

~Preface~

I have been raised in a Christian family and have known I have a savior for as long as I can remember. I have always said that if someone put a gun to my head and asked me if I was a Christian, I would die for the Lord. However, it wasn't until I received Mononucleosis, the Epstein Bar Virus, and then was diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, that I would fully understand what it meant to die for Christ.

It is easy to say that you would die for Christ if the time ever came, but your true loyalty to the Lord comes when you are willing to live for Christ. This is a lesson I have learned through the calling of Jesus Christ. **“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified” (Romans 8:28-30).**

I was 16 when the Lord first called me. I gave Him my life to be used in building His Kingdom in the summer, and in the fall I began to get sick. I continually got sicker, until I had to give up high school sports, including a rodeo scholarship. Sports were very important to me throughout high school and it was very tough for me to give them up. I looked to the doctors and they told me there was not much they could do. They said I would need to learn to manage my sickness in order to get on with my life.

The prognosis was not good. The doctors said if I managed it correctly, in 5 years I might be back to fifty percent; in 10 years, seventy-five percent, and in 20 years, I would be the same as the rest of the people my own age. The medical field gave me no hope. It had been a virus that depleted my immune system and caused me to become very weak. Once my immune system went down, my body could not fight off harmful substances and my internal organs had trouble operating the way they should; causing me to remain sick. Herbal pills helped my immune system to gain some strength back and helped my organs to function a little better. However, I still remained very weak.

I knew that the Lord had let a sickness fall upon me and I knew that He could heal me. However, I was a little bitter about having to give everything up, and I was not ready to come running back to Him yet. It took me a while of running around in my weakening flesh, trying to find comfort everywhere else, before I came back to the Lord. Finally, I came to the point where I could run no longer.

Although, I did not know it at the time, I needed a new organ that was vital to my recovery; I needed a new heart. Through a man in Christ, the Lord took out my heart of stone and gave me a new heart to serve Him. All along, I had thought it had been my body that had failed me, but in all reality, it was my heart. It was from that moment on, that I noticed I started to recover from my sickness.

The Lord has given me a great gift. Although my flesh is weak, when I seek Him I receive strength. **“To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great**

revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me” (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). The Lord has not totally healed my flesh from this sickness, but when I am seeking Him, I am strengthened. The Lord has called me and He knows I have the attention span of a 5-year-old on a sugar high. To ensure that I stay on the right path, He has given me a thorn in my flesh that I must seek His Spirit. **“That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:10).** His Spirit is where I have learned to find comfort and this is where He has revealed Himself to me.

I am excited to be an instrument for God. I have given Him my life and I will follow Him wherever He chooses to lead me. However, I feel I suffer from a little ADD. I feel like a Border Collie pup who set out to do a job with his Master, raring to please Him. I see the cows and am obeying the commands one minute and the next minute, I am chasing a deer over a hill, with God shaking His head at me. God then grabs me by the ears and shakes me around a little bit. Then I remember what we set out to do. We’re moving cows!

I then dive back in, trying to please Him and I work like a charm. That is, until I see a rabbit go running by me and then I am off again. God’s love never ceases to amaze me. He is patient and when I have returned from chasing the distraction, He is waiting to pick up where we left off. The consequences of chasing distractions are not fun, so I am trying to learn to stay focused on the will of my Master.

I can really relate to one of Jesus’ disciples, Peter. One minute Jesus is telling him that upon him He will build His church, **“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it” (Matthew 16:18)**, and the next, He says, **“Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men” (Matthew 16:23).** Peter also tried to defend Jesus by chopping an ear off one of the guards who was seizing Him, **“Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him. With that, one of Jesus’ companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear” (Matthew 26:50-51).** And in Matthew 26:69-75 Peter disowned Jesus 3 times. Peter matured in his walk with the Lord, and God was able to use him in amazing ways. I give my life to God, that He may guide me to maturity and that I may live the life He has called me to live.

This book is what the Lord has shown me, and what I have experienced, in my walk with Him. The Lord did not reveal these things to me because I have lived a righteous life, that is certainly not true. I have hit the bars with the same intensity that I have charged after the Lord. However, God is changing me; I love Him and want to give Him my life. I believe the Lord has revealed Himself to me because I have been willing to leave everything behind and climb the mountain to experience Him just as Moses did. I hunger and thirst for what Moses tasted and I have come boldly to the throne to receive it. I often get distracted, but He is always changing me, conforming me to the likeness of His son, **“For those God foreknew he also predestined**

to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers” (Romans 8:29), and I want nothing more than to please Him.

