Your introduction lays a strong foundation for exploring the concept of transcendence in the context of marriage and love. Here are some positive aspects and areas for improvement:

Positive Feedback:

* Clarity of Definitions: You provide clear definitions of transcendence and different forms of love, making it easier for readers to understand the concepts you'll be discussing.
* Personal Connection: Your personal testimony adds authenticity and relatability to the introduction, helping readers connect with your message on a deeper level.
* Spiritual Perspective: Introducing God's Agape Love and emphasizing the importance of seeking divine guidance in marriage adds depth and spiritual insight to the discussion.
* Engagement: By inviting readers to reflect on their own marriages and offering prayers for their journey, you actively engage them in the content and create a sense of community.

Areas for Improvement:

* Structure and Flow: Consider restructuring the introduction to create a smoother flow of ideas. You might start with a brief overview of the book's purpose and then introduce the concept of transcendence before delving into personal anecdotes and definitions.
* Transition Sentences: Add transitional sentences between paragraphs to guide readers through the different sections of the introduction more seamlessly. This will improve the overall coherence of your writing.
* Citation Integration: While you provide definitions from various sources, consider integrating these citations more smoothly into the text to avoid interrupting the flow of your writing.
* Conciseness: Some sentences could be condensed or revised for clarity and conciseness. Be mindful of wordiness and aim for brevity where possible to keep the reader's attention focused.
* Closing: Consider adding a stronger concluding paragraph to summarize the main points of the introduction and leave readers with a clear sense of what to expect from the rest of the book.

Overall, your introduction effectively sets the stage for exploring the transformative power of God's love in marriage. With some structural adjustments and minor revisions for clarity, it can become even more engaging and impactful for your readers.

**Transcendent Love**

**The Restoration of a Broken Marriage**

Introduction

Transcendence comes from the Latin prefix trans, meaning beyond and the word scandore meaning to climb. Beyond ordinary limitations. According to Blue Letter Bible

Transcendence means beyond or above the range of normal or merely physical human experience. According to Christianity.com, contributing writer Feb 4,2021

**Transcendent Love**Transcendence also means outside of human comprehension. According to Grand Canyon University Nov 14, 2019

If you have tried everything you could think of to make things better in your marriage to no avail. While reading this book my prayer is that you will become aware of new tools that will be helpful and effective in resolving issues in your marriage.

When we fall in love with that special person, we have no idea of what we will encounter. We do not know about the twists and turns that will occur down the road as we continue in life. When the honeymoon is over, and it will come to an end, you will discover human love alone will not sustain your marriage.

Eros in the Greek means love, mostly of the sexual passion, The Modern Greek word “erotas” means intimate love. According to Wikipedia.org

One day you will realize that you need God’s Agape Love which is the highest form of love. Agape love is a sacrificial love that unites and heals. It is the love of God that we see through the cross of Jesus Christ. Agape isn’t born out of emotions, feelings, familiarity, or attraction but from the will and as a choice. Agape requires faithfulness, commitment, and sacrifice without expecting anything in return, according to Christianity.com

When we are trying to express how we feel or get a point across to our spouse; our words enter their ears. But when God speaks to a person it penetrates their heart. God knows how to get our attention because God speaks with a love that transcends all barriers. God knows you and your spouse better than anyone; he is the manufacturer. Therefore, if a problem occurs with the product, we should consult the one who made it and not attempt to fix it ourselves.

As you peruse this personal testimony of the miracle that God performed in our marriage. There will be moments of reflection where you can pause and consider areas in your own marriage. I pray God’s Transcendent Love will consume your marriage in every area according to God’s Holy Covenant.

**The Restoration of a Broken Marriage**

Outline

Chapter One

Innocent Love

1. A Fairy Tale Beginning
2. The Courtship
3. Growing Up Fast
4. Get Directions Before Driving into The Unknown

Chapter Two

Starting from Scratch

1. The Dream
2. Our Comical Apartment

Chapter Three

New Discoveries

1. Learning How to Embrace Consequences
2. Discovering What I Really Knew about God
3. I Discovered That God Was REAL
4. Beware of Imitations

Chapter Four

Drifting

1. Drawing Closer to God
2. Drifting Away
3. You Need an Anchor

Chapter Five

Communication Connection

a. Communication is Key

b. Communication is Two Way

c. Warning: Don’t Open the Door

Chapter Six

The Darkest Storm

a. The Calm Before the Storm

b. A Storm is Brewing

c. Hold On and Rest in Him

d. Riding Out the Storm

Chapter Seven

Angles of Encouragement

Chapter Eight

When the End is The Beginning

Chapter Nine

Starting Over

Chapter Ten

Love Conquers All

Chapter Eleven

An Invitation to Experience the Miracle

Chapter One

Innocent Love

A Fairy Tale Beginning

One hot summer night, the moon was shining, oh so bright. The wind was blowing a wonderful soft breeze so light, you could feel this would be a very special summer night.

A young man and young woman were taking a stroll in the early night. When their paths crossed, then it happened as quickly as a flash of a speeding light. Their eyes met and at first, they could not say a word, two hearts beating as one, were the only thing that could be heard. Now, the young woman was wearing pink and white. To the young man she seemed to glow and glisten under the Magnificence moonlight. The young man was tall, and handsome and was dressed so neatly it made the young woman feel light on her feet.

They exchanged names there under a starlit sky. You see cupid was present and without any warning, the love arrows began to fly. Allen and Carolyn began to share, suddenly, they began to stare. Each one could see a twinkle in the other's eye. Something special had taken place between this teenage girl and guy.

Then the courtship began, movies and dinner every weekend. The walks under the moonlight holding hands, singing love songs to each other as they discussed wedding plans. Allen and Carolyn were married on August 20, 1973, now all they dreamed and talked about had finally become reality.

The Courtship

 .

Don’t you remember when you first met your husband?  When you think back to that day, afternoon, evening or night.  Can’t you remember the specific details, like how the room looked, or how the weather was.  Do you remember the light in his eyes and the expression on his face when you made eye contact for the first time?  Girl, don’t you remember how it felt, like everything stood still and you two were all that mattered even though the room may have been filled with other people.

Well, the picture is crystal clear in my mind.  Reminiscing back to the year 1970, I was 15 years old entering my second year of high school.  My family had just moved to a new apartment, and this was my first weekend home.  You see, during the summer I babysat for my cousin Emma who lived on the South side of Chicago.

One evening my sisters Darlean, Sharon and I were walking home from the restaurant.   As we approached the corner a group of guys was walking toward us.  Allen was one of those guys, you see my sisters would go to the park during the day and while there the young men would play basketball.  They had already met some of the guys, as they began to greet each other Allen and I made eye contact.   Which was broken with my sister Darlean saying, Carolyn this is Allen, and Allen this is my sister Carolyn. I recall Allen saying you're looking good Carolyn, and I replied you don’t look so bad yourself Allen.  He then asked if he could come by in an hour or so. He would like to talk to me, I said okay.  We sat and got acquainted that night under the stars, I must admit I really enjoyed it. He asked if he could come by the next day.  The days turned into weeks and the weeks turned into months. Most weekends we would go downtown to the movies and to dinner afterwards.  We would go window shopping, looking at the clothes and making jokes about buying each other outfits and shoes we knew the other person wouldn't dare wear.  We had so much fun, I remember him taking me to restaurants where live music was being played while we ate. It was romantic and I was impressed. Another romantic thing we would do while spending time together was to sing love songs to each other.  There was no doubt about it, we were in love.

Looking back, I was way too young to get so caught up in a young man. My focus should have been on school and setting goals for my future. I had no idea and no expectations of what I wanted in life.

Growing Up Fast

As a result of our love, a beautiful baby girl was born May 23,1973, at 1:28 am we named her LaTasha Shanice.  I was in my junior year of high school when Tasha was born but there was never any doubt in my mind about finishing school.  I was determined that I had to graduate, and I had to graduate with my class.  Although, there was no money for senior pictures nor prom because I now had a baby to take care of and she came first.

Allen began to save so we could get married.  You see there was no way my mother would agree that we would move in together unless we were married. We found an apartment in a building my sisters Darlean and Debra lived in not far from my mother.

Allen and I were married on August 20,1973 with both of our mothers present.  Allen was 19 years old I was 17, my mother signed giving her consent.  We were babies, with a newborn baby about to enter a full-grown world with no idea of what to expect.  The only thing we knew for sure was we were in love and at that time nothing else mattered.

Get Directions Before Driving Into The Unknown

Marriage is for mature people!  Marriage is not a game it is real life with consequences.  I wish we had received counsel and directions. like getting directions before you leave driving to a location you have never been to before.  Marriage is a very long road that has a lot of twists and turns.

There are mountains and valleys, bumps and dips.  You will encounter all types of weather you will go through rain and hailstorms.  The season may be summer, but it won’t stop it from snowing.  Don’t be surprised if it’s winter but flowers bloom.

It’s a great idea to sit down together and consider the cost of your lifetime commitment.  When life happens, and it will, you need to hold on tight to your commitment to each other.  I can’t stress how important it is to be totally honest with each other.  Whatever you hold back will always come out later; it could be years later, but it will resurface.  When two people truly love each other the key to securing that love is transparency.  If you can’t be open and truthful with each other in the beginning, you are already headed for trouble.

