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of a
generation

evangeline weiner

the
calling
of a generation

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dedication

This book is dedicated to all those men and women of faith who have gone before us—those who have sacrificed their lives for the Gospel and laid the foundations for what we have and understand today.

I also dedicate this book to my parents, Bob and Rose Weiner, who never let me live an ordinary life, and included my siblings, Stephanie, John, and Catherine, and me in all their adventures in the ministry. You both always wanted us right up front doing it with you. Without you both, I wouldn't be who I am today. Dad, you taught me what faith really is and you are my biggest cheerleader. Mom, you always have wisdom for me and never let me set a standard for myself that is less than giving God my everything. Thank you both for your help with some of the chapters of this book. You both are my heroes, and I love you!

To my grandparents, Dr. Henry and Grace Russell, who have spent over the last fifty years as ministers in the Methodist Church—you both have shown me the greatest example of the true love of Jesus and having fun in life! Also to the late Robert Weiner, who was raised in a Jewish home and came to know Jesus as his Messiah shortly after my dad was born, who always wanted to be about his heavenly Father's business—thank you for all your daily prayers for me and all the family to find God's will and blessing for our lives. And to Geri Weiner, my grandmother—you are my little evangelist and I love you!

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why this generation is so important to god

Over the past few years, I have had a real burden to see this generation of Christian young people rise up in faith and fulfill their calling. I have seen young people with a genuine calling from God who want to change the world.

Yet, I have watched them after they have graduated from their various universities, schools, or internships, and regardless of where they live, they are not sure what to do next. They flounder for a while, and then just get caught up in the status quo of making a living. They give up their dreams and settle for a routine existence of going to church and trying to be a good, successful person—the kingdom of God suffers from this loss.

This book was written out of a burden to see young people—no matter what their field of endeavor—released into the Harvest to fulfill the mandate of Jesus to change the world, make disciples of all nations, and see Christ’s great kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.

To do this Christians must get beyond the narrow box of separating the secular and the spiritual and take over the mountains of influence that form nations—Church and Family/ Government and Law/ Media, Arts and Entertainment/ Education/ Finances, Marketplace and Business/ Architecture and Engineering/ Science, Medicine, Invention and Discovery.

God wants His children to be co-laborers with Him. Without God, we can do nothing, and without people, God will do nothing. A story is told about a farmer that illustrates this point. A man bought a farm that was run down. The soil was full of weeds and the ground was full of chuckholes. The man labored for a long

time. He pulled the weeds, filled the holes, fertilized the soil, planted seed, irrigated the land and finally, the farm began to produce a good crop. A friend stopped by, and astonished at the transformation exclaimed, “Wow! It is amazing what God has done with this farm.” The farmer responded, “Well, you should have seen it when God had it all to Himself.”

The first command that God gave Adam and Eve in the garden was to cultivate the earth and to take dominion of it. When Jesus brought redemption to the human race and became “the First-born of many brethren” and as the Second Adam and the Father of the New Creation, He reemphasized the dominion mandate, commissioning His followers to make disciples of all nations. Jesus didn’t send angels to preach the Gospel, He sent people.

THE GENERATION OF JESUS—THE PROMISED SEED

The future will be what we will make it, and what it will be depends on our response to His call. We cannot underestimate the call of God on this generation. The devil has done his best to destroy us through abortion, drugs, sexually transmitted diseases, violence, divorce and rejection by parents.

There have been two other significant times in history when Satan has inspired the murder of innocent babes. When Moses was born, the devil tried to destroy “the deliverer” by exciting Pharaoh to kill all the male infants of a tribe. When Jesus was born, the devil excited Herod to murder all the infants of a city from two-years-old and under in his attempt to kill the King of Israel.

