

AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE

HOUSE: Home Away from Home: A Paramedic at Sea

MARRIAGE: Here's to Fifty Years and a Few Lessons Learned

HEALTH: Unforgiveness Affects Your Health

FINANCE: Do All You Can

PARENTING: Parenting as an Empty-Nester

COMMUNITY: Finding Your Circle: Why the Right Community Transforms Your Healing Journey



PUBLISHING EDITOR

Niccie Kliegl is CEO of **Fulfill Your Legacy**, Author, Discipleship Leader, and Speaker, shepherding Christians and Ministry Leaders into their Sweetspot where they fulfill their calling by connecting to the presence of God and Tapping into the Trinity to transform lives, homes, communities, and nations.

Niccie founded the **Legacy Leader Community** and *As for Me & My House* magazine. She also loves sharing what God puts on her in her 3 podcasts: **The Presence of God**, **The 5-Fold Forum**, and **Your Divine Business**.



COPY EDITOR

Helen Izek is an award-winning author and was once also a freelance editor. In addition to her current full-time day job with a global medical device company, Helen continues to edit the articles for our monthly *As for Me and My House* magazine. Passionate about working with each and every author, Helen strives to ensure the magazine is free of errors while preserving the unique voice of the contributors. She'd rather stay true to you, the authors - quirky turns of phrases included!

Helen lives in Israel with her husband and is mother to three wonderful children, and grandmother to two tiny tots. As we move into the New Year, Helen's prayer request is still for the peace of Jerusalem, and the soon return of all the hostages.



DESIGN EDITOR

Jana Smith writes *End-Times*, speculative Christian fiction with a hint of romance, for women of all ages. Her love of God's Word and interest in Biblical End-Times prophecy has led her to write a series of fictional stories dealing with this subject. Retirement has allowed her to focus much of her time on writing. Jana and her husband live in Calgary, AB, where they can be near their precious children and grandchildren.

Being involved with Niccie's **Sweetspot Mastermind** has opened her eyes to an entirely new form of ministry. For Jana, it is a joy and a privilege to help with the magazine layout every month.





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HOUSE

Brent McCain is a Legacy Leader. For the past three decades, his work has caused him to be away from his home for months at a time. He began his career “working the bus” (nickname for ambulance). In 2006 he transitioned to the industrial side of paramedicine, working in the oil and gas industry offshore in the Gulf of Mexico.

His work takes him away from home for 6 plus months of the year, placing a huge strain on a still-new marriage relationship. The pressure felt by both Stacey, his wife, and Brent was immense. Over the years, it has become much easier, but it took a lot of faith in God as well as sacrifices.



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MARRIAGE

Donna currently resides in Rocky River, Ohio, and is a wife, mother of four children, and grandmother of five grandchildren. She is an intimate worshipper/song writer, intercessor, and college professor. In addition to serving others in their ministries, she is on the pastoral care team and in the creative community at her church.

Donna loves adding value to others, and delights in seeing them achieve wholeness in body, soul, and spirit through the power of the Holy Spirit. She loves giving testimonies of God's faithfulness and miracle-working, resurrection power in her life.



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HEALTH

Cheryl Krichbaum, award-winning author, speaker, and writing coach, equips Christ followers to compassionately reach the abortion-minded for life and for Christ. Losing billions of children to abortion is a tragedy but so is losing the God-given destinies of the women and men who choose abortion.

Before Cheryl had her chosen children, she worked professionally as a technical writer, project manager, and instructional designer. Today, she is a wife, the mother of two tall sons, a homeschool composition teacher, a podcaster, and founder of **MybodyMyworship**, which provides abortion and sex ed, worship and music ed, and writing and speaking ed.



19 FINANCES

Susan Troth is a compassionate leader and advocate for healing, hope, and restoration. After the profound loss of her husband, Dr. Ron Plemons, and navigating severe illness, widowhood, and infertility, she founded Stressed to Splended, a coaching ministry supporting women through suffering. An Associate Professor of Worship at Cedarville University, Susan has served as a worship minister, music teacher, and global volunteer in disaster relief, missions, and grief counseling. Her trauma-informed coaching empowers individuals to find resilience and faith amidst pain. Honored with the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award in 2024, Susan's life exemplifies faith, service, and the pursuit of new horizons. www.susantroth.com



24 PARENTING

Angela Crist lives with her husband, David, within a beautiful state park in Ohio. She is an author, speaker, faith-based life coach and inner healing minister. She helps women to go deeper so that they can grow higher, by burning off their past and moving into the future that God has designed for them.

Angela has published one book, *Kairos Time*, which she co-authored with two of her precious friends, Niccie Kliegl and Barb Miller. Together, they have done women's retreats and recently co-founded **Real Time Ministry** where they host 4 fabulous women's retreat weekends per year to help women heal their hearts. Angela is also currently in the process of writing a 52-week devotional, which will hopefully be finished within the next year.



30 COMMUNITY

Kirsten D Samuel understands first-hand the shock and pain of discovering your spouse's porn use. As a coach, she has empowered hundreds of women to rediscover peace in the mess, heal their broken hearts, regain confidence, and find hope that life is worth living.

Coach, speaker, and author, Kirsten has been featured on the Focus on the Family Daily Broadcast, Chris Fabry Live on the Moody Radio Network, and many relationship and recovery podcasts.

WORDS FROM THE PUBLISHER

NICCIE KLIEGL, FULFILL YOUR LEGACY

January is here, and with it comes the start of a brand-new year. There's something so refreshing about turning the page to a new chapter, filled with endless possibilities and God's promises for what's to come. As we step into this year, I'm reminded of Isaiah 43:19: "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." What an encouragement to know that God is always working to bring forth new life and hope in every season!

For those of you who are new to *As for Me and My House*, welcome! This magazine is designed to inspire and equip you to live a God-partnered life, building a legacy that honors Him in every aspect of your home and work. Each month, our contributors—parents, Christian entrepreneurs, mentors, and leaders—share their faith journeys, practical wisdom, and encouragement to help you grow deeper in your walk with Christ.

This magazine is rooted in the message of my second book in the Legacy Series, *Embracing the Loving Legacy*. Just as the book teaches us to bring our faith into our homes, this magazine explores six vital areas of life: house, marriage, health, finances, parenting, and community. It's a beautiful reminder of how God's work in our lives flows out to bless those around us.

As we enter this new year, let's embrace the opportunity to partner with God in every area of our lives. Whatever challenges or dreams lie ahead, we can trust Him to guide us, strengthen us, and do a new thing in and through us. Take time this month to pray over your goals, seek His will, and invite Him into every plan you make. With Him, there's no limit to the impact we can have as we LIVE | LOVE | LEARN | LEAD for His glory.

I hope this month's issue inspires you to step boldly into the new year, encouraged by God's faithfulness and the promise of His presence in every step. May this year be a season of growth, hope, and abundant blessings for you and your home.

Happy New Year and many blessings to you!