To be honest no one offered advice to us. I’m not sure if we would have listened anyway. We felt that we had it all figured out. We didn’t think about a savings account or a rainy-day fund. We had no idea of a budget all I knew was I had to finish school and Allen knew he had to keep a job to pay the bills.

You may feel like we got this, no one can tell us what to do with our lives.  If you don’t get directions, you will end up in a ditch!  One day you will realize and wish you had gotten a map from somebody and paid attention to the directions.

As you read this book you may realize your marriage is in a ditch.  And you see the directions you refused to accept or pay attention to were needed after all.  I have experienced while driving thinking I was going in the right direction only to realize that I missed a turn and had to go back and find the exit to get back on track. That’s what this book is all about, I’m praying the wrong turns we made will point you in the right direction.

You see, being in love is not enough.  You can have knowledge, but if you don’t have the wisdom to use it, it will do you no good.

I would love to share just a little of what has been revealed to me with you.

                                               Chapter Two

                                           Starting From Scratch

                                              The Dream

Every woman has dreams of a beautiful wedding with the perfect colors, beautiful flowers.   Some women dream about their wedding day long before their prince charming comes along.  They already have in mind who their maid of honor and bridesmaids would be.

Some even imagine the type of dress they see themselves in, the song they want played as they walk down the aisle.

While growing up, when I thought of marriage, I would always say to myself. I will marry a man and that man will be the father of all my children. I will not sleep around with Tom, Dick and Harry men will not discuss me with each other.

My dream was to get married and that is just what I did.  We had already had our honeymoon and our beautiful baby girl.  The only thing left to do was to get married, move into our own apartment and playhouse.  I had no idea of how to be a wife, and Allen didn’t have a clue of what a husband was.  The only thing we knew for sure is we were in love.

Monday, August 20,1973 is a day I will never forget.   We hired my brother- in law Clarence to drive Allen, myself and our mothers to downtown Chicago where we were married at City Hall.   We were so excited about exchanging our wedding vows, but we had no rings, no flowers and no idea of what we were about to encounter.  The one thing we were sure of was our love for each other.  I recall my mother saying to me with concern in her voice that just because I had a baby by Allen didn’t mean I had to marry him.  I vividly remember replying, I don’t want to marry Allen because I have a baby. I love him, with that answer she gave me her consent and blessings.

                          Our Comical Apartment

I am so grateful to everyone that helped us get started.  My Uncle Reverend Ben Smith Sr. was the pastor of my family church, Israel Samuel AME Zion.  After finding out I had gotten married he called and said he wanted to do something to help he knew we needed everything.  Since I was a member of the church, he would have an announcement made for the members to bring gifts after service one Sunday.

My mother was getting new furniture, so she gave us the sectional she no longer needed. The legs were broken, so we put bricks under it.  She also gave us a cocktail table; the legs were loose if you bumped it when walking past the whole table would lean in the direction it was bumped.

My grandmother gave us a yellow hand-painted kitchen table and four chairs.   You had to be careful to pick the chairs up by the medal frames on each side.  If you picked it up by the back, you would be holding the back in your hands and the seat and medal frame would all go in different directions.

My Aunt Sophie gave us valuable instructions along with a twin-size bed frame.  She explained this is a twin-size frame but go and buy a three-quarter length mattress and it will make it bigger.  Following her instructions, we did just that.  The bed was bigger, but the mattress hung off both sides of the bed. We had to be careful to keep from falling out.

Allen’s mother gave us a black and white TV.  It was so small, it’s a good thing we were in love because we had to sit close if we wanted to watch it together. She also gave us our first Christmas tree, it was silver with a light that sat on the floor as it rotated and reflected on the tree it would turn yellow, green, red and blue. It was so beautiful to us!

My Uncle James, who was my favorite uncle, purchased a brand-new refrigerator, it was the only new item we owned.  I remember him saying to us, I don’t want the baby’s milk in a used refrigerator.  I don’t want you to get up at night to get a bottle and the milk is spoiled.

Yes, we laughed a lot in our first three-room apartment.  Every room was filled with jokes and a whole lot of love.  We didn’t have much, but we had each other.

                           Chapter Three

New Discoveries

                  Discovering How to Embrace Consequences

My husband and I discovered that it would have been better if we had prepared by saving before we got married.  Allen did not graduate high school because he had to cross gang territory to attend school.  One day he said while coming home the gang was chasing him and another young man.  Shots began to ring out when the young man running next to him had a bullet go through his coat.  That was the last day Allen attended school.  Now he had a newborn baby and a wife still in high school.  One thing I can say, my husband always kept a job even if it was day labor.  I remember pampers being .99 cents a box. We also had cloth diapers; I also recall Similac formula was approx. .79 cent a can.

I soon discovered that being married and a mother was a lot more than playing house.    I had made a choice and sacrifice came with it.  My senior year of High School turned out very different from what I had imagined in my freshman year.  I must admit at times I wish I knew what going to prom felt like.  There was no money for Prom or Senior Pictures because there were bills to pay.  I was still a teenager, but I had stepped into a grown-up world.  I was determined to accomplish the task of graduating with my class. My mother was concerned that I would not finish school.  I felt I had to prove to her that I could do it.  I graduated in June 1974 with my husband and my mother in attendance.

One of my classes in High School was Office Occupation.  In my Senior year I went to school part of the day and worked the other part.  After finishing school, I was hired full time.

There were two ladies at work one was a Muslim the other a Jehovah Witness.  One lady was trying hard to convince me to go to the temple.  The other lady shared scriptures from the bible that sounded familiar, but I wasn’t sure of the meanings.  She kept inviting me to go to the hall.  To be honest, listening to them was very confusing.  I said I was a Christian, but I could not even explain what a Christian was or believed.  When the Muslim lady began explaining that my body was made from the same substance the moon and stars were made of.  I realized I needed to find out the truth, because that didn’t sound right at all.

Discovering What I Knew About God

 My mother told me I was 6 months old when she agreed I could live with my grandparents, Elacey and Sue Bell Collins in Gary Indiana.  They were the first parents I knew; I called them mama and daddy. My grandfather was a minister, he taught me how to pray and would read the bible to me at night.  I will never forget him telling me “The words in red are Jesus talking” then he would continue reading.  I was extremely close to my grandparents my grandfather was my everything. When I was 8 years old, I went to live in Chicago with my mother and siblings.  My Mom would take me to church where my grandfather Reverend Archie Henry Smith pastored Israel Samuel A.M.E. Zion church. I still remember the choir marching in with their robes on singing “Walk in the light, beautiful light” many of the choir members were my cousins.

It was a tradition that all the children at the age of 12 attend a week- long service and sit on the chairs in the front row. It was called the mourners- bench.  The choir would sing, and my grandfather would preach.  During this week I was not allowed to play and at a certain time during the day my mother would have me go into a room alone to pray.  Now, I had no problem praying my grandfather had made sure of that.  But after I had said the Lord’s prayer three or four times there was nothing else to say.  I would just sit there in the dark room until my mother said it was time to come out.

Finally, Friday arrived, the last night of the revival. On this night a chair was placed in front of each person. When my grandfather told us to sit in the chair in front of us, we switched seats.   My understanding was this was an indication that you crossed over.  I had no idea why I crossed over or what any of it meant.

My grandfather asked each person how they wanted to be baptized.  My mother had already instructed me when asked this question to say I want to be immersed like Jesus.  But the majority wanted to be sprinkled so everybody got sprinkled.  My mother was not pleased; she stated it only wet my hair after she had pressed it out.

I loved to go to church, my Uncle James would pick me up on Sundays.  Sometimes my mother and sisters would go, but I went every Sunday.  There was a store across the street from the church.  My cousin Florene Anderson would give me change to buy snacks after Sunday School every week.  No doubt about it she was my favorite cousin.

I remember the Sunday School lessons with the little cards that had pictures on the front and the lesson on the back.  I remember being on the Usher board, my Aunt Sophie was president.  My cousin Yvonne and I were junior ushers.  We spent a lot of weekends either at Yvonne’s house or my house.

I recall my grandfather's favorite song “If you make it to glory before I do, please save a seat for me”.  When the choir would finish singing, he would say “It makes the hair rise up on my head”.  Yvonne and I would laugh so hard because he had no hair, and he was bald.

I attended church all my life now as an adult I discovered I didn’t understand what I said I believed in.  I had a longing to know if God was real and which God was real.  The God at my church, the God at the hall of the Jehovah Witness or the God at the temple the Muslims attend.

I remember in my first year of High school there was a young lady who we called sanctified her name was Shirley. She wore long dresses, no makeup, and no pants. She kept inviting me to go to church with her and I went to an evening service. I had been having stomach pains while in service. Her mother put her hand on my stomach and prayed where the pain was a burning feeling came and then the pain was gone. That night was really my first experience with God. When the pastor asked if there was anybody there that was not saved, I raised my hand I knew I wasn’t because I didn’t even know what it meant. I went to the alter and repented and accepted Jesus but when I got home and told my mother and sister’s that I was saved my sisters laughed at me and said, you can’t dance anymore, you can’t wear pants anymore. Ha, ha Carolyn is saved I was already different, so I said, well forget it I’m not saved. I never forgot that encounter with God it was forever etched in my heart.