Since 1973 in the United States, the devil has been destroying the unborn through abortion in the greatest genocide in history. Following our example, other nations have adopted this practice. In the United States alone, the tens of millions of infants who have been murdered is a number equivalent to a people group larger than the size of the entire nation of Canada.¹

In Moses' day in order to get one man, the devil inspired the slaughter of the infants of a tribe. In Jesus' day, Satan inspired the murder of all the infants in a city to kill the promised Savior. Is he after the promised seed again? Think of the magnitude of the seed Satan has been trying to destroy. Could it be there is not just one person the enemy is after, but instead a whole nation of deliverers that Jesus wants to release for world harvest to bring His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven? I believe that there is!

The good news is Satan didn't get Moses, he didn't get Jesus, and he hasn't gotten the promised seed of this generation who are destined to bring in the greatest harvest of souls for the kingdom of God that the world has ever seen.

Are you one of the promised seed God has called to turn the world upside down for the cause of Christ? The very fact that you are reading this book tells me that you are. Although this book is written especially for the younger members of the body of Christ, there are many Joshuas and Calebs who have been waiting and praying to see this day. I want to encourage you as well. God will use all those who will embrace the promises of God and refuse to give themselves over to disobedience and unbelief. The sons of God are all those, regardless of age or gender, who are giving themselves to be led by His Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14).

Are you ready to embark on a journey to follow the Lord in full surrender of self? Are you ready to stop seeking what is acceptable or normal for society, to give up seeking the praises of men, and regardless of the cost, look to God and believe Him to use you to alter the course of your nation and world history forever? If you aren't now, I believe when you finish reading this book you will be!

DREAMING GOD'S DREAMS

The main purpose of this book is to build faith, and to teach and encourage believers to enter the joy of the Lord by experi-

encing life in Christ through complete abandon to Him. This book features testimonies of young people who have done just that. Through their friendship and fellowship with the Lord, these young people have been filled with dreams from God, and they have already done something with them.

Between their stories, I have included teachings on the importance and great blessing of self-surrender to the Lordship of Jesus, practical ways to develop your faith and your relationship with the Lord, as well as a vision for Christ's dominion in the nations. My prayer is that you are encouraged to live your life from the dreams and desires born in your heart through your fellowship with the Father.

When Jesus came, God changed human history forever—a new world began for the human race. Isaiah prophesied about Jesus' mission, "I will give You as a covenant to the people, as a light to the Gentiles, to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house...New things I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them" (Isa. 42:6,7-9).

The prophetic promise given to Jesus and all those who follow Him in sonship is recorded by David, "Only ask, and I will give the nations as your inheritance, the whole earth as your possession" (Psalm 2:7). When Jesus rose from the dead, I believe He knelt down and in His redeeming blood, wrote, "Mine! I claim every nation!" He sent the Holy Spirit and commissioned His people to go and work in the power of His Spirit to "make disciples of all nations" and promised that He would be there working with them "always, to the end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20). If you are a believer you have been given the call to do your part to fulfill this Great Commission through the power of the Risen Christ—regardless of the field of endeavor or mountain of influence that God has called you to affect.

A VESSEL FOR THE CREATIVE POWER OF GOD

God is creating constantly. He is creating new things for His people to do right now to cause “His blessing to flow as far as the curse is found.”²² Isaiah writes of God’s creative power, and about the new things God will do saying, “Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it?... I have made you hear new things from this time, even hidden things, and you did not know them. They are created *now* and not from the beginning” (Isa. 43:19, 48: 6b-7). God wants His children to bring forth these “new things” in the earth through the power of His Holy Spirit.

My prayer is that you are encouraged to rise up in faith and in the power of the Holy Spirit to see your dreams become reality. The Scriptures exhort us to “imitate those who through faith and patience have inherited the promises” (Heb. 6:12). The true stories in this book furnish just such examples in faith. They are inspiring, instructive, and adventurous and are written by young people who have stepped out in faith in total abandon to God and His purposes and have seen Him do the impossible.