We are all called to be a light for Christ. **“...let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).** However, God uses us all in different ways. I asked the Lord how He wanted to use me one time and He told me I was to use horses to bring people closer to Him. I teach the colt starting classes at MSU and the Lord has helped me develop a very simple way of teaching the class; the teachings of Jesus Christ. I have learned a lot both directly and indirectly from Tom Dorrance (indirectly), Ray Hunt (my grandfather), and Martin Black (my father), and I would not be where I am today without the teachings of these men. I owe these men a great deal of credit for what little I have been able to absorb from them. I say “what little I have absorbed” because I have been blessed with the opportunity to be raised around some great horsemen and if I would have absorbed even a quarter of their talent, I should be a lot further from where I am today. These men, along with many others, have had a great impact in my life in setting a foundation for understanding the horse. However, my greatest teacher has been Jesus Christ. I give God all the glory and the praise for where I am today.

The biggest limiting factor in helping my students progress in their horsemanship is the inability to communicate with the horse and learning how to change their perspective. They must learn how to quit focusing on job completion and begin riding in perfection. This is what I try to teach them in my class. I am not interested in job completion, but perfection. Everything that I teach in my class is a parable to help them come into perfection in Christ Jesus, **“We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ” (Colossians 1:28).** This book is not meant to *teach* you about God, but to help you realize that we can be taught by God and inspire you to go boldly to the throne to be taught. The biggest limiting factor with my students is lack of communication and the biggest limiting factor in our relationship with God is a lack of communication. One of my goals in this book is to help you realize what is holding you back from communicating with your horse, but more importantly to help you realize what is holding you back from communicating with God.

In 2007 I was competing at a PRCA rodeo in Miles City, MT and was fighting my head pretty badly before getting on my horse. I was trying to picture a perfect saddle bronc ride and trying to get all the rides of imperfection out of my mind. I was trying to stand on Scripture to psych myself up and give me strength and energy. However, I kept feeling tired and weak, and I could not get my mind off all the rides of imperfection. I knew if I got on my saddle bronc in this mindset it was not going to be very pretty. So I snuck away and laid down in our rodeo rig and submitted everything into the Lord’s hands.

I laid everything at His feet and prayed for the Lord’s help. As I began to pray, I could feel the Lord’s presence begin to saturate my body taking away all my cares and worries, leaving me with total peace. I quit looking at everything from my perspective and started to feel total comfort knowing that everything was in God’s hands. The Lord redirected my focus from selfish ambitions (riding broncs) to a heavenly perspective (building the Kingdom). The Lord opened my eyes and showed me a vision concerning the hearts of the men behind the bucking chutes.

The Lord showed me how many of them had received a little spark for Him, but the spark had never been fanned giving it the opportunity to grow. He told me to “fan the flame.” The Holy Spirit is like a mighty wind and will bring life to a tiny spark, igniting an all-consuming fire. As the Lord began to speak to me giving me direction for my life, I became sanctified by the word of God, **“For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer” (1 Timothy 4:5 KJV)**, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. **“For you shall receive power after the Holy Ghost has come upon you” (Acts 1:8).**

I jumped out of the seat of the car and with a new perspective on life prepared to get on my horse. I was no longer tormented by rides of imperfection, but filled with the all-consuming peace and joy of the Holy Spirit. I climbed on my horse with the mindset of having fun and riding entirely for the Lord. The Lord blessed me with an 83-point spur ride which won the rodeo and let me take home the first place check.

This is what I hope the Lord is able to give you after reading this book, an open line of communication. **“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27 KJV).** God has not called me to preach the Gospel, but to demonstrate the Gospel. I am only called to prepare the way for the teacher. I am called to help people come into the fullness of the New Covenant and be taught by God. I am called to introduce people to the Holy Spirit and God has showed me He will do the rest. Just like a person must prepare a colt before he can start to communicate with them, I am called to show people how to prepare themselves so that they may start communicating with God. God wants to communicate with us, we just need to be “willing” and then able. It is so simple; the things that hold us back from communicating with our horse are the same things that hold us back from communicating with God.

Seven years ago the Lord told me, *“Write down the words that I have given you, that they may know I am God.”* In 2002 the Lord showed me a vision of Amaia (my wife) and me walking to Bozeman, MT and opening a book. Once we opened the book, fire came out of the book and people started to gather around the fire dancing and the fire spread across the state. Originally, I thought the book was a Bible, meaning God wanted me to start a Bible study. However, I believe that the book that I was supposed to open in Montana is this book. A year ago the Lord gave me another vision where I was riding in a boat with my friends. Jesus then walked out on the water, grabbed my hand and led me across the water. Once I had reached the shore I started handing out books. I have stepped out of the boat, relying on God that He will take care of me as a minister of Christ and these are the books that I have been called to hand out. **“So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life – not because anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace” (2 Timothy 1:8-9).**

I hope after reading this book you will have a better understanding of how to eliminate the resistance that is holding you back from Returning to Eden: True Unity and Willing Communication.