One Sunday my mother felt led to attend a church in walking distance from where she lived.  When the pastor prayed the prayer of faith she felt popping in

her joints and was healed of arthritis.  She continued to attend because she was receiving and understanding the word of God in a way she never had before.

I began attending church with my mom.  I believe because I desperately wanted to know God, he began to reveal himself to me.  The songs had a meaning that I had never understood before.  The teaching of the word had a light I never knew.  After sitting in Sunday services for a few weeks and attending bible studies, I realized that I had never accepted Jesus in my heart.  I had never repented my sins!  I believe my Grandparents and my uncle taught me the best they knew, but I had never been introduced to Jesus.  It was like a light shining so bright, and I had to find out more about that light.

December 1974, At the end of the Pastor ministering the word he asked if anyone wanted to except Jesus into their heart. I went to the altar and told the pastor I wanted to be saved.  I will never forget walking to the prayer room with Missionary Idellar Sams that Sunday morning.  She made it very clear that if I was sincere when I repented of my sins and asked Jesus to be my savior my life would never be the same.   I prayed that Sunday morning in the prayer room at New Evangelical Bible Church.  I didn’t see any stars, but something happened that I don't have words to explain, and my life changed forever.

I Discovered that God was REAL.

I was so excited to go to Wednesday night mid-week service.   The Sunday before I had repented of my sins and invited Jesus into my heart as my Lord and Savior. Now my prayer was God show me that you are real.  I had been so confused, I wanted to make sure I was on the right track.  With everything in me I wanted to know God.

*“Then (with a deep longing) you will seek me and require me (as vital necessity) and (you will) find me when you search for me with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:13 amplified*

At the end of service Pastor Willie J Sams said if anyone wants special prayer come to the altar.  I remember saying over and over in my mind as I walked down the aisle, God please show me that you are real.   I recall Pastor Sams putting his hand on my shoulder, I don’t remember what he prayed.  When he was done, he said lift your hands and say thank you Jesus.  I lifted my hands and began to say thank you Jesus as instructed.  I felt a joy that I never knew existed!    Mere words could not explain what I was experiencing.  It felt like something was turning over and over deep down in my chest. The more I said thank you Jesus, the faster it turned and the more joy I could feel.  I had an encounter with God that night, God continued to reveal himself to me.  I was convinced beyond any doubt that Jesus was my Savior and GOD WAS REAL!

*“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.” Matthew 5:6 NKJ*

Beware of Imitations

~ A Moment of Reflection ~

John 15:1 says, “Jesus is the true vine.”

If Jesus is the true vine we must beware of the false vine.

Everything that appears real is not always authentic. Wherever there is a real thing you will always find a counterfeit. For example, when shopping for jewelry you don’t want something that’s not real because when you wear it a few times it will begin to turn its true color. If that is true in the natural, it’s also true in the spiritual.

When God said let us make man in our image in our likeness. Then he blew into man the breath of life which was part of himself. When man sinned in the garden that spirit part inside of man died. Ever since that time there has been a void inside of man, he seeks to fill it. There is a constant search, a hunger that can’t be satisfied. There is a deep hole that no matter where man turn, no matter how much alcohol, drugs, sex or money he can’t be filled. That longing and desire is the part of God that he put on the inside of man that need to be revived or born again. There is only one way for that to happen man must first recognize that he is separated from God repent of his sin and accept Jesus as their Savior and Lord.

*John 3:1-6 NLT “There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. After dark evening, he came to speak with Jesus. Rabbi, he said, we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you. Jesus replied, I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the kingdom o God. What do you mean? exclaimed Nicodemus. How can an old man go back into his mother’s womb and be born again? Jesus replied, I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life.*

There is no way around it we MUST be born again!

The only way man can come to this realization is by hearing the word of God. Because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. The bible says we will know the truth and the truth will set us fee. If we hear and receive a lie when it comes to God, we will be deceived, and that void will not be filled with the true God but a false God. You may ask how can I tell who the true God is? I’m glad you asked, everything concerning the true God will line up with his written word. The rule of thumb is whatever is presented to you, and it does not matter who presents it, if it is not written in the word of God (The Holy Bible) do not receive it! You may also hear some say Jesus was just a good man, but the bible says Jesus is the Son of God and the only way to God is through His Son. If you attempt to come to God, any other way you are like a thief or robber.

To go to church is not enough, you need to know what that church’s doctrine is and that it is based on the virgin birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It can have a cross on top and bible verse below it but if it does not teach the complete word of God run. Many times, the word of God is twisted to say what someone want it to say. That’s why we should not take anyone word at face value, but we should study ourselves. The bible says we should study to show ourselves approved rightly dividing the word of God. It has been said the bible is full of contradictions but let me assure you that if you study the word of God, not just read the bible but get a good study bible. Invest in a bible dictionary and look up words you will find there are no contradictions. The problem is people attempt to study the bible like they would a textbook. The bible is not a textbook it is the living word of God. Therefore, if a spiritually dead person attempts to study the living word of God, they will never understand it because they are spiritually dead!

When you are searching for God beware of getting in every prayer line and accepting every prophecy. Just as you are particular about eating from different restaurants, be careful of the church you receive from. Many people are seeking a word from God, but they are looking to receive that word from a man. Don’t get me wrong, God does speak through men but if the word given does not line up with the written word of God it is a false word. Seek God for yourself I promise He will give you the word you are seeking.

II Timothy 3:16 AMPC “*Every Scripture is God-breathed (given by His inspiration) and profitable for instruction, for reproof and, conviction of sin, for correction of error and discipline in obedience, (and) for training in righteousness (in holy living, in conformity to God’s will in thought, purpose, and action”*

The scripture says that all scripture is God-breathed meaning the word of God is the breathing out of God himself. John 6:63b says, *“the words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.”* Breath and spirit mean the same thing therefore, it’s not the black or red letters in the bible that give life, but the spirit who is the essence of those words. Once this is understood we come to the bible not to learn something new but to be touched by the spirit which is the life-giving essence of the word. If we open our spirits to the spirit of God’s word the spirit of God will then impart new life and understanding of himself.

A person can also attend a church where the whole word of God is being taught but if the individual never accepts Jesus and make Him Lord of their lives, they will live defeated. Also, to say Jesus come into my heart forgive me of all my sins is the very beginning. Just saying words are not enough God want our whole heart. Revelation 3:15 says God would rather we be hot or cold because if we are Lukewarm, it makes him nauseated. Everyone must develop a personal relationship with God. The only way to do that is to spend time in his word, prayer and worship. How bad do you really want to know God. Are you willing to surrender ALL? We must surrender ALL because God will not except anything less.

Pastors and Ministers will be held accountable for leading souls to God and then leaving them on their own to sink or swim. People must be taught and not left to themselves someone must take them by the hand and show them how to walk according to the word of God! Does it take time? Yes, it does. Will you have to sacrifice? Yes, you will. Pastors, Ministers and Teachers have a very important responsibility according to God’s plan.

*James 3:1 NKJV My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgement.*

Speaking of Imitation People themselves must be real before they can receive the real. As my Pastor Ronnie Woodfork often says, “It’s time to stop playing church and be the church” People want to live their lives the way they want to then when things go wrong, they expect God to rescue them it doesn’t work like that. If you are not praying, reading God’s word and have an intimate relationship with him when everything is well. Why do you want to contact him when things are going wrong? God is not Let’s Make a Deal, or Burger King. People tend to make God promises if you do that for me, I’ll do this for you. Then when things get better, they forget all about the promise they made.

*Ecclesiastes 5:5 AMPC It is better that you should not vow than that you should not pay.*

Chapter Four

.                                                    Drifting

                                           Drawing Closer to God

According to the Oxford Dictionary the meaning of Drifting is “carried slowly by a current of air or water.”

We were excited to welcome our second daughter DeKisha Carol on September 18,1975 at 10:03am.  You see, this was another occasion where God demonstrated His mighty power to me.  The doctors induced my labor at approximately 9:30am due to my water breaking the night before.  The doctor indicated it would probably be late evening before I delivered.  But remembering the missionaries praying for me at church saying “it won’t be much longer before you deliver your baby.  God told me to tell you when you go into labor ask him for whatever you want, and he will perform it” I looked at the clock then looked up at the ceiling and reminded God of what he spoke through the missionaries.  I prayed and asked God to let my baby be born within an hour.   When I tried to tell them, the baby was coming the nurses said it was too soon.  When they finally checked, everybody started rushing and saying the baby was coming! God is an on-time God and He will do everything he promised!

My father Clarence Mosby Sr. transitioned October,1975 and my mother Miley Mosby transitioned January,1976.  This was a very difficult time in my life.  I had a lot of unanswered questions.  I was 19 years old, married with two children and no parents.  I was grateful to still have my grandmother Sue Bell Collins, Tasha and Kisha spent time with her in the summer.  God was so faithful to surround me with women that were very instrumental in caring for my children.