A few years ago, when I felt the Holy Spirit tug on my heart and ask me to write this book, I thought about it for a second and then I began to offer my objections. I wondered what in the world I would write about the subject that people didn’t already know since I was only 19-years-old at that time. I told the Lord about all my inadequacies. “What would I put on the back of the book about what I do that would make people think I had anything to say?” Finally I told the Lord, “After thinking this over, I don’t really want to do it.”

Immediately the Lord spoke to my heart and said, “Okay, Evangeline, I will ask someone else to do it.” My heart felt like a lighting bolt hit it. I didn’t want to miss out on what the Lord wanted me to do. Without any other hesitation I said, “Okay, Lord, I change my mind. I will do it—I want to do it.” Within minutes the

Lord gave me the entire plan for this book. I knew that this wasn't just a good idea—this was a God idea!

LIVING IN THE REALM OF THE IMPOSSIBLE

One important thought—when God calls you to do something, it will probably be impossible. That is, impossible to do in your own ability. If you are sure you have the ability to get it done, you can act and take the credit. You can pat yourself on the back for a job well done. It takes no faith. You can tell everyone what you have done for the Lord. But when you know you can't do it, and you step out in faith and trust in God to work through you, you will tap into His supernatural power and ability. You will give Him all the glory.

In your own strength, you can spend your life working hard gathering wealth, creating new inventions, or developing new business strategies. You can try very hard to achieve something great. You can have an impressive strategy mapped out and follow it faithfully.

You may be successful, but you could end up becoming like the rich man Jesus told about who was very prosperous and was rejoicing because he had stored up food and possessions to last him for many years so that he could retire and live it up. But God said to him, “You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?” God called him a fool. Jesus pointed out his sin—he had laid up “treasure for himself and was not rich toward God” (Luke 12:21).

On the other hand you can say, “God, I am nothing, I don't know how to do very much, but here are all my gifts and talents, and more than that, here is my entire life—do with it whatever you want.” Within an hour, or even in minutes, God can give you a plan that could change the course of history, a plan that you would have never thought of on your own. He is the God of the impossible!

And you can be sure that the thing God will call you to do will eventually be beyond what you are capable of doing in your own strength and effort, and will be impossible to do without God's power and anointing. Faith will be required to accomplish it.

Testimony to the truth that the impossible is accomplished by faith and trust in God is found throughout the pages of scripture. Hebrews reminds us that it was *by faith* that those who looked to God for power and victory “subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the enemy” (Heb.11:33-34).

CHANGING HISTORY

As you read the chapters and the stories of young people like you who said “yes” to what the Lord was calling them to do, I pray that faith floods your heart and causes you to become a man or woman of strength and courage, ready to fight and win our generation and change the world for Jesus Christ! No matter what your age, you can make your life count for the kingdom of God.

When all the other Israelites were hiding in caves from the Midianites, Gideon, though small in his own eyes, was threshing his wheat in the wine press and guarding it so the Midianites could not steal it. Seeing his brave spirit, the Angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, “The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor...Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?” (Judges 6:12,14).

Even after this angelic visitation, Gideon did not believe that he could do it. However, after being convinced of God's direction, Gideon went forward in obedience to God's instructions, trusting not in himself, but in God—and he conquered Israel's enemies and brought great deliverance!

If you read this book with expectation and an eager heart to surrender yourself to be everything that God has called you to be—if you are willing to obey the Holy Spirit no matter what the cost—then you can live a life that changes history! As you answer God’s call, you will discover as Gideon did that the power is not in who you are, but in “who He is.”

As you follow Jesus’ call to go and make disciples of all nations, Jesus promised, “I will always be with you to the end of time.” As you obey the call of God to “go in this your might”—the might of the Holy Spirit—you will overcome the enemy and usher the kingdom of God into the hearts of men, women, children and ultimately nations. Step out in faith and answer God’s call. Take your place on the battlefield—your Captain waits to give you His orders!



A Note From the Author


Dear Reader,

Will you do me a favor? I would love to hear your comments. Please visit me at The Calling of a Generation on facebook and share your thoughts and ideas with me.

