

EXPECTING PEACE, BUT GETTING JOY!

*Expecting  
Peace, but  
getting  
JOY!*

Carol Carnevali

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*Dedication*

*I dedicate this book to my two daughters, Lacey and Lindsay, who went through this move from Pennsylvania to New Jersey with me, and have become successful women with families of your own.*

*All My Love,*

*Mom*

## *Credits*

Special credit to my husband, *Cavan Parkes*, who has been so patient and supportive in the publishing of my two books!

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## *Chapter 1*



**I**n 1991, the year that I wrote my first book, *Angel in White*, I was thirty-four years old and my two daughters, Lacey and Lindsay, were fourteen and twelve respectively. The girls were happy and doing well in school and we were all growing in the Lord. We were very involved in the church, going as often as the doors were opened. I was still working at The Foundation for Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), and we were still living in my parents' four-bedroom house in Spangler, Pennsylvania. My job was going well and though we were living from paycheck to paycheck, I still had one of the better jobs in town; the kind of job that most people say “you marry” and never leave.

Though it was hard being a single mother - we had

been on our own since Lacey was two years old, and Lindsay only six months - we still had a good life. My kids were my life and I wanted to give them the best that I could, especially a college education since they were both so smart and doing so well in school. I wanted them to have opportunities that I never had growing up. But first and foremost, was doing as God instructs in Proverbs 22:6, which reads:

*Train up a child in the way he should go:  
and when he is old, he will not depart  
from it. (Proverbs 22:6 KJV)*

knew that my main job as a mother was to give my children a Godly foundation and upbringing.

Even though things were good, I still desired that God would give me a godly husband. I prayed for almost ten years, and truly believed that God would provide someone *better* than the love I had lost for His sake...He didn't. For almost the whole decade of my thirties, my prime years, I didn't even date. The loneliness and lack of human touch were so great at times that I actually cried when I was at the dentist's office and the dentist had to put his arm around me to work on my teeth; just to feel someone's touch! A few times some sisters from the church felt that I needed a hug and when they gave me one, it meant so much to me.

Looking back now, I thank God for those years that I was able to focus a hundred percent on my kids. God knew that I would treasure this time later in life; that they would be young only and I would have this opportunity only once. He knew that it would be best for both them and me to devote my life solely to them at this stage of our lives. It was the right thing to do, and I'm so grateful now for those ten years and often wish that I could go back to those times! God knows best.

One day back in 1990, I was having some pain in my ovaries so I went to a doctor in Indiana, Pennsylvania, where I worked, to get it checked out. After running some tests, the doctor took me into his office, sat me down, and told me that I had a cyst about the size of an orange on one of my ovaries and that it might be cancer! I was mortified! Back in those days, cancer was even scarier than it is today because it was still pretty rare.

The doctor said that I needed to find a surgeon and have it removed as soon as possible. Someone at work gave me the name of a good surgeon at the Magee Women's Hospital in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, so I called and scheduled the surgery. Pittsburgh was about a hundred miles away and, when I tried to find someone to take me, I realized that I had no one to even ask. I felt so alone. Here I was facing one of the scariest mo-

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ments of my life, and I had no one to go through it with me, and no one to even take me to the hospital for my surgery.

My dad was very busy at work and didn't want to take me all that way. He didn't understand why I chose a hospital in Pittsburgh, a hundred miles away. But Magee's had an excellent reputation in dealing with women's problems and cancer, so I wanted the best. Finally, since I had no other choice, he agreed to take me.

At a minimum, I was expected to spend a week in the hospital, then a six-week recovery period before returning to work, so I scheduled the time off. The night before the surgery, God led me to Psalm 38 that explained exactly how I was feeling. My loins were filled with a loathsome disease, my lovers and friends, and even my kinsmen, were standing aloof, and I needed my God to be near me and help me! The scripture reads:

*I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly;  
I go mourning all the day long.*

*For my loins are filled with a loathsome  
disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh.*

*I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared  
by reason of the disquietness of my heart.*

*Lord, all my desire is before thee; and*

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*my groaning is not hid from thee.  
My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as  
for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me.*

*My lovers and my friends stand aloof from  
my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off.  
For in thee, O Lord, do I hope: thou  
wilt hear, O Lord my God.*

*Forsake me not, O Lord: O my God, be not far from  
me. Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation.  
(Psalms 38:6-11, 15, 21-22, KJV)*

My mom and dad drove me to the hospital on the appointed morning and stayed there while I underwent the surgery. I was put to sleep under the anesthesia, not knowing what the outcome would be when I woke up. My stomach had to be cut open, they had to remove the cyst and then send it to the laboratory to find out if was malignant or benign. It was very scary.