My mom loved ALL her grandchildren so much, she received a diagnosis of colon cancer and still insisted on her grandchildren not going to babysitters but staying with her until she absolutely could no longer care for them.

I am so grateful that Pastor Sams didn’t allow me to just sit but had me be active by teaching the Primary Sunday School class.  I was teaching Sunday School with Tasha sitting in a chair next to me while Kisha was in her carrier seat at my other side.   We were at the hospital a lot with Tasha, but with Kisha I was learning to pray, anoint with oil and speak the word of God over her. Yes, I was developing a closer relationship with God.

Drifting Away

My desire was that we go to church as a family, but my husband was not interested.  He didn’t understand what happened to the young woman he married.  My desires were no longer the same.  I would no longer sip a little wine to fit in, I never experienced being drunk.   I was never a smoker even though my best friend Sharon and I would buy a pack of cigarettes and smoke while coming home from school. When we reminisce as adults we laugh because at the time neither one of us knew that we couldn’t wait to get home because we were both dizzy and nauseated but we put up a good front while we were together.  We would dress in the same colors I’ll never forget the red, white and blue jeans with bold stripes. With the choker pullover tops that had little buttons on the side.  One of us would wear red and the other white and we were cool.

When a relationship begins to drift apart it’s so subtle you don't even realize it.  It’s an unconscious process of gradually moving away.  Deep inside the love is there but the time you spend together is not the same.  You go through the motions, but you can sense something is missing.

In the beginning Allen and I were inseparable, we did everything together. Now that I was developing a relationship with God, I didn’t even consider my husband.

As time goes on in a marriage if you are not careful you can take each other for granted.  Going to the movies and walking under the moonlight was no longer happening.  A woman desires attention and affection especially after two pregnancies. Your body changing, the size you once wore is a vague memory.   Your emotions are all over the place and you don’t have a clue what’s happening.  I recall my mother saying, “a woman experience so many changes in her body sometimes she does not have words to express how she feels.”

A man desires emotional support, encouragement and respect.  Women we influence our husbands in so many areas both positive and negative. When the woman is upset the whole house is upset, when the women is at peace the whole house is at peace. Women must learn to be quiet, always having to have the last word is not the way. Women are the atmosphere setters; they tend to want to get their point across and have the last word. Women must study to be quiet according to I Thessalonians 4:11. You may have worked hard to build your marriage but saying the wrong words will destroy it. The husband may be the strongest physically, but the woman holds the power when it comes to influence. God gave woman this power, but we must be wise in how we use it.

*Proverbs 14:1 NLT “A wise woman builds her home, but a foolish woman tears it down with her own hands.”*

Women can build a man up or tear him down but remember if your tear him down you allow room for another woman to build him up. It might have been hit and miss but I guarantee you my husband, nor I knew how to do any of these things. You see, we had no idea of what we needed ourselves so how could we supply what the other person needed. Everything we experienced we had to learn from the school of hard knocks. We had to figure it out at each turn holding on to each other as we navigated through life so there would not be a wreck.

You Need an Anchor

According to portal.ct.gov: an anchor is the means of securing the ropes and/or system to something solid. An anchor (also called an anchor point) is a stationary object capable of supporting the load attached to it. The primary anchor shall be backed up by a secondary anchor to provide support. This backup anchor must be in line with the primary anchor and the load and must also act to counter the type of force that the load is applying to the primary anchor.

Every marriage needs an anchor, something that will grip the surface deep beneath to keep everything steady. When the winds of life begin to blow an anchor keeps the marriage in place and causes it to stay on course. That anchor be should strong, steady and secure. If you attempt to make anything other than God, your anchor it’s just a matter of time before your marriage shipwreck.

~ A Moment of Reflection ~

*2 Samuel 22:49 AMPC Who brought me out from my enemies. You also lifted me up above those who rose up against me; You delivered me from the violent man.*

Abuse is any action or behavior that causes harm or mental anguish. There are 8.

Types of abuse: Emotional, Sexual, Physical, Intellectual, Material and financial,

Mental, Cultural, and Discriminatory. According to marriage.com

There are many marriages in trouble, some wives and even husbands suffer in silence. According to https: medium.com there are six types of emotional abuse that can occur in relationships:

* Verbal insults and Belittling
* Gaslighting
* Emotional Neglect
* Control and Manipulation
* Intimidation and Threats
* Blame-Shifting and Guilt Tripping

If you are in a marriage that is physically abusive. I suggest you seek shelter someplace else as soon as possible. Maybe later you can work things out with proper counseling. My advice to any individual in this situation is not to think twice about leaving, begin to think about an exit strategy. Never subject yourself to physical abuse under any circumstances. Remember nobody can take care of you better than you can.

It's possible to feel uncomfortable about how things may be said or done. You look the other way not expressing how you feel hoping for change in the other person. Remember you cannot change another person. In many cases you think things will get better, but they only get worse. You may have even noticed some things that you did not agree with. But you ignored your instincts and continued with a smile on your face but deep inside you were troubled.

Rember, you must set boundaries and people will treat you the way you allow them to. You must view yourself as valuable and love yourself if you want someone else to. You must stand up for yourself because if you don’t no one else can. Nobody can defend you like you.

The church is where people turn when they have exhausted all means. They are broken and distraught seeking help. Situations in life have overwhelmed them and church should be their safe haven. This should be a good thing; the problem is in many churches people are just like the world. There are many people that go to church, they know all the proper protocols. They know how to put their finger up when walking, they know how to single and double clap, they even know the proper places to say amen when the Pastor is preaching. But the word of God says.

“*Therefore, lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.” James 1:21-24 NKJV*

Couples put on their Sunday Best with a smile on their faces. They sing in the choir, usher and greet people at the door, pray at the altar and even preach from the pulpit.  But they can’t wait to get in the car, they fuss and even curse each other out.  Some men/women even physically abuse their spouses and still attend church. If God is a healer, why don’t the couples that attend church allow Him to heal their marriages. It’s shameful, the church should be throwing out anchors to rescue lost souls and people that are looking for help. But in many cases need an anchor itself the word of God says in Luke 6:46 NLT *“So why do you keep calling me Lord, Lord when you don’t do what I say.”* If we proclaim to be Christians, we should allow the word of God to transform us by renewing our minds with the word of God.

Perhaps couples are not aware of the vows they make before God expressing both committee and promise. They made an agreement with each other and entered a covenant. Marriage is not 50/50 it’s 100% of the husband and 100% of the wife. If the husband would spend 100% of his time seeking to please his wife and if the wife spent 100% of her time seeking to please her husband, I submit to you they both would be well pleased with each other.

You have two people from different upbrings and backgrounds coming together as one. Each person’s feelings, likes, and dislikes must be considered. You will have to learn how each other perceives different situations and respect them. It’s not just you any longer your other half must be considered.

It would be wonderful if both husband and wife knew the Lord and He was the anchor of their souls.  But one of you holding tight to the rope of God’s word and trusting Jesus as you ride the waves of life will make all the difference in your marriage.

You will need an anchor gripped to a firm foundation if you have a blended family. The most important thing in this type of situation is for the husband and wife to be on one accord and stay on one accord. Don’t allow the children to separate you by telling the wife one thing, and the husband another. Close all doors to the enemy in the beginning, lay some ground rules and stick to them. Remember when you married each other you married every problem that other person already had. You must accept whatever the issues are and seek to resolve them as one. There is no problem that can’t be resolved but you must work together, you are on the same team and if you have allowed a third team to develop get rid of it. The answer is not divorcing its communication!

An anchor is a necessity because your marriage will enter choppy waters.  You will need something to make it steady.  You will be sailing along fine then suddenly; a storm will come out of clear blue skies.  That’s where the Transcendence of God's Love will take over.  His love surpasses our love, His love can do what our love can’t.  Because God is Love!  If He is not your anchor, he is patiently waiting for you to invite him into your life.  He will then direct and guide your marriage according to his word and put it on the path of recovery.

You have tried it your way……What have your results been?  Are you tired of being tired?  Are you ready to release it and allow God to work it out?   Are you ready to trust God to take control because things are so out of control?

*“Are you weary, carrying a heavy burden? Come to me. I will refresh your life, for I am your oasis. Simply join your life with mine. Learn my ways and you’ll discover that I’m gentle, humble, and easy to please. You will find refreshment and rest in me. For all that I require of you will be pleasant and easy to bear.” Matthew 11:28-30 TPT*

Chapter Five

                             Communication Connection

Stay Connected

According to <https://www.archesbeachweddings.com> Wedding vows are words of commitment, love and dedication between two people. The bride and groom exchange their promises to one another with their closest loved ones and friends present as witnesses. A wedding vow is a promise, most often in the form of words, exchanged between two people when they get married.

~ A Moment of Reflection~

Vows should be honored and not given up on so easily. Endurance is a virtue that must be embraced but the question is how you obtain it. The bible says in

James 1:5 NLT *“If you need wisdom, ask our God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. The bible also says in Matthew 19:26b “Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible.*

Communication is necessary for a successful marriage. I remember when my husband and I would talk throughout the day and night. We would laugh as we shared with each other about everything. We never ran out of things to say, and we felt free to express ourselves to each other. If you are not careful over time you can lose that connection. Check the outlet every now and then to keep it secure. Be observant and recognize changes in your spouse. Don’t ignore the small things when you see something out of the ordinary address it. Keep the communication connected tight between the two of you.