Follow me on twitter.com/EvangelineW.

Look forward to seeing you there!

Evangeline Weiner



chapter I

ESCAPING THE FATE OF A NOWHERE MAN

I have never even considered the direction.
For where am I to go? And by what shall I steer?
What is to be my quest?

—FRODO BAGGINS

J.R.R. TOLKIEN, *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*

We were born to be dreamers. In “trailing clouds of glory,”¹ God sends each of us to earth for a purpose—with a dream in our heart—our own personal blueprint from the Master Architect. Before the prison house of doubt and unbelief began to box us in, as children we beheld the light and glory in the place of dreaming. Nowhere is the capacity to dream more alive than in the heart of a child.

Go with me into any first grade class to the dreaming place and what do you hear? You hear their dreams. A little girl with rosy cheeks speaks up, “I’m going to be an astronaut and a lawyer!” “I’m going to be the President of the United States of America!” a bright-eyed boy shouts. A tiny girl with curly, blonde hair giggles, “When I grow up I’m going to a famous actress!” “I’m going to be a doctor,” a small boy with glasses says seriously. Zookeeper, fireman, lion trainer, policeman, basketball star, inventor—the list goes on and on. Children believe they can be anything they want to be.

Fast-forward a few years. Enter the sixth grade classroom. The same kids in the first grade class are there, but something has changed. The bright-eyed boy, taller and thinner now, has held on to his dream in all his childhood innocence. He yells, “I am going to be the President of the United States of America!” The whole classroom laughs and points fingers. Then even the teacher chuckles as he pats Johnny on the back and says, “Sure you will, son. Wouldn’t we all like to be someone great?”

For one of the first times in his life, Johnny gets very discouraged and begins to wonder what in the world he was thinking by dreaming he could be the President. He begins to talk himself out of his dream, as the kids continue pointing at him and mockingly call him a dreamer.

By the time Johnny enters high school, his dream of being the President—once so vivid—has vanished into a slight memory. He has listened to the lies of doubt and unbelief and finds many reasons to convince himself that he is not good enough, not skilled enough, not smart enough. “Guess what I used to think I could be?” Johnny laughs, as he remembers that he actually believed he could do something that mattered.

As Johnny passes into adult life, unbelief, fear, doubt, and worry are now the stones that clog his channel to the Divine. These attitudes, left unresolved, are certain to keep Johnny from discovering or fulfilling God’s dream and plans for his life and will instead paint a negative picture of the things he fears, which can easily become his reality.

GOD’S ETERNAL PURPOSE

Do you remember dreaming as a child? I do. I loved to sit and think of all the awesome things that God was going to use me to do when I grew up. I also dreamed about what God was going to

use me to do while I was still a child. I really believed it was all going to happen and I still do.

Maybe some of you once thought that you were going to be a millionaire, a politician, a news anchor, a researcher who would find the cure for cancer, a founder of orphanages, the next Mother Teresa, or maybe a missionary to Africa. Whatever the dream was, it was probably something big. When you were young there were no little dreams and nothing seemed impossible or too great to be accomplished. It is this childlike attitude that Jesus told us to imitate. He reminded His disciples, “I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will not enter it at all” (Luke 18:16-17 NAS). Maintaining this childlike spirit is so important Jesus tells us that without it we cannot enter the kingdom.

Not all dreams of childhood or adult life are from God, but it is important to keep the capacity to dream alive so we can dream the dreams inspired by the Holy Spirit. One sign that the dream is from God is that it will be impossible to do without Him. Here is my question for you—as the years have gone by and you have entered the “real world,” have you forgotten your dream that you could make a difference in this world? Has your life just become a life of check marks? Are you filling out life’s checklist of all the important things you think are required without considering your God-ordained purpose?

