting what is behind, and the birth of Ephraim represents bearing fruit in the land of affliction. The chapter emphasizes that God specializes in making all things new and that each of us has a unique story that God has weaved for our good.

Chapter 5

When God Prospers You in Unexpected Places Like Jeremiah

In Chapter Five, the author delves into the context of Jeremiah 29:11 and its relevance to the exiled people of Judah in Babylon. The chapter is about the constant wavering of the people in their worship and the false prophets who misled them with false hope of deliverance. Despite Jeremiah's warnings, the people did not repent, and many died on the journey toward exile. The author stresses the importance of seeking God wholeheartedly, as God promised to restore their fortunes and bring them back to their land. The chapter serves as a reminder of the consequences of disobedience and the hope that comes with seeking God's guidance.

Chapter 6

When God Calls You When You Don't Feel Ready

Chapter six of this book discusses how God calls people even when they feel unprepared or unqualified. Moses was the one, who doubted his ability to do so despite being called by God to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. The God had been preparing Moses for this assignment since before he was born. The chapter highlights the importance of trusting in God's plan and not being too concerned about our adequacy or qualifications. The author ends the chapter by emphasizing that God demonstrates his power to us with the hope that we will trust in him and obey his calling.

Chapter 7

When God Uses You Like Barnabas

This chapter is about the importance of relationships and brotherly love in the Christian faith. The author emphasizes that relationships matter to God and that love for one another is just as important as love for God. The danger of busyness is highlighted, as it can cause individuals to miss out on divine interruptions, opportunities created by God to use individuals for His

transformation of the earth. The author also discusses the significance of agape love, genuine friendships, and the impact of words on building up or tearing down friendships. The chapter highlights examples of deep friendships in the Bible and mainly focuses on the friendship between Barnabas and Saul (later known as Paul) in the book of Acts.

Chapter 8

When God Disappoints You Like Mary and Martha

This chapter is about the disappointment that can come when God doesn't do things as we expect or want Him to. He points out that God's ways are not our ways and that God has an eternal perspective that we often lack. The author uses the story of Mary and Martha to illustrate this point and the passage from Isaiah 55 that reminds us of the vast difference between God's thoughts and our thoughts. The author acknowledges that disappointment with God is inevitable in a broken world but encourages readers to trust God even when things don't go as planned. He shares a personal story about when he felt disappointed with God but ultimately learned to trust God's plan.

Chapter 9

When God Gives You a Thorn in the Flesh Like Paul

This chapter discusses the purpose of the thorn in the flesh given to Apostle Paul. It prevented him from becoming arrogant due to the extraordinary revelations he had received from the Lord. The nature of the thorn is unknown, but it caused Paul immense pain. Nonetheless, Paul saw the thorn as a way to maintain his humility and keep people from thinking more of him than what they saw or heard. The thorn became the source of Paul's humility throughout his ministry.

Chapter 10

When God Calls You to Lead People Who Would Rather Be in Egypt

This chapter discusses the challenges of leadership and effectively managing people to reach the intended goal. The author notes that leadership is lonely and comes with greater responsibility and scrutiny. The chapter examines the journey of Moses as a leader of the Israelites and highlights the importance of understanding people's nature and challenges as a leader. Despite their obedience, Pharaoh retaliated against the people, making things worse for them. Eventually, after ten plagues, Pharaoh relented, and the Israelites were freed from Egypt. However, the journey to the promised land was not over, and God chose a unique route for them.

Chapter 11

When There Are Giants in the Land of Promise

This chapter discusses Israel's journey to the promised land and how God promised to give them a land flowing with milk and honey. The journey was supposed to last 40 days but took 40 years. Moses sent a delegation of 12 men, one from each tribe, to spy on the land of Canaan. The spies observed that the land was flowing with milk and honey, but the people who lived there were strong, and the cities were fortified. However, only Caleb had a positive attitude and suggested that they could overcome the land's inhabitants. The rest of the spies had a negative attitude and brought back an evil report, causing the people to lose faith in God's promise.

Chapter 12

When God Heals You Like Naaman

The chapter delves into the story of Naaman, a brave yet leprous man healed by the prophet in Samaria after washing himself in the Jordan river seven times. This narrative serves as a case study for Christianity's concept of divine healing. The author acknowledges that while divine healing is a fundamental truth, not everyone receives healing when they ask for it, citing the complexity of God's promises and the unfinished state of our souls in a broken world. The chapter concludes by encouraging readers to approach healing with faith and humility, recognizing that God's ways are higher than our own.