Maintain a heart connection, it is the worst feeling to desire to express yourself to your spouse only to find they are not hearing your words. Most importantly they are not hearing your heart. The perspective of the wife is important, and the opinion of the husband is equally important, the problem is how you express your viewpoints to each other. Both should be respectful of the other, it may be helpful to talk after tempers have calmed down. Remember Love covers, Love protects, and Love refuses to hurt.

The challenges of life began to come.  Allen was laid off work, he would go to day labor to make ends meet.  I continued to work, take care of the children and attend church.  From the beginning my husband and I always put all the income together. We discussed prioritized and paid the bills. I took what was needed to buy what the children needed or get my hair done. My husband took money to get hair cut etc. We were both working and the money that came into the house was our money, we didn’t divide bills, we were both responsible for all of them, we created them together. Finances can cause a huge disconnect in marriage, but you must communicate with each other.  Discuss how the bills will be handled and who will take the lead role if you choose not to pay them together. Every major decision should be discussed between the two of you when it comes to money so that both of you will know what’s happening. Then if something arises later you will both be on the same page with no surprises. Once trust is broken when it relates to finance it’s not easy to regain it.

Communication Is Two Way

According to bibleproject.com; A covenant is a relationship between two who make binding promises to each other. And work together to reach a common goal. Covenants define obligations and commitments.

~ A Moment of Reflection~

*And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate.”*

Your marriage and whatever situation arise in it is between you and your spouse. When you entered a covenant with your spouse it did not include a third party. I can’t stress enough that any communication concerning your marriage should be discussed and decisions made should be between you and your spouse. Every person is different therefore every marriage is different. There is no cookie cutter marriage, sure you can look at other marriages to get examples but remember you must seek God when it comes to your personal marriage. Advice from others can often lead you down the wrong path. Beware, everyone you talk to doesn’t have your best interest at heart. The very thing they tell you not to take you will find they are taking much more. There have been cases where a husband-and-wife separate and the very person you have confined in is trying to hit on your spouse. It’s up to you to guard your marriage by keeping the third party out.

It’s important that you and your spouse develop the way you will communicate with each other. There is more than one way to communicate, nonverbal communication expresses a lot without saying a word. Your body language and facial expressions can say it all.

Beware of silent treatments, according to Wikipedia.org Silent treatment is the refusal to communicate with someone who is trying to communicate and elicit a response. The only way to resolve a problem is to expose it. Rember marriage is between two, don’t shut your spouse out and go solo.

Master your emotions, don’t speak out of anger. Once a word is released no matter how much you apologize you can never take that word back. When growing up I often heard “sticks and stone may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” That has never been farther from the truth. Words enter your heart, and you can feel them when they land. Words can cause wounds so deep that man can’t reach and only the love of God can heal.

Proverbs 18:21 TPT says “*Your words are so powerful that they will kill or give life, and the talkative person will reap the consequences.*

Warning: Don’t Open the Door

There is a door right in the middle of your marriage. One side of the door says Love/Covenant the other side says Temptation/Deception. Communication between you and your spouse is the delicate hinge that your marriage hangs on. If you are not careful and the door is opened to Temptation/Deception caused by communication breakdown. Depending on the temptation will determine if the marriage survives. If the husband spends his time loving and making sure his wife is happy and the wife spends her time respecting and making sure her husband’s needs are met. Both would be elated, but when the needs of one or the other spouse are unmet it leaves room for temptation/deception to creep in. Once the door is opened it’s hard to close it.

The affection my husband once showed was not as it was in the beginning. Every woman wants to know that she is beautiful in her husband’s eyes. If you don’t give your spouse what they need, someone else will. I met a young man at work who began to compliment me. I would have lunch with him from time to time. To be honest I enjoyed the attention because I was no longer getting it at home. We would talk on the phone because my husband was not home when getting off work, he would go out with friends, I missed the attention he once gave me. I am so grateful to God, He kept me during temptation. This young man was working during summer break from college. I gave my life to the Lord that December 1974. When this young man returned the following summer and approached me at work, I informed him that I had accepted Jesus as my Savior so I could no longer have lunch or hold conversations with him. I explained I was married and devoted to my husband. If not for the grace of God those lunches and phone conversations would have gone much further. I can say my husband is the only man I have ever known because God kept me.

~ A Moment of Reflection ~

*With much justifying and enticing argument she persuades him; with the allurements of her lips, she leads him {to overcome his conscience and his fears} and forces him along. Suddenly he {yields and} follows her reluctantly like an ox moving to the slaughter, like one in fetters going to the correction {to be given} to a fool or like a dog enticed by food to the muzzle. Till a dart {of passion} pierces and inflames his vitals; then like a bird fluttering straight into the net {he hastens}, not knowing that it will cost him his life. Proverbs 7:21-23 AMPC*

There are men and women waiting to comfort you, they stand on the other side of the door patiently waiting for it to open. Some people are married themselves and some don’t want a husband or wife because being with someone else’s spouse will cause them to have no responsibility.

Reasons that will force the door open to Temptation/Deception:

Withholding lovemaking

Feeling controlled

Neglecting to spend quality time.

Not feeling secure

Not feeling understood, respected, needed, heard, or appreciated.

Excessive complaints, criticism, being accused and name calling.

Being disrespectful to each other

Embarrassing your spouse in front of others

It is imperative that you and your spouse agree to keep the door shut and not allow Temptation/Deception any place at all in your marriage.

*Amos 3:3 AMPC says “Do two walk together except they make an appointment and have agreed?”*

Chapter Six

The Darkest Storm

The Calm Before the Storm

Calm before the Storm – Hush quiet before the storm according to [www.quora.com](http://www.quora.com)

A quiet or peaceful period before a period during which there is great activity, argument or difficulty according to Cambridge English dictionary.

A period of unusual tranquility or stability that seems likely to presage difficult times per Oxford Dictionary.

Before a tornado hits, the wind may die down and the air may become very still. This is the calm before the storm per cleavelandcounty.com

A lull or temporary period of quiet before a tumultuous event, such as a storm or an episode of excitement, activity, violence etc. per Dictionary.com

We welcomed our third child, a baby Boy Allen Gean Lee, II on October 3, 1978, at 10:55am. We were so excited to finally have a son. My husband went to his mother’s house and picked her up saying I HAVE A SON! I HAVE A SON! She replied that’s good now can you put me down. We laughed so hard as we reminisced about the day our son was born. Now our family was complete Tasha, Kisha and Allen Jr.

I did everything possible to ensure my children knew the lord. Every week they learned a new scripture, they participated in Sunday school and learned how to go up and speak in front of the church, Friday choir rehearsal and youth bible study was a must, Wednesday mid-week service, I wanted them to understand they should be engaged with God during the week not just on Sundays. I did not send my children to church, I took them, and I lived all I knew before them an example of a holy life. But there was a missing piece we did not worship as a family their dad did not participate. I never spoke badly to our children about their father. I taught them to pray and every day they would each include in their prayers God save our daddy. God had blessed me with three children, and it was my responsibility to train them and direct them in the way of God.

*Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. As arrows are in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one’s youth. Psalm 127:3-4 AMPC*

Our lives were calm and peaceful. My husband never interfered with me attending church. I made sure dinner was ready every Sunday before leaving for church. I made sure he could eat whenever he got ready. There were times I would stay home to spend quality time with him but that was not often. I loved God with all my mind, soul, heart and strength and He came first in everything.

My husband was a good provider, and he loved his family. We worked together when it came to the children picking up report cards, taking the children to school or picking them up was a team effort. Again, the missing piece was him being involved spiritually in their lives.

We had an opportunity to move closer to the children’s school. There was a building owned by a lady that attended my church. This was a great opportunity to be able to begin saving for our own home.

I always prayed trusting God to save my husband thanking Him for his salvation. We were about to enter a new year after moving into our new apartment. That New Year’s Eve I will never forget The Holy Spirit directed me to pray like I had never prayed before. I took authority over the devil; I commanded him to take his hands off my husband’s spiritual eyes and ears. My husband was a witness to my lifestyle, he saw my walk with God, yet he demonstrated his love to me, and I displayed my love for him. It was my desire that our marriage be complete in God. Deep in my heart I knew there was hope he could be saved.