Niccie Kliegl



BRENT MCCAIN

[BRENT'S WEBSITE](#)[CONTACT BRENT](#)

AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE

Home Away from Home: A Paramedic at Sea

"The magical thing about home is that it feels good to leave, and it feels even better to come back." Wow, how haunting to think I've lived this push and pull for many years! For so many years of my life I have lived away from home, for at least half of each year. My work takes me away from my home and family anywhere from two to four weeks and at times even longer. I am a safety paramedic and work many miles away from home, with much of that time at sea.

FOR THE LAST DECADE I HAVE HAD TWO PLACES
OF RESIDENCE, BUT ONLY ONE TRUE HOME!

- BRENT MCCAIN

For the past three decades I have worked as a paramedic. I began my career working the bus (short for ambulance). In 2006, after my divorce, I transitioned to the industrial side of paramedicine, working in the oil and gas industry offshore in the Gulf of Mexico. In 2008 I remarried.

During the time leading up to and following my divorce, I dove into God's Word and sought godly counsel from my church leaders and my small life group. The same month Stacey and I married, I started a new job, a Monday through Friday job, a schedule that I had not worked before. Though it was great being home every night, it just wasn't the schedule for me.

FAITH TO ENDURE CHANGE

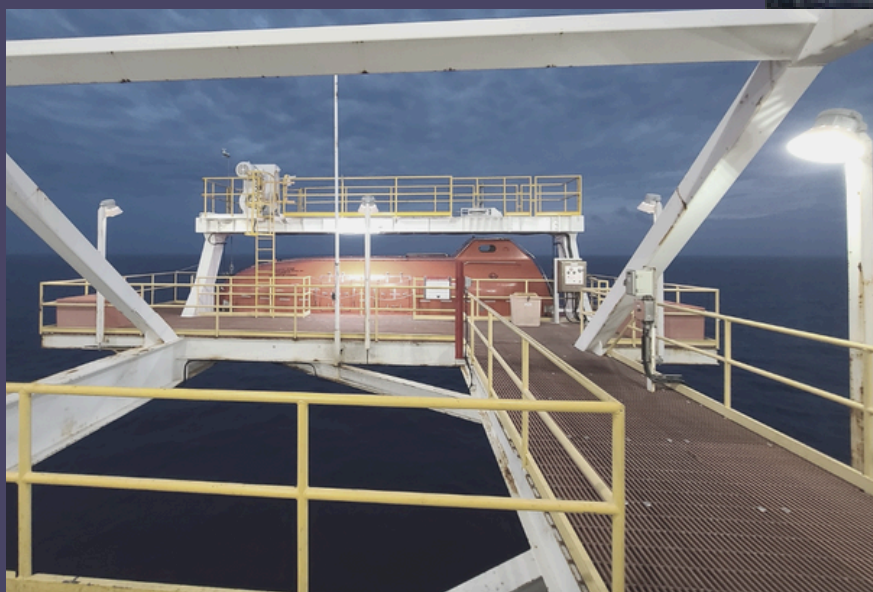
A little under a year after I remarried, I decided to go back to work offshore. In fact, I was away at work during our one-year anniversary. My choice to again work a job that took me away from home for 6 plus months of the year placed a huge strain on our still new relationship as husband and wife. The pressure felt by both Stacey and me was immense. Over the years it has become much easier. It took a lot of sacrifices, on Stacey's part mainly, to hold us together. Take the year when a winter storm struck much of Texas. I was away at work while Stacey was literally stuck at home, with several days without electricity and no heating.

Over the past few years, I have begun to reach out to my Savior. I began to seek out the Lord, the Holy Spirit. I enrolled in Niccie's *Living Legacy* program through which I've experienced the work of the Holy Spirit in my life. What a change it has made in my life, and in my relationship with Stacey.

FOR THE LAST DECADE, I HAVE HAD TWO PLACES OF RESIDENCE,
BUT ONLY ONE TRUE HOME! DO YOU KNOW YOUR ONE TRUE HOME?
THAT HOME GIVES SAFETY AND PEACE TO ANY AND IN ALL PLACES.

- BRENT MC CAIN

HOUSE



The background of the slide is a photograph of an offshore oil rig at sunset. The rig's complex metal structure is visible on the left, with several lights glowing. A large flare extends diagonally from the rig towards the upper right, with a bright flame at its tip. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, and the ocean is visible at the bottom.

“HOME IS A
SHELTER
FROM
STORMS –
ALL SORTS
OF STORMS”.

WILLIAM J. BENNETT



SERVANT HEART

PSALM 119:76

MAY YOUR UNFAILING
LOVE BE MY COMFORT,
ACCORDING TO YOUR
PROMISE TO YOUR
SERVANT.

COMFORT

COLOSSIANS 3:2

SET YOUR MINDS ON
THINGS THAT ARE
ABOVE, NOT ON
THINGS THAT ARE ON
EARTH.

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

PHILIPPIANS 4:19

AND MY GOD WILL
SUPPLY EVERY NEED
OF YOURS ACCORDING
TO HIS RICHES IN
GLORY IN CHRIST
JESUS.





DONNA HINSON

AS FOR ME AND MY MARRIAGE

[CONTACT DONNA](#)

HERE'S TO FIFTY YEARS AND A FEW LESSONS LEARNED

"O MAGNIFY THE LORD WITH ME, AND LET US EXALT HIS NAME TOGETHER," PSALM 34:3 NKJV

"If a girl gets married in times like these, ***it is no sin. But marriage would bring on extra problems I wish you didn't have to face right now.***" The words leapt off the page like electricity to her innermost being, a direct answer to the plea of a young girl desperate to know God's will concerning her fast-approaching wedding date.

She was counting the weeks, and something didn't feel right; she had to know what to do. She believed marriage was "for life" and couldn't risk making the wrong decision. Out of desperation, she had said, "God, if you're real, like my parents say you are, then I need for you to speak to me now! I'm going to open my Bible and expect an answer."

Now, I am not suggesting that the way to know God's will for a mate is to close your eyes and then follow the first scripture your eyes light upon as they open. But God, in His tender mercy, answered the cry of this young girl with the words of 1 Corinthians 7:28 (NLT), proving to her not only His existence, but also His Divine interest and care for the details of her life.

She understood that she still had a choice, and although it wouldn't be a sin, this union would not be God's best for her. This "rhema" revelation gave her the courage to face the fall-out of cancelling a wedding so near its date, and changed the course of her life forever.

That young girl was me, and I am eternally grateful to God for meeting me at my point of need, for teaching me that sometimes we have to give up what we think is best to make way for God's best. And I did that.



Thankfully, when the time was right and in such an amazing way, the right man did come along and for fifty years now—yes, FIFTY!—I have been married to God's best for me. We marvel at God's grace. And I thank God that He spared us from those "extra problems"—whatever they were—because

even with the right person, learning to navigate married life is challenging enough. But by God's grace, we have made it thus far, and while we don't count ourselves as experts, we have learned a few things worth remembering.

We have learned that our First Love is not each other but is in fact our Jesus, and putting Him first is vital. We have learned that marriage really IS about being there for each other "through sickness and in health." We have learned there really are seasons in life and that the adjustments don't end. We learned early on that we needed healing and deliverance from past hurts and issues in order to have a healthy relationship with each other. We learned to walk in forgiveness—toward each other, toward ourselves, and toward others who tried to interfere in our relationship.

"SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS,
AND ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED TO YOU,"

MATTHEW 6:33 NKJV

We learned about spiritual warfare, and the importance of standing in faith for what God has given us. We honor each other by keeping confidence, by not complaining about or discussing each other with other people, unless it is a "ministry" session. We have learned that marriage really is about leaving and cleaving: our spouse comes first.

*"Let us therefore
come boldly to the
throne of grace, that
we may obtain mercy
and find grace to
help in time of need,"*

Hebrews 4:16 NKJV

We hold each other close, but set each other free. We have learned that we cannot control the other or meet all of the other's needs. There is room for other interests and appropriate relationships. We have learned that marriage is about learning to trust and being trustworthy; it's best not to keep secrets. We have learned

that "not letting the sun go down on your wrath" does not mean arguing all night while we're both exhausted. I sure wish I'd learned that sooner!

We are still learning the fine art of communication. We have learned there is great power in agreement, that it can mean the difference between life and death—and on more than one occasion, it has.

We have learned that every good and perfect gift "comes down from the Father of lights" and marriage is one of those gifts. And so, as we move forward and lean towards the future, we are still learning to love and to live with the other in an understanding way. We continue to walk out these and other lessons learned along the way.

We celebrate the fifty years, and—if it were possible—we would say, "Here's to Fifty More!"



"LIKEWISE, HUSBANDS, LIVE WITH YOUR WIVES IN AN UNDERSTANDING WAY,"
1 PETER 3:7 ESV



SOME TIPS TOWARDS A LONG AND HAPPY MARRIAGE:

We found each other when we were fervently looking for Him.

It's important to be "equally-yoked" or have a similar belief system.

Marriage is a life-long commitment to the Lord first, and then to each other.

Get to know each other, learn each other's love languages, and learn to fast and pray for the other.

Closer personal communion with the Holy Spirit results in a closer union between a couple.

Be teachable, develop mutual respect, and learn to forgive.

There's no room for competition in a marriage: you're on the same team.

Remember to have fun together!

Abortion

Changing the Conversation

Podcast
&
Show



CHERYL
KRICHBAUM

AS FOR ME AND MY HEALTH
CONTACT CHERYL
MY BODY MY WORSHIP

UNFORGIVENESS AFFECTS YOUR HEALTH

Nora casually walked by my vendor table and said, “Yeah, I’ve had an abortion, too.” But she said it in such a way that led me to believe she thought her abortion was no big deal. She did not know what she did not know.

I was the only vendor at that Christian women’s retreat, and with my big book banner about abortion, I was also the scary vendor.

Most Christians—anyone, really—don’t know what to do with an admission of abortion. We’re taught that when we don’t know what to say, we shouldn’t say anything. So most

people walked by—except the woman who chose what I chose.

I was invited to the retreat at the last minute and once there I was asked to give my testimony. The keynote speaker was an abortion survivor, and yet they wanted me to tell my story of choosing abortion. First, I was going to share after lunch. But the plan changed, so I was going to share after break. The plan changed again.

Before dinner, all were invited to come forward for prayer, but no one moved.

After dinner, I was invited to share my testimony.

My invitation to speak for 10 minutes turned into 20 minutes because my story is long—long enough for a 300-page book titled *ReTested: the Story of a Post-Abortive Woman Called to Change the Conversation*.

I did not justify my abortion because there's no justification for my choice.

But there were circumstances, a life test that I failed. So God retested me again and again and again until I understood that my ways are not His ways (Isaiah 55:8-9) and that our choices have consequences (Lev 26, Deut 28).

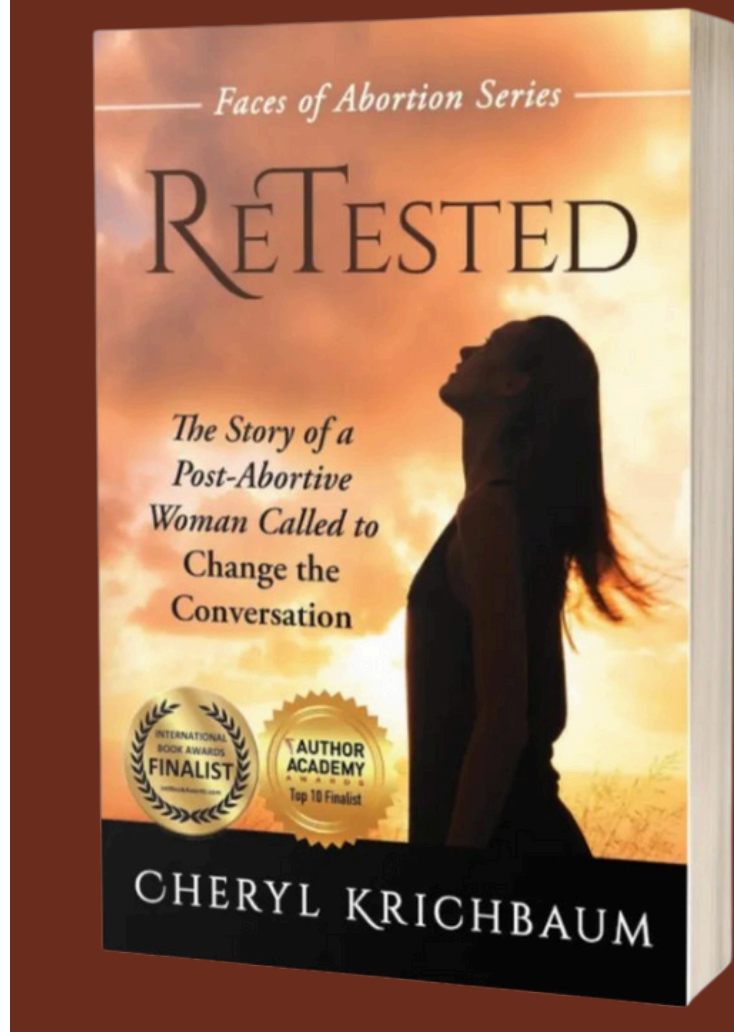
Then Jesus invited me to be an overcomer.

When I shared the following verse at the women's retreat, I changed the pronouns. This is Jesus speaking:

“SHE WHO OVERCOMES, I WILL GRANT TO HER TO SIT DOWN WITH ME ON MY THRONE, AS I ALSO OVERCAME AND SAT DOWN WITH MY FATHER ON HIS THRONE,” (REV 3:21).

Two years prior to this speaking event, God took me through an exercise of forgiveness. That week, my back was tight and hurting. My mattress was new. My chiropractor adjusted my back twice per week. I stretched before going to bed. But every morning I awoke to tightness and pain. I stretched again.

At that same time, I was in a post-abortion healing group but felt like I was healed from my abortion. My healing came through writing my memoir and was so amazing that I wrote it into my book.



So why did God have me in a post-abortion healing group? He answered: “You may be healed of your abortion, but you are not healed from all the circumstances that led to your abortion choice.”