It is easy to become like the group of people Jesus calls “the Gentiles,” who He describes as spending their lives gathering and collecting, worrying about what they are going to eat, how they are going to become successful, where they will live, what they will wear, who they will marry, and about whatever else life throws their way. It is easy to get trapped into focusing on gathering and collecting for life’s needs and to forget Jesus’ admonition to “not worry about these things,” but to trust God and “seek the kingdom

of God first and His righteousness” with the promise that “everything you need will be given to you” (Matt. 6:31-33).

Life has got to be more than just going to a good university, establishing a good career, getting married, buying a house, a dog, a car, raising a family, retiring, and dying. These are all good things, but if you are not fulfilling a purpose greater than yourself, if God’s dream is not alive in your heart, then you have failed at life and are missing out on God’s great blessing.

We must realize that our lives are not meant to be insignificant, for the Apostle Paul reminds us that the whole world is “waiting to be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom. 8:21 NAS). If you entertain the thinking that you’re nothing special, or you’re not good enough, then God can’t change the world through you, or use you to fulfill His purposes.

You are actually contradicting the promises of God, and you are agreeing with the enemy in doubt and unbelief. Satan will rob you of becoming all that God has planned for you to become, and God will not receive the glory from your life that is due Him. One more future will fall short of the plan that God has ordained. This is spiritual abortion. Your life of aimlessness will have as much meaning to the world around you and to the kingdom of God as the man described in song by the Beatles: “He’s a real nowhere man, sitting in his nowhere land, doing lots of nowhere things, for nobody.”

BECOMING A DREAMER

In the early 20th century when most women did not attempt to do anything outside the home, Lady Astor—the first woman ever elected to the British Parliament who championed the rights of women and children—realized the importance of having a vision. “Dreams are great,” she remarked. “When they disappear you may still be here, but you will have ceased to live.”² Isaiah said it this way,

“Without a vision, a redemptive revelation from God, the people perish” (Proverbs. 29:18 AMP).

In the 19th century, T.E. Lawrence’s dreams enabled him to become a British archeological scholar, adventurer, and military strategist whose legend inspired the epic film, *Lawrence of Arabia*. His success lay in his belief not just about the dream, but the dreamer. Lawrence explained, “All people dream, but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their mind, wake in the morning to find that it was vanity. But the dreamers of the day are dangerous people, for they dream their dreams with open eyes, and make them come true.”³

Walt Disney said it this way, “All our dreams come true if we have the courage to pursue them.”⁴ The dreamers of the day are those who dream with faith.

What do the lives of these great people tell us? A person with a dream can accomplish something of value in this world. The great news is this—as you spend time in God’s Presence, the Holy Spirit will fill your heart with God’s dreams. God invites you to come into His heart of secrets, which is the fountain of all creativity, wisdom, invention, and purpose.

Pay attention to the dreams and desires that come into your heart while you are spending time in fellowship with Jesus. Don’t look at yourself, at your own abilities, and your inadequacies. God doesn’t ask you to work for Him in your own strength. He calls you to yield your life to Him in self-surrender, which simply means relax and follow Him—He’s got it. God reminds us, “It is not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit says the Lord” (Zech. 4:6). And again, “Faithful is He who calls you, Who also will do it” (1 Thes. 5:24 NAS).

God told Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you as a prophet to the nations” (Jer. 1:5). God formed not only Jeremiah;

He also formed you in your mother's womb and created you for a purpose. What else does the Lord say? " 'I know my plans that I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope' " (Jer. 29:11 NLT). Are you ready to be used by God to change your generation? He's ready to equip and release you!

ANSWERING THE CALL

One of the most important things to remember is that you are not a robot. God has not programmed you to complete your destiny automatically. Many people live and die and never fulfill God's purpose for their lives. He gives you a choice. He gives you a free will, and it is up to you to choose God's plan and obey and follow Him, or to do things your way. Jesus makes this very clear in this parable about the kingdom of God:

The kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a king who had prepared a great wedding feast for his son. Many guests were invited, and when the banquet was ready, he sent his servants to notify everyone that it was time to come. But they all refused! So he sent other servants to tell them, "The feast has been prepared, and choice meats have been cooked. Everything is ready. Hurry!" But the guests he had invited ignored them and went about their business, one to his farm, and another to his store.