~ A Moment of Reflection ~

That night I took authority and prayed according to the word of God. I gave God’s word back to Him mixed with faith I prayed according to:

*I Corinthians 7:14-16 TPT “For the unbelieving husband has been made holy by his believing wife. And the unbelieving wife has been made holy by her believing husband by virtue of his or her sacred union to a believer. Otherwise, the children from this union would be unclean, but in fact, they are holy. But if the unbelieving spouse wants a divorce, then let it be so. In this situation the believing spouse is not bound to the marriage, for God has called us to live in peace. And wives, for all you know you could one day lead your husband to salvation. Or husbands, how do you know for sure that you could not one day lead your wife to salvation?*

*I Peter 3:1-5 NLT “In the same way, you wives must accept the authority of your husbands. Then, even if some refuse to obey the Good News, your godly lives will speak to them without any words. They will be won over by observing your pure and reverent lives. Don’t be concerned about the outward beauty of fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes. You should clothe yourselves instead with the beauty that comes from within, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God. This is how the holy women of old made themselves beautiful. They put their trust in God and accepted the authority of their husbands.”*

*Matthew 18:18 NKJV “Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

*Matthew 16:19 NKJV “And I give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

*2 Peter 3:9 AMPC “The Lord does not delay and is not tardy or slow about what he promises, according to some people’s conception of slowness, but He is long-suffering (extraordinarily patient) toward you, not desiring that any should perish, but that all should turn to repentance.*

*Mark 11:22-25 NLT “Then Jesus said to the disciples, Have faith in God. I tell you the truth, you can say to this mountain, May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea, and it will happen. But you must really believe it will happen and have no doubt in your heart. I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you’ve received it, it will be yours. But when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too.*

*Ezekiel 18:4 NKJV “Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father as well as the soul of the son in Mine; The soul who sins shall die.*

*John 10:16 those also; AMPC “And I have other sheep (beside these) that are not of this fold. I must bring and impel those also; and they will listen to My voice and heed My call, and so there will be (they will become) one flock under one Shepherd.”*

Let me encourage you to write the above scriptures down in a journal or index cards. Feel free to insert your name and your spouse’s name where applicable you are about to enter spiritual warfare and you will need the word of God it’s your weapon. The Holy Spirit will lead you to other scriptures as well, these are just a few.

*II Corinthians 10:3-5 NKJV “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”*

*Luke 10:19 AMPC “Behold! I have given you authority and power to trample upon serpents and scorpions, and (physical and mental strength and ability) over all the power that the enemy (possesses); and nothing shall in any way harm you.*

A Storm is Brewing

Signs that a storm is coming: Large, puffy cumulus clouds. Darkening sky and clouds. Abrupt changes in wind direction. Sudden drop in temperature. Per [www.thehartford.com](http://www.thehartford.com)

One night I had a dream that my husband came home from work on a Friday. In the dream he turned his pockets inside out and said he had no money. I said what do you mean you have no money didn’t you get paid today he responded it’s up my nose. The dream was so real, when I woke up, I told him what I had dreamt. He replied, “I drink beer, alcohol and even a little weed but I would never do drugs”. I just kept saying it seemed so real. He laughed and said you shouldn’t go to sleep if you are going to be having dreams like that.

My husband moved to another area to work on his job and met new friends. I could always reach him when he wasn’t home, I had everybody’s phone numbers, I also knew their wives. I noticed a difference in his attitude, he began to stay out later than usual. I had no way of contacting him and our communication was way off. Staying out late turned into staying out days at a time.

I recall one night not knowing where he was, I began to search for information and found a phone number in his pocket. I called the number; a young lady answered the phone. I explained that I was looking for my husband and I found this number in his pocket. She then asked me a very disturbing question “do your husband do drugs?” I responded no she went on to say, “if he’s hanging out with so and so if he’s not doing drugs, he will be”. I hung up stunned as I thought back on the disturbing dream I had a few weeks prior. I noticed changes in my husband’s behavior, that was a shift in the wind. Now after making this phone call, I could feel the dark clouds closing in. I could sense the storm was uncomfortably close.

~ A Moment of Reflection ~

There was a storm brewing you could feel the shift in the wind blowing. You could smell the stench of the storm in the air, the atmosphere was changing. The clouds were gathering, the demons were meeting, and I was preparing for warfare. You see, if I just lived with my husband and went to church, and he was pleased to live with me if I didn’t bother him, and he didn’t bother me things in the spirit realm would be fine. But once I stood my ground according to the word of God using the authority of The Name of Jesus and commanded Satan to take his hands off and release my husband. All hell broke out and I do mean hell like demons being released from the very pit.

The bible tells us whatever we bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever we lose on earth will be loosed in heaven. In other words, whatever we allow God will allow and whatever we don’t allow God won’t allow. The problem is Christians live beneath their privilege because they don’t know what rightfully belongs to them. Many Christians just settle for whatever situation they are living in. If your marriage is not what you desire it to be rise take authority in the Name of Jesus according to the word of God. It’s very important to remind God what he said in his word. When you do be prepared to stand because there will be resistance in the spirit realm.

Marriage is an example of Christ and the church. *As the Scriptures say* “*A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one. This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ, and the church are one.” Ephesians 5:31-32 NLT*

When ministering to women that are in troubled marriages my question to them is. Are you willing to stand for your marriage according to the word of God and do it His way not your way. If you could have fixed it, you would have done so already evidently your way is not working. You see cursing them out, giving them a piece of your mind, not cooking, not speaking, withholding sex, turning to alcohol, drugs or any of the things you fight with in the natural won’t work because it’s a spiritual battle.

No warfare for marriage is identical but each one will be strategically directed by Holy Spirit. That’s why it is very important to present your body a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God. Prayer, fasting and consecration are prerequisites. This is the only way to close all openings to the enemy.

Hold On and Rest in Him

I had no idea how to prepare for this fast-approaching storm. I am so grateful for God’s grace and mercy Holy Spirit directed me what to do to prepare as I entered the darkest spiritual storm I ever encountered. Looking back, I understand God wants me to share my experiences with you perhaps it will strengthen and encourage you during your storm. I’m not telling you it’s going to always be easy or that you will always feel victorious. But I am telling you the word of God works, He loves you and always promises never to leave you.

To ensure you survive the storm you must prepare before the storm hits. Just like you prepare in the natural you must prepare in the spirit. Transfer the word of God from your head to your heart. It is imperative to spend time in worship. Also, the word says lay aside every weight that will hinder you. Every known sin, habit, or hang up ask God to take it from you as you by faith give him everything that is not pleasing to him. Make sure your heart is clean and pure before God be honest with him because he already knows you inside out. Please get rid of your attitude it will only hinder the process ask God to humble you. Allow God to transform you as you stand in faith for your marriage to be transformed. How bad do you want your marriage? Are you willing to give up any and everything that stands in the way of preventing restoration in your marriage? If so, you will have to fight in the spirit like a hungry dog fight to hold on to a steak that someone is trying to take from him. You will have to have that same tanistry and tell Satan you can’t have my marriage I command you to let go in Jesus’ name!!

Use the authority in Luke 10:19 you already have victory. Remember you don’t fight from a place of defeat Jesus has already given you the victory your fight is to maintain it and claim everything that is already yours which includes your marriage! I believe when we pray, we should pray for results! We must take our place of authority in the name of Jesus; the responsibility is on us not God. The bible says be it done unto you according to your faith. If you can’t see it, you can’t have it.

~ A Moment of Reflection ~

Be Honest with God He Knows All about you anyway according to Psalms 139:1-6

Ask God to Cleanse your heart according to Psalm 51:10-12

Write down scriptures that promise what you are believing God for according to Matthew 21:21-22 and Mark 11:22-24

Have Faith in God and diligently seek Him according to Hebrews 11:6

Agree with God’s word and say only what the word says according to Ezekiel 37:1-10 and Proverbs 18:21

Agree with another believer according to Matthew 18:19

Refuse to say anything negative about your husband or your marriage according to Proverbs 18:21

Be careful who you share with regarding your husband or your marriage according to Proverbs 13:3 and Psalms 1:1

Put ALL your Trust in God no matter how it looks or feels according to Proverbs 3:5-6, II Corinthians 5:7 and James 1:7-8

Rest In God’s Word according to Isaiah 40:31, Philippians 4:6-7 and John 14:27

Riding Out the Storm

I can’t relate to getting high or doing drugs I don’t have a clue how to deal with the sickness of drug addiction. But as a wife I know exactly what being in that position feels like. I know how it feels to be alone in a marriage for than 20 years we always made major decisions together. I had no doubt my husband loved me, and I loved him, I felt safe and there was no doubt that he would provide for our family. We were happily married, but that happiness was suddenly shaken.

Just like in my dream, very little if any, finances made it home. I recall my husband coming home with a man I never seen before trying to sell me some encyclopedias. After listening to his presentation, I turned to my husband and asked if he forgot we already had encyclopedias. Every payday there was excuse after excuse. One Friday he said when I cashed my check, I put the money on top of the car when I pulled off it all went flying away. Or after being gone for three or four days bringing a copy of an I bond with someone else name and information on it. He then took a pen and wrote his name on top of theirs to prove he was arrested, and they held him all those days.

Special days were no longer special Holidays, Anniversaries, Birthday’s etc. with each one I felt a deep empty disappointment. It came to a point where I could no longer protect our children from knowing something was wrong that hurt more than anything. When our oldest daughter graduated high school, my husband did not come home from work to get her the graduation on time. Thankfully we were able to locate a classmate she could ride with she made it right in the nick of time to march in with her class. After graduation we were stranded in the rain for hours before he finally picked us up. I learned a valuable lesson whenever anything important was planned I knew not to allow him to drive the car.