When the surgery was over, a miracle had happened! When they cut me open, they found that the cyst was gone! There was nothing to cut out and nothing to test for cancer! I was perfectly healthy! The doctor told me to go home and live my life; that I was one of the lucky ones!

As I walked down the halls of the hospital, trying to recover from being cut open, I realized that he was right. So many women looked so gravely ill and were

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not as “lucky” (really blessed!) as me. I still had to remain in the hospital for a week with a miserable tube down my throat to recover from being cut open, but when I walked out the door a week later, I felt so happy and blessed; like I had a new lease on life!

Though I was weak and it took time for me to fully recover, two blessings came of it. First, my having six weeks off from work gave me a much-needed break plus quality time to spend with God and my girls. The other thing was having my ugly vertical C-Section scar, which was done to me when I had Lindsay, cut open and made thinner.

Because of a condition called Placenta Previa, Lindsay was born a month early via an emergency C-Section. it was done by a local doctor and hospital, not the ones I had scheduled in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. This doctor did vertical C-Sections on almost every woman in town, whether they needed it or not; he literally left his “mark” on them. He was eventually legally accused and under suspicion of doing it for the money. but I couldn’t complain because both our lives were in jeopardy, and Lindsay was born small, weighing only 6.1 pounds, but healthy. Nevertheless, the scar had gotten thick and ugly over the years and I always hated it. Having it cut open and the scar tissue removed was almost like having plastic surgery done on it and having it revised.

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So God always turns things around for our good, as is states in the Bible in the book of Romans, which reads:

*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28, KJV)*

## Chapter 2



**D**uring the years leading up to 1993, God started closing doors and I felt a stronger and stronger urge to move to New York City, even though it was still such a far-fetched idea to me; a dream but never a reality.

Not too long after Bill and Dana left my home to go back to New York, I felt led to leave the North End Assembly of God church and start attending my friend, Joe's church, called Morningstar Ministries. As I had written in my first book, Bill and Dana were my two friends (now a married couple) from Times Square Church in New York City whom I had taken into my home to live with me for a while.

Regarding leaving the church, I felt that God was protecting me from what was to come because, shortly after I left, there was a lot of tension at North End As-

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sembly which caused a major church split. I was glad that I was not there and not involved in it.

Morningstar was a real blessing to me for a time. God immediately put me in the kids' ministry, continuing my teaching ministry. He also opened up a little music ministry for me there as well. I'm not much of a piano player but using music books that I could read somewhat, I could play well enough to worship God, and I often did so in the privacy of my own home. I definitely felt an anointing when I played, but that was between me and the Lord.

When I was asked to assist with the kids' ministry at Morningstar, I saw that the kids had no music to sing to so I decided to bring our keyboard and play it, leading the kids in worship and praise songs. That was all I intended to do in one of the back rooms of the church.

One day, however, I guess the pastor heard me playing and thought that I was good enough to play for the main song services! He thought that I could fill in for his wife at times, who normally did it, to give her a break.

"Me, play for the song service?" I thought to myself. I certainly wasn't good enough to sit at their beautiful, white, baby-grand piano up in the main sanctuary and play for their song services! Even though I didn't think I could handle it, if God was asking me to, I wanted to be

obedient, so I said "yes"! But under one condition, which I don't think I told the pastor, but should have: I would have to give the worship leader a song list, and he would have to sing those songs *only*. He couldn't throw in any other song because I could not play by ear. I had to have the music and notes to read; that was a must. I knew the songs that were typically sung in the church so I used those songs.

My first time doing it felt like such a miracle to me and it actually went pretty well. Nobody seemed to know that the song service was "canned". I managed to pull it off a couple of times and felt good about it.

However, one evening at the end of the service, the pastor asked me to come up to the piano for the altar call, even though I had not played for the beginning of the service. He also asked the worship singers to come up, too. I panicked, and I'm sure that fear was all over my face., but I didn't feel that I could refuse him in the middle of the service, so reluctantly, I went. It turned out to be a total disaster and one of the most embarrassing moments of my life!

The pastor started leading the congregation in the most simple chorus – I think it was "God Is So Good" - and I was supposed to find the key they were singing in and accompany them. As hard as I tried, I just couldn't seem to get it. Even if I had found the key, there was no

way that I could play the tune without having the music to read. Most church pianists, like the pastor's wife, played by ear, but I did not have that ability, and it was a total disaster! Finally, I gave up and they started singing it "a cappella". I just sat there like an idiot, and the other worship leaders who joined in, seemed disgusted with me. I couldn't wait till the service was over so that I could slink away. Needless to say, after that, they never asked me again!