Others seized his messengers and treated them shamefully, even killing some of them. Then the king became furious. He sent out his army to destroy the murderers and burn their city.

And he said to his servants, "The wedding feast is ready, and the guests I invited aren't worthy of the honor. Now go out to the street corners and invite everyone you see." So the servants

brought in everyone they could find, good and bad alike, and the banquet hall was filled with guests.

But when the king came in to meet the guests, he noticed a man who wasn't wearing the proper clothes for a wedding. "Friend," he asked, "how is it that you are here without wedding clothes?" And the man had no reply. Then the king said to his aides, "Bind him hand and foot and throw him out into the outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen" (Matthew 22:1-14 NLT).

From this parable, we learn that all are invited into the kingdom of God. Both the good and bad alike are accepted when they come in willing obedience. However, among those who are called, there are those who are not "found worthy of the honor." They refuse God's call because they are too busy with their own affairs. They have their own goals and plans and can't be bothered with God's call on their lives. Some people get so mad about being asked to accept God's invitation, and about being reminded that there is a King to whom they owe their allegiance, they will actually persecute, shame, and kill God's messengers.

The sure way to fulfill God's call is to obey Him. There is no such thing as a Christian who is in rebellion against God. To be a Christian is to give up your rebellion and surrender to His Lordship. Jesus taught, "If you refuse to take up your cross and follow Me, you are not worthy of being mine" (Matt. 10:38 NLT).

The parable of the wedding feast illustrates the self-centered will that runs like a gigantic fault line through the human race—and this self-centered existence keeps people from living the truly amazing life of the Spirit. All who want to follow Jesus must submit to the requirement that He laid down. Jesus told the multitudes, "If any one of you wants to be My follower, you must put aside your selfish ambition, shoulder your cross daily, and follow Me. If you

try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for Me, you will find true life” (Luke 9:23-24 NLT).

This is what it takes to gain entrance into His kingdom. But, what an awesome promise! Full surrender allows us to sit down at the table of fellowship and the feast of resurrection life that God has prepared for those who love Him! What an invitation!

THE RIGHTEOUS ACTS OF THE SAINTS

Jesus ends this parable with a word of warning about a person who answered the king’s call to come to the feast, but came without the wedding garment. Who does this man the king called “friend” represent? What wedding garment was this person missing that disqualified him from being chosen and caused him to be “cast into the place of outer darkness?” The Bible gives us the answer.

In Revelation, we catch a glimpse of the wedding clothes and another wedding banquet. This banquet is the marriage feast of “the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.” John explains, “It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; *for the fine linen is the righteous acts (good deeds) of the saints*” (Rev. 19:7-8 NAS, NLT).

After this, the scene changes, the heavens open, and One appears on a white horse crowned with many diadems who is the “King of Kings and the Lord of Lords” and the armies that *follow Him* are “dressed in the purest white linen”(Rev.19:14,16).

James tells us about the righteous acts and good deeds that will clothe us if we follow Him:

Dear brothers and sisters, what’s the use of saying you have faith, if you don’t prove it by your actions? That kind of faith can’t save anyone. Suppose you see a brother or a sister who needs food or clothing, and you say, “Well, good-bye and God bless you; stay warm and eat well”—but then you don’t give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? So you see, it isn’t enough

just to have faith. Faith that doesn't show itself by good deeds is not faith at all—it is dead and useless...

Don't you see that our ancestor Abraham was declared right with God because of what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see, he was trusting God so much that he was willing to do whatever God told him to do. His faith was made complete by what he did—by his actions.

And so it happened just as the scriptures say: "Abraham believed God, so God declared him to be righteous." He was even called "the friend of God" so you see, we are made right with God by what we do, not by faith alone.

Rahab the prostitute is another example of this. She was made right with God by her actions—when she hid those messengers and sent them safely away by a different road (James 2:14-25 NLT).