There were so many times I was stranded at work. I recall one day my husband didn’t show up and my very good friend Dorothy, who was also my prayer partner, was taking me home. When I spotted the car, I convinced her to turn around, which she did reluctantly, being upset and afraid for me. She pleaded with me not to get out of the car, but I insisted I was so upset. The car was parked in front of a pawn shop with my husband in the driver’s seat. He didn’t notice me until I opened the passenger door I sat in the front seat. He began saying go with Dorothy, I’ll see you at home later, but I refused to move. The drug dealer was in the pawn shop, but I didn’t care, I felt a rage that I had never felt before. When that man got in the car, I can’t recall all that I said but I do remember asking him if he had room for my husband to live with him. I insisted they drive to a gas station and put gas in the car then I drove off and left them standing there. All with my friend and prayer partner watching and praying from a distance.

Then there was the time we didn’t have a car at all because my husband gave it to the drug dealer to use for a period to pay off a debt.

The biggest and strongest wind that blew was when the drug dealers told my husband they were coming to kill our family because of a debt he owed them. Hearing this news caused feelings I had never experienced I began praying and anointing the doors and walls of the apartment with oil and pleading the blood of Jesus. I quoted scripture and claimed God’s protection and I prayed in tongues after praying all I knew in English I needed to get in agreement with the Holy Spirit. I could hear the downstairs door being kicked in; I recall hearing in my spirit they will not come into this apartment. I continued to pray I instructed my daughter to take her newborn baby and go upstairs to the third-floor apartment using the back door. I could hear footsteps coming up the stairs, the closer they got the louder and harder I prayed. Finally, they stopped at the front door. I could hear them pacing I kept praying and quoting the word of God they continued pacing and I continued praying then I could hear the footsteps slowly walking downstairs. I don’t know what those men heard or saw I don’t know how many there were. But one thing I knew for sure was God promised protection for my family and I heard the Lord say they will not come into this apartment. Just like the children of Israel the death angel passed over our family that night. Hallelujah God is more than faithful!!

After the incident where the downstairs door was kicked in my oldest daughter, and I went downstairs to pay rent a few days later. The owner of the building informed me that I had six months to put my husband out or she would increase the rent. She proceeded to say he was no good and I was stupid he was never going to change. She continued to say I can smell food cooking when he comes in late at night you are stupid. My daughter interrupted her and said God is going to save my daddy and my mother is not stupid! My daughter said come on mama! I walked away feeling embarrassed thinking this lady was a member of my church. I’m doing all I know to stand in faith trusting God to save my husband only to have her call the Pastor telling him and anybody else that would listen what was happening in my personal life. I would feel so discouraged walking into church wondering what had been said while different ones would stare. All the time praying Father thank you for saving my husband I trust you.

During this storm our oldest daughter Tasha began to seek God with all her heart. God always dealt with her in dreams she would also have visions, one she shared of her dad sitting in a big black chair weeping. When she would get out of bed because the weeping woke her up to go into the room where the chair was, he would not be there. Tasha also got a job when she graduated high school to help financially, her sister and brother were still in high school. Tasha held my arms up and encouraged me she prayed with me and was a constant reminder that God was going to save her daddy. Once she asked him to take her to the store when they got in the car together, she began to talk to him and try to get him to realize what he was doing was wrong. Yes, Tasha was the oldest and she took her role seriously.

Kisha, our second daughter began dating she graduated high school and spent a lot of time away from home this is how she escaped what was going on at home.

Allen Jr. was at a critical age where he needed his dad. I’m thankful for his God Parents who had three sons who was older he spent quite a bit of time with them.

It appeared this storm was raging out of control. You could feel the intensity of the forces of evil pursuing and hear the whistling of the wind, you could hear the howling as the hounds of hell raged in the spirit realm. It appeared my family would be consumed by this fierce storm I wanted my husband saved. Now it appeared my entire family was at stake. You see, the enemy want to destroy families if he can disrupt the covenant of marriage which represent the covenant between God and the church, he will be accomplishing his goal. To be honest with you this warfare is not between the enemy and mankind but he’s doing everything he can to disrupt God’s plan.

I had to realize that I was in a spiritual battle. The word of God says think it not strange concerning the fiery trail as though some strange thing has happened to you. I had to focus my attention on the enemy and direct all my anger, disappointment, and frustrations not on my husband but on the one who launched this attack. I could not see the chains breaking in the spirit realm. As I look back, I realize that’s the reason the attack intensified. This storm lasted five years, the number five means grace. God gave me grace to stand on his word, trust him to do what he said he would do and not give up!

During the most difficult time of my life, I had to trust God and use every tool available to me. I had to ask God to help me forgive my husband. I had to ask him to create in me a clean heart and renew the right spirit within me. I had to be honest with God and expose all the ugly feelings and thoughts I had allowed to linger in my mind. I had to bring every thought into the obedience of Christ. I made a choice to release everything that was not like God so that I would not hinder the power of God in my marriage. I would walk the floor confessing the promises of the word of God out loud with authority. I would give God’s word back to him mixed with faith that his word can’t return to him void it had to do what it said because he honored his word above his name.

I would go through the apartment anointing everything with oil and when I did laundry, I applied oil to every piece of clothing. I would plead the blood of Jesus over our apartment and family. I would confess that my husband was saved, delivered and set free. I realized my husband had a will and no matter how much I wanted him delivered he had to want God for himself. I would pray Father help Allen to want to, want to. Turn his heart toward you, take the blinders off his spiritual eyes, unstop his spiritual ears. Don’t give him any peace until he accepts you. I would pray send labors across his path wherever he goes, whatever he does let someone tell him about Jesus. I would declare my husband loves God with his whole heart and every yolk of bondage is broken and destroyed over him.

I would call his name and pray in tongues because I realized there were things happening in the spiritual realm that I was not aware of, but the Holy Spirit was. I declared I am not moved by what I see or how I feel because it is temporal and subject to change. I would bind everything that was not like God, I would name them one by one. I would lose love and contentment in our home. I decreed and declared salvation for my entire household. I would speak directly to Satan and command him to release my husband in Jesus Name. I would pray according to Luke 10:19 Standing in the authority given to me. I refused to be moved! God had blessed me with my family and the devil in hell could not have them!

Right amid this storm I was allowed by Missionary Idellar Sams to start a Women ministry at church. God would give me messages to minister to hurting women I could connect with them because I was hurting. The anointing and power of God would manifest in every meeting. I was determined to walk by faith not by sight. I continued to be Vice President of the Nurses’ board, teach Sunday school and participate on the missionary board. I was doing everything God required of me I refuse to allow doubt to linger because it made many attempts, but I made a choice to resist the devil and he had to flee. With all my heart I believed God would deliver my husband I knew deep within he wanted to be free. When someone is bound, they can’t set themselves free. God is looking for intercessors someone who will stand in the gap and make up the hedge. For God to work in the earth he needs a body which explains why Jesus had a body and God’s plan was fulfilled through him. The word of God said it would done unto me according to my faith. I was at a point where it did not matter what anyone thought this was my marriage and I was determined to hang in there until I got a manifestation. Yes, the storm was still raging but I was still standing in expectation in faith according to God’s word.

~ A Moment of Reflection ~

The word of God says, write the vision and make it plain. Find the promises in God’s word relating to your marriage using the word write out what you desire God to do in your marriage. Beware of praying in doubt for example if it be your will God save my husband and heal our marriage. You already know it’s his will because he said it in his word. The word plainly says it’s not God’s will for any to perish but all to come to repentance. It also says what God has joined together let no man put asunder. God desires your husband to be saved and your marriage to be healed. You must see it done by faith, if you can’t see it, you can’t have it. Once you write your vision don’t stop until it comes to pass as the word says it may be delayed but wait for it don’t give up! I can’t promise it will manifest in a month or two, but I promise if the words that come out your mouth agree with God’s word it will come to pass. Because God said his word won’t return to him empty, he didn’t assign an angel to watch over his word, he watches over it himself. Rember God is not like man if he promised you something he won’t change his mind.

One of the most effective manipulations Satan uses against the body of Christ is unforgiveness. Satan knows that unforgiveness will block your receiving from God. All your prayers, fasting, and even confessions will be in vain. Unforgiveness is when we choose not to have compassion for someone that has wronged us. The key is we choose, God has set his principles before us in his word we must do it his way not ours. God is aware of every deep hurt that you can’t even put into words. He knows the pain is so deep at times it’s hard to function. Your heavenly Father sees you at night with the tears wetting the pillow and you turning on the other side to find a dry spot. I know personally because I have been where you are. You must be honest with God tell him you need his help to forgive and release your spouse. Tell your heavenly Father you choose to forgive by faith!

Pick your head up! It’s not over because Jesus declared It Is Finished! You are in a win, win situation Satan has no winning qualities in him because Jesus defeated him and stripped him of all authority over you!

Don’t coward down stand up! I speak strength and courage to you right now in the name of Jesus. Rise up in your faith! Rise up using the Word of God which is your only effective weapon! Speak the word out of your mouth! Get your oil and anoint your home open the door and command every spirit that not like God to GO! in The Name of JESUS.