So I spent hours identifying all my anger and whom I blamed. Then I forgave and blessed each person.

Jesus, after teaching us to pray “forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” (Matt 6:12) said,

“IF YOU FORGIVE OTHERS FOR THEIR TRANSGRESSIONS, YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER WILL ALSO FORGIVE YOU. BUT IF YOU DO NOT FORGIVE OTHERS, THEN YOUR FATHER WILL NOT FORGIVE YOUR TRANSGRESSIONS,” (MATT 6:14–15).

I was forgiven. My debt wiped clean.



*“If you forgive others
for their
transgressions, your
heavenly Father will
also forgive you. But
if you do not forgive
others, then your
Father will not
forgive your
transgressions,”
(Matt 6:14–15).*

Now that my soul was empty of anger and bitterness, I asked God to fill me with more of the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13) because the fruit of the Spirit is agape love, expressed as joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22-23). What I wanted most was joy, so I asked specifically for that fruit.

My back no longer hurt. My parenting improved. My teenage son said, "Mom, you're actually laughing at my jokes."

At the women's retreat, I invited everyone to become overcomers.

The day after I shared my testimony, a woman told me that her friend, Nora, had been amazed that everyone was talking about abortion. "Is everyone here pro-life?"

Nora was in a lot of physical pain but came to the retreat anyway.

After my testimony, many women went forward for prayer, including Nora. She confessed her abortion. Her pain disappeared.

Trauma affects your body whether you realize it or not. Abortion is trauma whether you realize it or not.

**NOW MAY THE GOD OF PEACE HIMSELF SANCTIFY
YOU ENTIRELY; AND MAY YOUR SPIRIT AND SOUL
AND BODY BE KEPT COMPLETE, WITHOUT BLAME AT
THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.
1 THESSALONIANS 5:23**



Confession and forgiveness help you release your trauma. The Apostle Paul says that we are spirit, soul, and body (1 Thess 5:23). When we release trauma from our souls, we release trauma from our bodies. No matter your trauma, take responsibility for what you did (that's what confession is) and forgive others for what they did.

When your debts are released, ask God for more Holy Spirit and the fruit you most desire. The fruit is your advantage to having the Holy Spirit. I call it your Holy Spirit Advantage.

I am Cheryl Krichbaum, award-winning author, podcaster, and writing coach called to change the abortion conversation. If you'd like to learn more about your Holy Spirit Advantage, get your free online Bible study (which is for every Christian regardless of your choices) on my website, MybodyMyworship.com.

All Bible quotes are NASB translation.

Abortion

Changing the Conversation

Podcast 
&
Show 

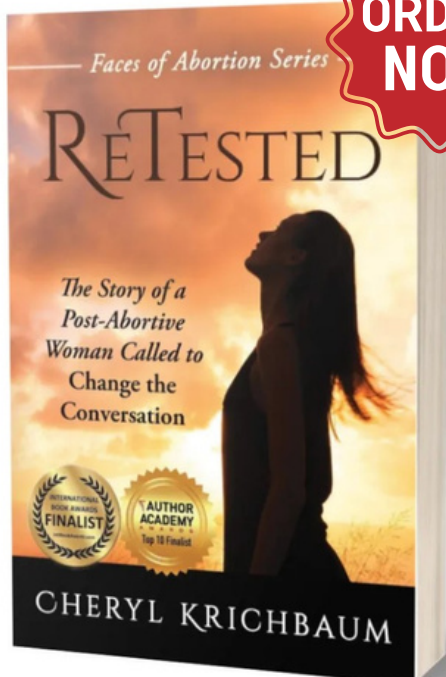


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AS FOR ME AND MY FINANCES

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DO ALL YOU CAN

“DO ALL YOU CAN DO TO BE ALL YOU CAN BE.”

I found this saying in the newspaper when I was in high school, cut it out, folded it and kept it in my wallet for quite a long time. Somehow God wired me to enjoy maximizing results. Whether I'm calculating how long it will take me to clean the house or grade projects, I will efficiently pack as much into sixty seconds as I possibly can.

I'm going to try to efficiently pack as much into this article as I can.

One of the saddest statistics relating to church membership is the lack of stewardship. I was a Minister of Worship for thirteen years and my husband was senior pastor for twenty-five years. When the church needed work done, we could count on twenty percent of the members to do the work and the same to be the tithers. I've never understood how eighty percent of church members can ignore what the Bible says about money and stewardship. Personally, I think it's really good news! We serve a generous God.

We are made in His image. Ergo—we should be generous people with our time, talents, and resources.

I think one reason that tithing and stewardship receive such a bad rap is because we are often misled to believe that money is bad. Nope. “For the LOVE of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs,” (1 Timothy 6:10 ESV). When we dig into this verse, it is about our *heart* and not about the object (money).

This is why I believe we should talk about stewardship when we discuss our finances and resources. You see, we don’t own anything. It all belongs to God. We are merely stewards as we manage our resources to bring glory to God.

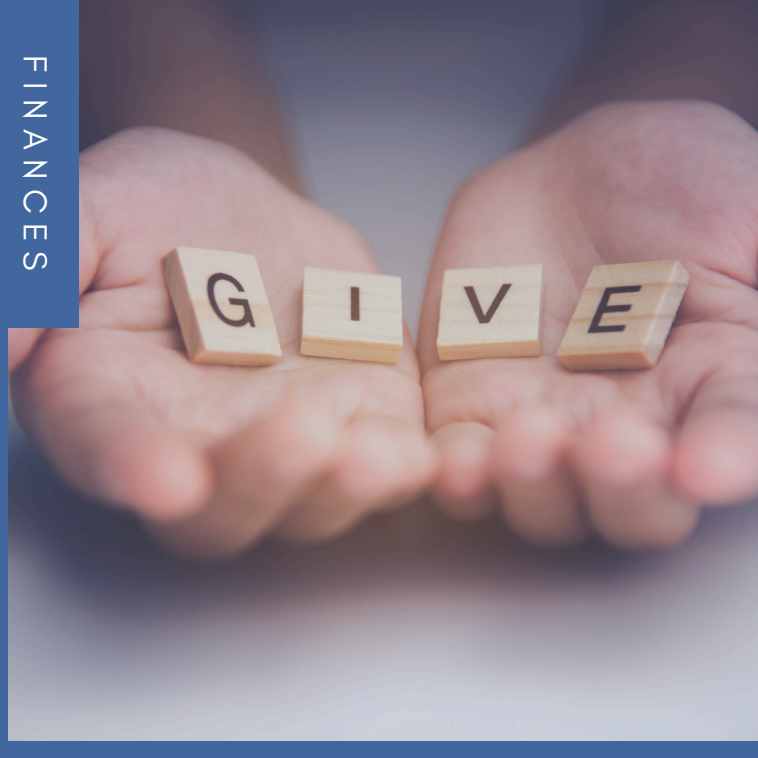
Let’s break it down some more.

S STEWARDS SERVE THE MASTER.