James concludes, "So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless" (v 26). Good deeds are the result of loving God, spending time in His Presence and trusting and obeying Him. We will naturally perform good deeds out of our love for God because He will put His directions and desires in our heart through the inspiration of His Holy Spirit.

Having all this in mind, Peter exhorts us, "So dear brothers and sisters, work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen. Doing this, you will never stumble or fall away. And God will open wide the gates of heaven for you to enter into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:10).

RETURNING TO THE FATHER'S HOUSE

If you want to live a fulfilled and happy life and receive an eternal reward, let God use your life for His glory. Believe what God has said, and love and obey Him. If you haven't been following Jesus, don't think that it is too late for you and that you have blown

it. Don't believe that you have messed up your calling forever, or that your sins have disqualified you. This is another lie of the enemy.

Here is a scripture for you, "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom.11:29). Paul explains, "We are made right with God when we trust in Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in this way, no matter who we are or what we have done" (Rom. 3:22 NLT).

If you have fallen away from God, you can forsake sin and disobedience, and return to God with your whole heart. "Today is the day" and "now" is the time to return to God's purposes for your life. God's mercy and forgiveness are great. However, there is still a tragedy involved in every rebellion. That tragedy is that you have less time to serve God and do His will. So don't delay. Today is the day and now is the time to return to God and His love and His wonderful purposes for your life.

To explain the love and forgiveness of God, Jesus told the story of the prodigal son who left his Father's house and spent his inheritance on wild women and riotous living. When he came to his senses, he said: "At home, even the hired men have food enough to spare, and here I am, dying of hunger! I will go home to my father and say, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.'"

When the son was still far away, his father saw him coming, and overcome with "love and compassion he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him... His father said to the servants, 'Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger, and sandals for his feet. And kill the calf we have been fattening in the pen. We must celebrate with a feast, for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found'" (Luke 15:17-32 NLT).

To return to his father's house, the prodigal son had to make a decision and walk away from the pigpen of his own making. He had to decide in his heart to give up his freedom of self-choice to become one of his father's hired servants. This is repentance. The good news is the father received the prodigal back as more than a servant—he gave him the position of honored son.

In the same manner, Jesus came to restore the sonship with the Father that was lost in Adam and Eve's fall. He said, "I have called you friends *if you do whatever I command you*...No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you" (John 15:14-15). What a great privilege!

If all this has spoken to you and you know you are not where you need to be, why not surrender to the Lord. Ask Jesus to take selfish ambition out of your heart and every dream that is not from Him. Ask Jesus to give you the new birth and baptize you in the Holy Spirit—then, bury your old life in the waters of baptism.

Ask Jesus to put His dreams in your heart and to change your desires. Give Him your imagination like the blank canvas of an artist, and let Jesus paint it with His dreams for you. He will do it! Just give Him your future right now, all your hopes, aspirations, dreams—and in exchange, you will receive His plan, His aspirations, His hopes, His desires for you to affect your generation for Him! This is what is called the Great Exchange—trading your life for His life!

Now I see the crimson wave,
The fountain deep and wide;
Jesus, my Lord, my life He saves,
I see His wounded side.
Now the cleansing stream I see,