Chapter Seven

Angels of Encouragement

God promised never to leave or forsake me he is so faithful! I would not exchange my walk with God for anything. Looking back, I recognize special assigned angels that surrounded me during the most difficult time of my life. I am reminded of Aaron and Hur standing on each side of Moses holding up his hands. While Moses held up his hands the Israelites were winning but whenever he lowered his hands the enemy would begin winning. I don’t have words to express my gratitude for the many angels God assigned to me during this horrific time in my life.

I met Sharon Williams at the bus stop on our way to school one morning. I had never seen her although we lived on the same block. Sharon and I would go to school together; we would go to lunch together. Sharon and I became Best Friends she was my biggest support during my pregnancy. Sharon and I never lost contact we have always been there for each other during the most difficult times in our lives. I got married first and we always laughed because I married a guy named Allen. She married a guy named Allen, I had a son Allen Jr, and she had a son Little Allen. I always teased her saying she always wanted to be just like me. The Lord blessed me and my husband with three children LaTasha, Dekisha and Allen Jr. Sharon and her husband were blessed with two sons, Little Allen and William. I was her children’s God mother, and she was mine. Sharon’s mother and father became my God parents her sisters and brother became my siblings. My children would even wake up on some Christmas mornings at her house. When I attended my parents’ funeral my children were at my best friend’s house. We made it a tradition to spend every New Year’s Day together. Sharon was my rock during the most trying times of my life, she was there financially, a great support and encouragement. I could share exactly how I felt because we knew each other and always shared so many things I could relax and be myself. Sharon was there for the children in any way she could be. She was and still is one of my special angels I love and appreciate our special friendship.

I was chasing my son one Sunday morning, he did more running than walking. We ran right past Dorothy Mathews who was standing there with her little girl Tiffany. I turned and said to Dorothy, what’s wrong with him? She replied he’s just being a boy we chuckled. You see, I had two little princesses, now I had a prince. Months later the Lord placed it on my heart to ask Dorothy if she wanted to be prayer partners. We began praying every morning we received many answers as we petitioned God for so many situations. God showed himself strong in many areas of our lives and in our families. We trusted God for our children we prayed them through some very trying times from childhood to adulthood. We will never stop praying for our husbands, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Even now our children will mention from time to time they can remember hearing us calling their names in prayer. This test and trial with my marriage was one of biggest mountain we faced during all the years we prayed together. It was a five-year long haul and Dorothy was there every step of the way. She prayed with me, cried with me, encouraged me, she often expressed having a difficult time watching me go through this fiery trial. She supported me while I stood in faith and would always tell me Carolyn, I agree with what you want God to do. She would often say I’m not sure if I could go through this test like you. Dorothy was there for me and my children always in my corner, I had no doubt Dorothy had my back. Dorothy and I have a special connection when we pray and study the word, God always meet us. We can talk to each other about anything, and we are very careful to take all our conversations to God in prayer. Dorothy and I have prayed for more than 43 years, Dorothy is my forever prayer partner, friend and confidant, and my forever angel.

My mother’s name was Miley, she had two sisters Sophie and Maude. Aunt Sophie had a daughter named Yvonne; we had a special relationship we spent a lot of time together growing up. Aunt Maude had a daughter named Dollie we did not spend much time together growing up. We developed a relationship after I accepted Jesus; we became very close we did everything together. Doll joined the same church I attended I witnessed God work miracles in her body. She had two children, Lisa and Trina. After marrying Fred, she had a deep desire to have children with him. God healed her of female issues and opened her womb, and she gave birth to two more beautiful daughters Ebonie and Monica. Doll and I were expecting babies at the same time we would pray over the babies in our wombs every day. At that time, they didn’t do ultrasounds so there was no gender reveal until the baby was born. But Doll and I had a plan we were both going to have boys Allen Jr and Fred Jr. they were going to grow up together etc. Allen Jr. was born October 3, 1978. Doll called me to pray before she went to the hospital to deliver her baby. She called me the next morning November 11, 1978, to tell me she had a baby girl. I was so upset she had to console me. I was so disappointed, but we concluded the baby was heathy and this must be God’s plan. Fred named the baby Ebonie. I was grateful Doll asked me to give the baby her middle name, I named her Shanea. Allen Jr and Ebonie were extremely close. Allen Jr referred to her as my Ebonie. This is a very short glimpse of my angel Doll and our special relationship.

When I was in the Darkest Storm of my life, expecting a miracle in my marriage Doll was right there. She prayed with me, encouraged me, gave me food and finances. When my grandmother passed away, I was so upset and was unable to drive. I had a relationship with my grandmother as if she was my mother. This is the time you needed your spouse but at that time I had no idea where my husband was. I will be forever grateful for my cousin Doll who drove me and my children to the funeral and cemetery. She prayed the whole time another incident I will never forget is the night someone told me that my husband had another woman. They volunteered to take me to a bar where they were known to hang out. When I told Doll she begged me not to go because it was in the middle of the night, she made me promise to call her when I got home. She was so relieved when I let her know I was home she had been praying the whole time. We set outside this lounge for hours, but I never saw my husband or another woman. To this day I have never had proof of another woman. Now don’t get me wrong I know things happen, but I never had any proof of a relationship other than the one he had with drugs.

Ebonie suffered an asthma attack just before her baby was to be born both her and the baby was deprived of oxygen. Ebonie transitioned January 1999 we concluded after we had done all to trust God and things did not turn out the way we thought we still had to trust God. Doll and I continued to pray but this was more than she could bear. Four months later Doll transitioned in May 1999 she would say to me Carolyn, I don’t understand but I’m trying not to let it get to my heart. I really believe she died of a broken heart but one thing for sure she now has all her answers. Five months later in October 1999 the precious baby girl Brizhae joined her mother and grandmother. I had a difficult time releasing Doll, but I take comfort knowing we will one day praise God together around his throne. My angel Doll is always with me in my heart, and I have no doubt that she is looking out for me.

I will never forget my Angel Helen Dockery-Hudson who lived on the second floor of the apartment building we lived in. One night at about 1:00am Helen came to our apartment and knocked on the door when I answered she asked if I could come to her apartment. You see our second daughter Kisha was a few weeks old and she always woke up about that time. Helen shared a disturbing dream she had that there was a bus, everybody on the bus was wearing white, but the driver would not let her on because she was not wearing the right clothes. That night I led Helen to the Lord she accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior.

Helen was right there when my mother transitioned, I trusted her to keep my children. She fell in love with Kisha and became her second God mother.

Helen was a witness to the turmoil in my marriage. I will never forget when she found out the drug dealer was threating to kick the door in and kill the whole family. Helen was so upset her advice to me “Carolyn throw Allen out!!” when Jona was running from God and got on that boat when the sea was in an uproar when they found out Jona was causing the problem, they threw him overboard. I know you want God to save him, but he doesn’t have to be there in the house with you and the kids for God to do that. Helen prayed with me, cried with me and was a great encouragement. Before Helen transitioned Allen and I was at her bedside I was so grateful that she had on the right clothes and God allowed me to help her get dressed. I’m also grateful she got a chance to witness the Miracle of Allen’s salvation. I have no doubt Helen is watching out for me, she will always be my Angel.

My sister Ora was a special angel, she was not married and made herself available at any time during the night. God is always there but at times you need to talk to a person my sister would listen, cry and pray with me. All my sisters were precious angels, encouraging me any way they could.

Lorraine Render and Charlene Johnson were the two angels God had for me stationed at work. We would pray, fast and call out my husband’s name in the conference room at lunch time. They would pray that God would give me strength and pray laborers across his path. They set themselves in agreement with what I wanted God to do in my marriage. Lorraine and Charlene are still two of my wonderful angels.

I have no doubt that Dorothy Adams is singing in the heavenly choir. While I was standing in faith Dorothy would call me and sing if this storm doesn’t cease my soul has been anchored in the Lord. Then she would come by and give me money to buy food. Yes, Dorothy was a very special angel in my life I am so grateful God placed her in my life.

My God parents Canary and Tommie Williams were very important angles in my life. Pastor Willie Sams and his wife Elnora was God sent angels they helped our family in countless ways. I will be forever grateful to God for Sister Elnora Sams who is now in heaven she will always be my angel.

God blessed me with two angels Inez and Albert Sams. I am forever grateful for them making us part of their family. They were a second set of God parents to my son and as a result they became my God parents as well. Our families became intertwined, and we have wonderful fellowship together.

Mother Susie Clark was another angel assigned to me. Our children attended a school across the street from house she allowed our children to go to school from her house. She was another God mother to me and was a blessing and encouragement in many ways.

Missionary Idellar Sams was a special angel that called me regularly. She was a great encouragement, always praying for me. She had a comforting gentle voice. I recall her telling me I know you are tired but don’t give up. God is going to save your husband then she told me about a lady she knew who was saved but her husband was a drunk. After praying for his salvation for so many years she gave up because she was so tired. The lady divorced him a few years later the man got saved married someone else and the new wife received all the benefits of her prayers. Missionary Idellar Sams will always be one of my special angels as she cheers me on from heaven.

*Psalms 91:11 NKJV “For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.”*

*Psalms 34:7 NKJV “The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him and delivers them.”*