Colossians 3:23 directs us in “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.” We pray over our budget and our spending to learn God’s ways and seek His will. When I want to talk about my money, then I have to rethink and reframe what I am saying to reflect Psalm 24:1, “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.” This verse keeps me on my toes—even my family isn’t mine to control. Everything belongs to God

T TREASURE THE GIVING.

Yesterday, my office was taking up a Christmas gift collection and my first inclination was to be stingy with the bills that were in my wallet. The Holy Spirit wasn’t happy and I’m glad that I was generous because my Master wanted me to be generous. Matthew 6:21 teaches us “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Yesterday, God wanted me to treasure blessing someone else, even if it meant leaving only dollar bills in my wallet.




E EXPECT GOD TO PROVIDE.

Remember those dollar bills in my wallet? From my years as a tither in college through 40 more years of life, “I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread,” (Psalm 37:25 ESV). I have never been able to out-give God.

W WELCOME OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE.

In this latter season of my life, I have come to trust God’s generosity so much that I am continually listening for His voice telling me to help and to give. Two weeks ago, it was loaning my car; this week it was baking for stressed-out students, and sometimes we share our house when we’re out of town. These are resources that God has given us to manage. What resources, big and small, do you have that can be used to bless others?

A background image showing a hand holding a coin over a wooden bowl filled with various coins and banknotes. The scene is softly blurred, focusing attention on the text overlay.

"TRUST IN THE LORD
WITH ALL YOUR HEART,
AND DO NOT LEAN ON
YOUR OWN
UNDERSTANDING. IN
ALL YOUR WAYS
ACKNOWLEDGE HIM,
AND HE WILL MAKE
STRAIGHT YOUR
PATHS"

PROVERBS 3:5–6 ESV

ASK GOD. WE ALL NEED HELP.

The Apostle Paul was a great example of humility, abundance, and being content in every circumstance. He describes it in Philippians 4:10–20. Don't park in verse 13 (which is in the context of being content whether we are in a season of plenty or hunger). Rather, keep going all the way to verse 20 and you'll see that "my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." There is hope as we ask our generous heavenly Father.

RELEASE YOUR GRIP.

The insecurity of our world can cause us to clench tightly what we value. I get it. Our family, friends, households, bank accounts. But haven't we learned that God is sovereign and the only bedrock we should build our lives upon is the solid Rock? That is what tithing disciplines us to do—trust in God. Giving ten percent will help us frame our entire lives with the correct perspective. Hands outstretched, palms up in surrender. It's all about trust (ask my geeky computer-programming husband). "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths," (Proverbs 3:5–6 ESV).

DISCOVER JOY IN GIVING.

"So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver," (2 Corinthians 9:7 ESV).

I hope that God loves how we give. Let's purpose in our hearts to do all we can to manage His resources His way.





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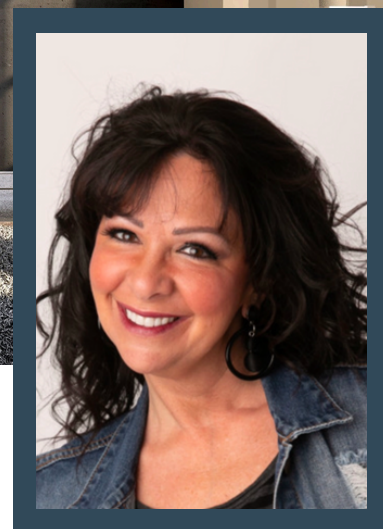
Schedule a Chat

Use this link to schedule a time to talk with Susan about
your journey to find healing, hope, and new horizons



ANGELA CRIST

AS FOR ME AND MY PARENTING
[CONTACT ANGELA](#)



PARENTING AS AN EMPTY-NESTER

LIFE DOESN'T NECESSARILY GET EASIER. IT JUST LOOKS DIFFERENT WITH EACH PASSING SEASON.

In the last couple years, we officially became empty-nesters. Our youngest child finally flew the coop and now all six of our children are living on their own. Being a full-time mom was all I ever knew for almost 30 years and I found myself processing through a series of unsettling emotions as I adjusted to this new normal.

**"I HAVE NO GREATER JOY THAN TO HEAR THAT MY
 CHILDREN ARE WALKING IN THE TRUTH,"**
3 JOHN 1:4 NIV

I wish I could say I transitioned well, but the truth is I battled through a season of deep grieving, loss, and loneliness. I began to ask all my fellow "empty nester" friends how they coped. What I found was that everyone's experience was unique as they faced many different challenges. Because my battles were uniquely my own, it was clear I needed to give these new heart issues to my Heavenly Father.

I think my biggest battle was wondering where my place in their lives now fell. Was I to simply wait for them to call me? Should I be checking on them

regularly? Did they establish new boundaries? Would they ever NEED me again . . . GULP!

So in my best efforts, I created a culmination of what I believe were my largest hurdles in adjusting to empty nest syndrome. The Lord truly helped me to process and nurture these emotions and relationships. Of course, my first step was to acknowledge my feelings and recognize them as honest and valid. I accepted this transition in life as normal. I should add: **it wasn't that I resented this new lifestyle change, rather it was that I was trying to understand the layers underneath the adjustment.**

HURDLE #1: IDENTITY CRISIS

"THEREFORE, IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST, THE NEW CREATION HAS COME. THE OLD HAS GONE, THE NEW IS HERE!"

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 NIV

I know this to be true! So why was I being so challenged in my foundational truths? I soon discovered that finding my identity outside of parenthood was a journey that would require lots of time, grace, and compassion. My first step was to identify the lies I believed. The TRUTH is that I have purpose outside of raising littles. I don't only belong at home. I belong in other places and spaces too. My happiness doesn't solely depend on moments and experiences with my family. The joy of the Lord is my strength. And I can now love on and cherish others with a greater capacity. Why? Because I will now have the time to do so!



If you are here . . .

Start by getting back to the basics. Wash yourself in the scriptures and remind yourself who you are FIRST; before kids ever began. Your identity is in your first love. Establish and develop a self-care routine that will nourish your mind, soul, body, and spirit to these deep foundational truths.