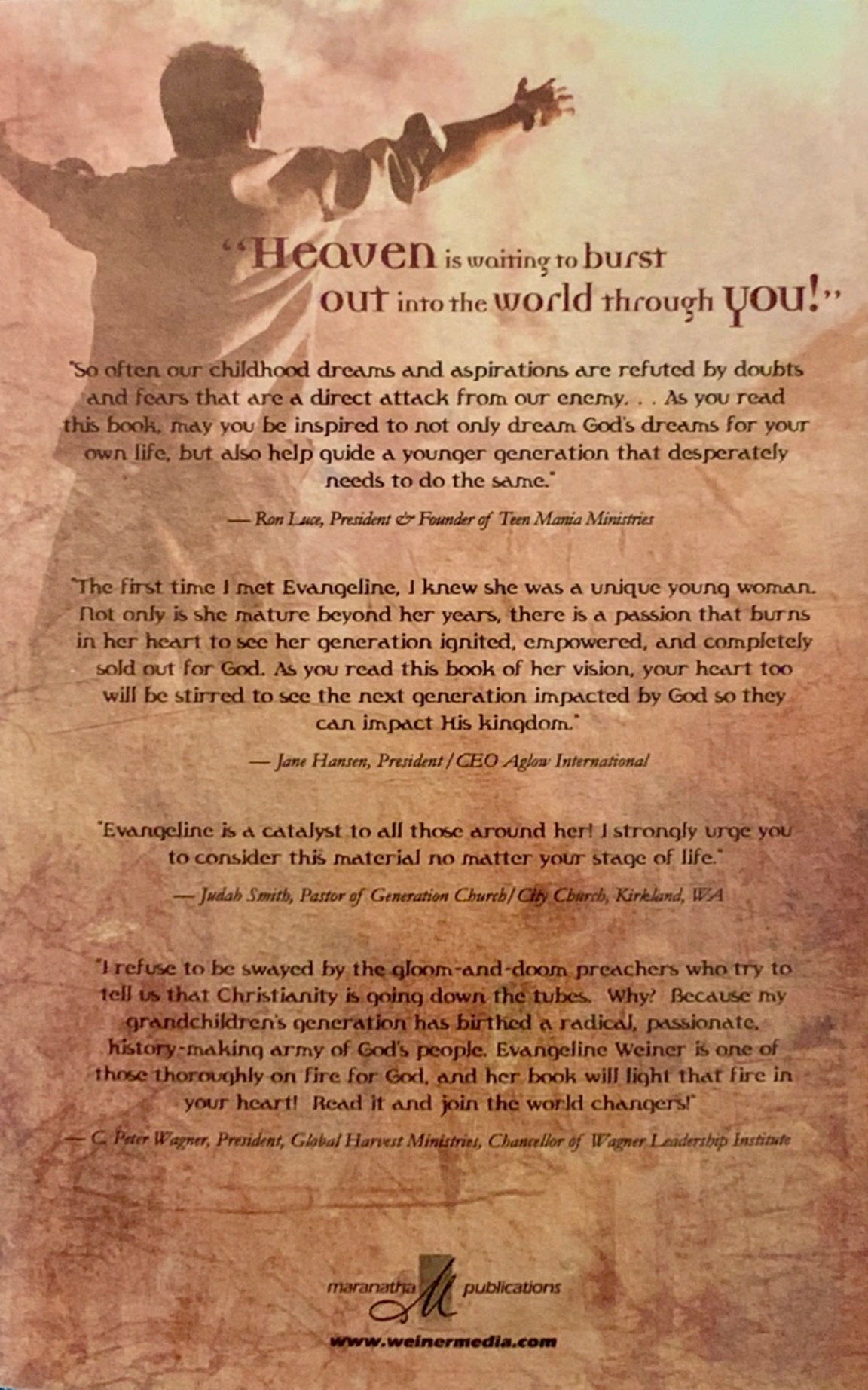
I hear the speaking blood;
I see the New Creation rise,
Out of the crimson flood.

I rise to walk in heaven's light,
Above the world and sin,
With heart made pure and garments white,
And Christ enthroned within.

Amazing grace! It's heaven below,
To feel the blood applied,
And Jesus, my Lord and Savior know,
My Jesus crucified.

—Modified from a hymn by
PHOEBE PALMER *1804-1874*

“We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves” (2 Cor. 4:17 NLT).



“Heaven is waiting to burst
out into the world through YOU!”

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— Ron Luce, President & Founder of Teen Mania Ministries

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— Jane Hansen, President / CEO Aglow International

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— C. Peter Wagner, President, Global Harvest Ministries, Chancellor of Wagner Leadership Institute

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