Chapter 13

When God Calls You to Generosity Like Elisha and Gehazi

This chapter discusses the importance of generosity in our lives, as seen in the story of Elisha and Gehazi. While Elisha refused to accept payment from Naaman for his healing, Gehazi saw an opportunity to gain wealth and lied to Naaman, accepting his silver and clothing. However, God revealed Gehazi's sin to Elisha, and he rebuked him for his greed. The chapter emphasizes that how we handle worldly wealth is a measure of how we handle kingdom riches, and a scarcity mindset can lead us to neglect generosity.

Chapter 14

When God Sees You Like Hagar

Chapter 14 discusses the story of Hagar in Genesis 16. Hagar, an Egyptian servant of Sarai and Abram, was given to Abram as a wife and later conceived a child, causing conflict between Sarai and Hagar. After being harshly treated by Sarai, Hagar fled into the wilderness, where an angel of the Lord found her and told her to return to Sarai. The angel also told her that her offspring would be multiplied and named her son Ishmael. Hagar called God "El Roi," meaning "the God who sees me," indicating that she felt seen and cared for by God despite her circumstances.

Chapter 15

When God Gives You a Godly Burden Like He Provided for Nehemiah

In chapter 15, the author discusses the concept of godly burden and ambition through the story of Nehemiah in the Bible. Nehemiah felt a calling to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and used his time, talent, and resources to accomplish this task. Godly ambition centers on bringing glory to God, while worldly ambition prioritizes self-glory. A leader dares to challenge what needs to change and pay the price for it.

Chapter 16

When God Loves You Despite Your Story (Woman at the Well)

Here we explore the story of the Woman at the Well, where Jesus offered her living water that would quench her thirst forever. Despite her troubled past and shame, Jesus showed her unconditional love and understanding of her identity. The chapter highlights the significance of recognizing our identity through the eyes of God rather than through societal pressures that cause guilt and shame. It emphasizes the importance of God's love and how it is not dependent on our past or present situations.

Chapter 17

When God Uses You to Bring Justice to Corrupt Systems

This chapter has two parts: the first is a story from the Gospel of Luke, where Jesus tells Simon to cast his net on the other side, leading to a great catch. The second part is a personal reflection by the author on their faith journey and the importance of returning to the simplicity of the gospel. The author emphasizes the importance of positive change that brings institutions closer to their original intent and prioritizes loving God and others. They also share an encounter between Jesus and his disciples, where they caught nothing until Jesus directed them to cast their nets on the other side, resulting in an abundance of fish.

Chapter 18

When God Opens Your Eyes Like Elisha's Servant

It is a story from the Old Testament about Elisha and his servant, who was surrounded by the Syrian army. Elisha prayed for his servant's eyes to be opened, and the servant saw that they were surrounded by horses and chariots of fire sent by God. When the Syrian army attacked, Elisha prayed for them to be struck with blindness and led them to Samaria. The text discusses fear as a tactic of the enemy and the need to rely on God's strength in challenging situations.

Chapter 19

When God Tells You to Cast Your Net to the Other Side

We encounter two parts in chapter 19. The first part is a Bible story from the Gospel of Luke where Jesus tells Simon to cast his net on the other side, resulting in an abundant catch. The second part is a personal reflection on the author's journey of deconstructing their faith and returning to the simplicity of the gospel. The author discusses the importance of positive change that brings institutions closer to their original intent and prioritizing loving God and loving people. The author also shares an encounter between Jesus and his disciples where they caught nothing while fishing until Jesus told them to cast their net on the other side, resulting in an abundance of fish.

Chapter 20

When God Shows Up in Your Circumstances

In this chapter, we have found the importance of celebrating God's blessings in our lives, citing the story of the ten lepers healed by Jesus in Luke 17:11-19. While all were healed, only one returned to give thanks. The author emphasizes the need to develop a regular habit of gratitude, even in difficult times, to help us maintain a balanced perspective. Paul's exhortation to the Thessalonians to give thanks in all circumstances is mentioned as a reminder to practice gratitude in both good and bad times.