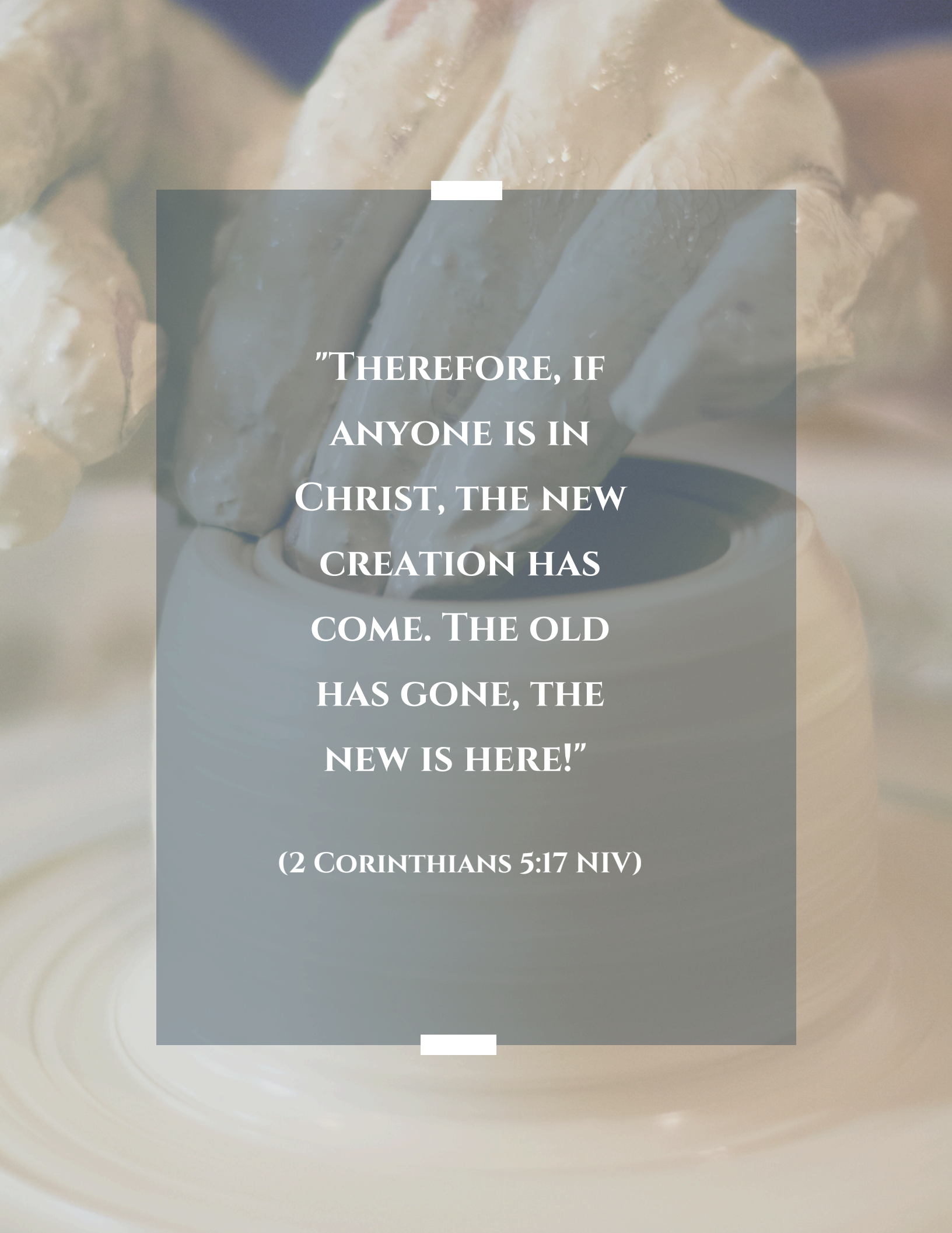


HURDLE #2: MARITAL RELATIONSHIP ADJUSTMENTS

"A WIFE OF NOBLE CHARACTER WHO CAN FIND? SHE IS WORTH FAR MORE THAN RUBIES,"

PROVERBS 31:10 NIV

I found that the absence of our children brought on both new challenges and also amazing opportunities in our marriage. I knew it would take some time but I had a strong sense that Holy Spirit was reconnecting and redefining my partnership with my husband. Hmmm, maybe I hadn't put him first before my children, after all?



"THEREFORE, IF
ANYONE IS IN
CHRIST, THE NEW
CREATION HAS
COME. THE OLD
HAS GONE, THE
NEW IS HERE!"

(2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 NIV)

Again, I had to first acknowledge and accept where our relationship had fallen short. Needless to say, there were more holes than I initially thought. We've had to recreate and strengthen our bond, whether it be through more date nights or simply setting aside time to talk. I have had to practice active listening, and I am still growing in this area. I'm finding I have to make an effort to truly hear and understand my husband's thoughts, feelings, and desires.

If you are here . . .

Start by revisiting your husband's love languages. Gary Chapman wrote a really good book called *The Five Love Languages*. Be it through words of affirmation, quality time, gifts, acts of service, or physical touch . . . it's a beautiful way to start demonstrating your love and commitment in the language that best fills your partner's love tank.



HURDLE #3: GOALS

**"THE PLANS OF THE DILIGENT LEAD TO PROFIT AS
SURELY AS HASTE LEADS TO POVERTY,"
PROVERBS 21:5 NIV**

I'm not sorry for the years during which I dedicated my entire life to the wellbeing of my family; however, I was astonished when I realized how many personal goals I'd lain down. When we are busy helping our children hit their goals, we often forget our own passions, dreams, and aspirations. I began to see where I'd allowed myself to go dormant in my dream life and future planning. When I finally gave myself permission to dream again, it became exciting and liberating. I do still have it in me! By identifying my core values, and exploring my interests, I was able to quickly identify what changes needed to be made in order to enhance my life. The silence and emptiness of my home was sometimes deafening and overwhelming, but I began to use that silence to tap into new daily routines and creativity.

If you are here . . .

Try incorporating a Time Blocking Book (daytimer or time planner). That's what I did! Creating a roadmap helps you to not only stay focused but also to remain motivated. It helps so much to see on paper our personal growth and development.

HURDLE #4: GUILT AND SELF DOUBT

"START CHILDREN OFF ON THE WAY THEY SHOULD GO, AND EVEN WHEN THEY ARE OLD THEY WILL NOT TURN FROM IT,"
PROVERBS 22:6 NIV

It sounds really wild to say I experienced somewhat of a guilt trip by this newfound freedom, but I truly did! I kept feeling like there had to be a child somewhere that needed my servanthood or advice, but the phone never rang. Then fear started to creep in. Had I adequately prepared them to live in this cruel world? I was forced to reflect on my parenting journey. I thought about all of the sacrifices I'd made, and the lessons and values I'd instilled into their hearts. I also did a lot of repenting. It was clear I needed to trust God to "take it from here." I recognized I was not a perfect parent and humbled myself to realize that there may be things they would teach me through their own shortcomings and hard life lesson lessons.

If you are here . . .

Instead of "I should have" force yourself to focus on "I did

my best." Let go of all your guilt. Give it to God daily if you need to. Trust in your children's abilities and continue to build your confidence in the Lord as the only "perfect parent." Where you fell short, He can heal. He is not bound by time.

To wrap this up, I want you to know that you are significant. Allow yourself to grieve and acknowledge your loss when your children leave home. Rediscover your identity by diving into the Word. Practice self-care and set new goals and aspirations for yourself. But more than anything . . . CELEBRATE! Recognize the hard work and dedication you've invested into your children.

Keep that communication open by actively listening to their thoughts, feelings, and concerns, continue to give them quality time, and acknowledge your child's growth and independence. What I'm discovering is that the healed version of me is way more effective with my children than the old broken me. And I love visiting with my adult children and learning from them now.

Never forget that new seasons birth new life. You can truly embrace this new chapter in your life with confidence and joy!



Realtime Ministry

Where the Heart finds Healing in Community



Our Story

Together we have walked through brokenness, healing, and transformation. Now we have a passion to bring this life-changing gift to other women.

Our Call

To see women whole, healed and understanding their identity and God-given purpose.

Our Mission

To train women to walk in their true identity so they can bring this same transformation in their own community.





KIRSTEN SAMUEL

AS FOR ME AND MY COMMUNITY
KIRSTENDSAMUEL.COM



FINDING YOUR CIRCLE: WHY THE RIGHT COMMUNITY
TRANSFORMS YOUR HEALING JOURNEY

ALONE.

The History Channel's reality show *Alone*^[1] chronicles survivalists who are dropped into some of the most remote places on Earth. It's interesting to see the creativity and ingenuity people use to build safe and warm shelters and find food.

[1: <https://www.history.com/shows/alone>]

However, everyone struggles most with one element—being alone. Usually within 48 hours, the survivalist’s total solitude becomes a factor in their survival.

WHY DO WE CRAVE COMMUNITY?

In Genesis 1:26, we read, “Then God said, “Let us make man in our image. . . .” This holy Trinity—The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit—reveals perfect relationship and unity to us. Therefore, as image-bearers of God, our soul longs for holy relationships.

Our core relational need is salvation through Jesus Christ, which brings us back to a right relationship with the Godhead (see John 3:16–17). John 14:6 tells us that Jesus is the only way to this relationship. There is no other way.

As image-bearers of God, Imago Dei, we were created for community. It’s in our DNA. Somehow, you will find at least one person with whom you relate. However, not just anyone will do.

CHOOSE YOUR COMMUNITY CAREFULLY

Who you surround yourself with matters.

The smartest man who ever lived wrote about wisdom and community-building. Throughout the Proverbs, Solomon contrasts the life of the wise man and the fool. Interestingly, this contrast becomes apparent in the company each person keeps (community).

One way to evaluate your community is through an exercise I call the “Circle of Influence.” I discovered this process while working through my betrayal



trauma and suicidal depression recovery several years ago. It’s a thought-provoking exercise I use with my clients as a starting point to evaluate their community influences.

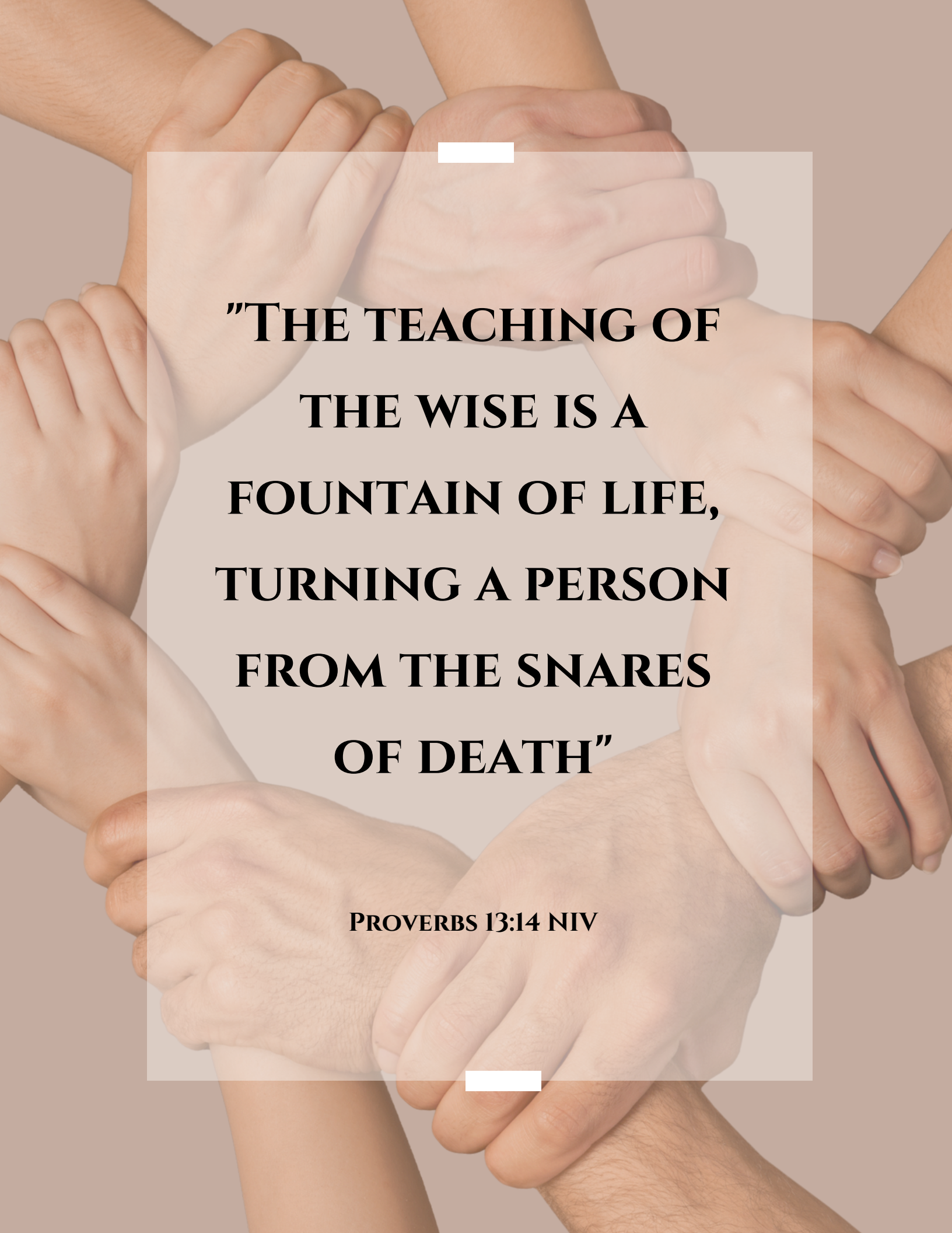
Jim Collins talks about having the right people in the right seat on the right bus in his book, *Good to Great*. While this is critical for businesses to function optimally, you also benefit from applying this principle to your life.

As God instructs through Proverbs, your community either enhances your life or detracts. You might be comfortable with someone or have a long-term relationship (a seat on the bus). During different seasons of your life, people move in and out of your community. While every change causes a sense of loss to some degree, and you need to acknowledge it, this metamorphosis shows growth. The Circle of Influence worksheet helps you identify what people are where in your life and if they belong there. You can download a [free copy of this resource here](#).

Your community matters, especially those in your inner circle.



WISE community characteristics	FOOLISH community characteristics
Fear (awe, reverence, wonder) of the LORD – Proverbs 1:7; 9:10; 15:33; Psalm 92:4-5	Despise wisdom and discipline – Proverbs 1:7; 15:5
Inherit honor – Proverbs 3:35	Resentful – Job 5:2; Proverbs 27:3
Receive correction well – Proverbs 9:8,9; 12:15 15:31; 21:11	Ignore evidence of God – Psalm 92:5-7
Love to learn – Proverbs 10:8	Not interested in wisdom – Proverbs 15:14; 17:10, 16; 28:26
Speak life – Proverbs 12:18; 13:14	Practice slander – Proverbs 10:18; 11:12
Humble – Proverbs 11:2; 12:23	Dishonest – Proverbs 19:1
Choose their friends carefully – Proverbs 13:20; 14:3	Cause grief – Proverbs 10:1; 15:20; 17:25; 19:13
Accurately evaluate their actions – Proverbs 14:16	Untrustworthy – Proverbs 26:6
Teach others wisdom – Proverbs 15:2, 7; 16:23	Mocker – Proverbs 9:7; 13:1; 24:9; 26:4
Calming influence – Proverbs 16:14; 21; 18:4; 29:8	Hot-tempered – Proverbs 12:16; 14:17; 17:12; 22:10
Financially responsible – Proverbs 21:20	Financially irresponsible – Proverbs 21:20
Watch their words – Proverbs 29:11; Ecclesiastes 12:11	Speak without thinking – Proverbs 10:14; 14:1; 15:2; 18:13
Sexually pure – Proverbs 2:16; 29:3	Promiscuous – Proverbs 6:32
Disciplined – Proverbs 17:24; 19:8; 24:14; 29:15	Participate in wrongdoing – Proverbs 10:23; 24:9; 26:11; 30:32



**"THE TEACHING OF
THE WISE IS A
FOUNTAIN OF LIFE,
TURNING A PERSON
FROM THE SNARES
OF DEATH"**

PROVERBS 13:14 NIV

Your community matters, especially those in your inner circle.

When you look at your Circle of Influence, which characteristics do they exhibit?

During my healing from betrayal trauma and suicidal depression, my community changed, by necessity and some design. Building a healthy community provided the safe space to be myself, explore new ideas and horizons, laugh, encourage and be encouraged, challenge and be challenged, and lock arms with others.

You can design a healthy community. Start now. Today. Spend a few minutes with the [Circle of Influence](#) exercise. Pray over it. Ask God to direct you through this process with truth and grace.

And as you do so, honestly look in the mirror. How many wise characteristics do you exhibit and bring to others?

If you're up for a challenge, join me in reading the book of Proverbs.

Here's the plan:

- Read one chapter of Proverbs daily, i.e., January 1 = Proverbs 1.

- Journal what you learned from God.
- Receive encouragement and accountability by joining the Wisdom Seekers Challenge for January. [Click here for more information.](#)

You were never designed to do life completely alone. Make 2025 the year you find your God-designed community. You'll be thankful for this gift.

OTHER RESOURCES RELATED TO BUILDING A HEALTHY COMMUNITY:

[A Powerful Way to Change The Direction of Your Life](#)

[Do These 12 Influences Improve Your Marriage?](#)

[11 Healthy Ways to Improve Your Family Relationship Influence](#)





Who am I?

Hi, I'm Kirsten. Having walked this recovery journey for over 17 years now, I'm excited to journey with you in Proverbs.

Whether you've just started your betrayal recovery journey or have been walking the road for years, you will benefit from diving into Proverbs.

Kirsten D Samuel
COACH | AUTHOR | SPEAKER

What Do You Gain?

- **A Simple Plan:** One chapter a day, paired with thoughtful prompts to guide your reflections.
- **Encouragement:** Find peace and wisdom in God's Word, even on your busiest days.
- **Connection:** Share your insights and questions with a supportive, like-minded community.
- **Renewed Perspective:** Discover practical truths that bring clarity to decisions and challenges.
- **BONUS Gift:** A 31-day Wisdom Seekers Journal to guide your reflections and prayers.

Discover Daily
Wisdom to *Quiet* the
Chaos and *Renew*
Your Spirit

JOIN THE WISDOM SEEKERS CHALLENGE



Who Influences You Most?

DOWNLOAD YOUR COMPLIMENTARY COPY OF THE CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE RESOURCE.

DOWNLOAD HERE



5-Fold Workshop

LEARN OF YOUR SPIRITUAL CALLING & HOW TO ACTIVATE IT W/ GOD'S
POWER THROUGH THE 5-FOLD GIFTS

As pastors, teachers, evangelist, prophet & apostles

November 25 @ 4 PM-7 PM CST

FILL OUT THE FORM AND WE'LL GET YOU IN THE WORKSHOP!

Your Name Here...*

Your Email Address Here...*

Your Phone Number Here...*

SAVE MY SPOT

NiccieKliegl.com will use your information to send you workshop updates & promotional content. You can unsubscribe at anytime. See our [privacy policy](#) for more information.

5 - FOLDS Leading legacy Academy

WHERE WE LIVE | LOVE | LEARN | LEAD
ACCORDING TO THE CALL

EQUIPPING OF THE SAINTS EPHESIANS 4:11



Carrie Hurley | Niccie Kliegl | Carolyn Davis

IT'S IMPORTANT THAT I KEEP THIS GROUP TO 20 & ↓ SO I
KNOW EACH ATTENDEE WELL AND CAN HEAR HOW THE HOLY
SPIRIT IS UNIQUELY CALLING YOU.

JOIN

US!

TRAINING

- 12 WEEKS/PROGRAM
- 5-PART PROGRAM: (1) APOSTLES (2) PROPHETS (3) EVANGELISTS (4) PASTORS (5) TEACHERS
- TEACHERS/STUDENTS
- SPIRITUAL WARFARE
- EXPERT GUEST
- WEEKLY VIDEO TRAINING
- WEEKLY GROUP COACHING SESSIONS
- 3 PRIVATE SESSIONS
- BIBLICALLY BASED CURRICULUM

SUPPORT

- NICCIE: CONNECTING TO THE SPIRIT IN PRAYER TRAINING
- NICCIE: LIVE SEMINAR ON HEARING THE VOICE OF GOD.
- CAROLYN: HOW TO STUDY THE WORD
- CARRIE: ARMOR OF GOD

ACTIVATIONS

- WEEKLY ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE THE SKILLS OF PASTOR, APOSTLE, EVANGELIST, TEACHER, & PROPHET
- PARTICIPATION IS NOT REQUIRED.
- IN-PERSON RETREAT COMMISSIONING, SHARE GIFTING, FIND SUPPORT & ENCOURAGEMENT AS YOU HEAD OUT ON YOUR OWN.

COMMUNITY

- SAFE PLACE FOR DISCUSSION.
- YOUR OWN LIKE-MINDED COMMUNITY
- CONTRIBUTE IN LEGACY LEADER MAGAZINE
- 5-FOLD PODCAST
- CARRIE: WEEKLY INTERCESSORY PRAYER
- CARRIE: ONE GUIDED GROUP INNER HEALING
- NICCIE: LIVE AM BIBLE STUDY



5-FOLD CURRICULUM

Module 1: Introduction to the Five-Fold Ministry



Module 2: Identifying Your Calling



Module 3: The Ministry of the Apostle



Module 4: The Ministry of the Prophet



Module 5: The Ministry of the Evangelist



Module 6: The Ministry of the Pastor



Module 7: The Ministry of the Teacher



Module 8: Walking in the Spirit and Spiritual Gifts



Module 9: Building Unity and Functioning Together in the Body



Module 10: Practical Ministry and Going Forward



Final Assessment and Commissioning