Working for two years as a counselor at their annual "Kids Kamp" in Somerset, Pennsylvania, however, was one of the highlights of my Christian life because God's presence was so strong there and He always moved so mightily. I would take one week from my two-week vacation that I received at work and spend it ministering at a camp out in the woods, serving the Lord. Of all the vacations I've taken, those two years were probably the most memorable, and the most meaningful.

There was also a time at Morningstar that I believe God wanted to give me the gift of healing! During the altar services, my hands started having oil come out of them! I felt that God wanted me to lay hands on people and pray for them when they were at the altar, but I didn't want to step out of line and do it without the pastor's permission. I tried to get his attention by looking

at my hands in front of him, but he didn't get it and I was too shy to tell him. After a time, it stopped, and I always regretted not using that precious gift (and could really use it now on myself). But God does say in His Word that he doesn't take back his gifts and callings. The Bible reads:

*For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. (Romans 11:29, KJV)*

Though things were good for a time, after about two years at Morningstar, a door was closed tightly for me there and I felt led to leave that church as well. We had heard that a lot of folks from the North End Assembly of God church were attending an Assembly of God church in Hillsdale, Pennsylvania, so we decided to check it out. We fell in love with it immediately and knew that that was where we were to stay! There were so many people that we knew and loved from the North End church, and the young preacher and his wife were just amazing. We got "plugged in" immediately, and for a time, it was so wonderful.

The Hillsdale Assembly of God church was where Lacey started playing piano during some of the altar calls. Now Lacey is the *real* piano player of the family. She had a God-given talent and was so amazing. She was able to play many difficult pieces of work, such

as the prelude that Twila Paris does before her "He Is Exalted" song. She played beautifully.

At one of the evening services, while I was kneeling at the altar praying with my eyes closed, the pastor's wife was playing the most beautiful and anointed music I had ever heard. It was so heavenly! When I finally opened my eyes and looked over at the piano, I saw that it wasn't the pastor's wife playing after all; it was Lacey! The pastor's wife had asked her to fill in for her so that she could be free to pray for people. That was one of the sweetest blessings God has ever given to me!

Lacey was so good that she actually started giving piano lessons while she was in high school! Some of her students were adults who would show up on our doorstep for their weekly lessons. I, myself, was one of her students, and she wouldn't give her mother any leeway. If I hadn't practiced and played the songs properly, she would hold me back another week and make me repeat them. I had to laugh at how strict she was, even with me!

Though the Hillsdale Assembly of God church was so great, after about a year, the pastor and his wife felt led to leave, so we were left, again, without a church.

Things were never quite the same after the pastor left, and we didn't really like any of the "fill-in" pastors, so we began to check out other churches in the area, es-

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pecially in Indiana, the city where I worked and thought I might move to, since New York didn't seem very realistic. But as hard as we tried, we couldn't seem to find the right church, and come Sunday mornings, we ended up having no where to go to church. It was very disheartening.

### *Chapter 3*



**O**ne day while driving home from work and heading up the steep hill to my house, I reached a turning point in my life. It was nothing but it was everything. I knew that this was the end. I felt like I just couldn't do it anymore; I couldn't work at my job anymore, couldn't do this commute anymore, and just couldn't live in this small town one more day. It was over; time to move on.

Never really thinking that moving to New York could happen, at least at this stage of my life, I started looking around Indiana, Pennsylvania for a house to buy. Indiana was a beautiful college town. I would be close to work and I envisioned my kids going to college there. We could start a better life in a city that offered much more than the Barnesboro/Spangler area that we lived in, which was later combined and renamed North-

ern Cambria.

Employees of IUP received a major benefit; their kids could attend the college for free! That was a dream come true to me because my kids were nearing college age and I had no money at all to send them. For them to get a free college education at IUP was one of the most wonderful things I could imagine! However, though I worked directly on the campus, I worked for “The Foundation for” IUP, which was a separate entity, so we didn’t qualify for the free college benefit. But an effort was underway for the university to take The Foundation under its wings and make us part of the university; so we were hopeful.

After some looking around, I found a nice house that was going to be sold at auction. My parents offered to help me buy it if I wanted it. On the evening of the auction, my parents were driving the thirty miles there and I was going to meet them at the house, after finishing work. On my parents' drive there, a very strange thing happened; my dad got extremely ill. This was very unusual for him, but he was so sick when he got there that he had to go lie down on a bed of one of the upstairs bedrooms until the auction started, which was going to be in about an hour. When the auction was about to begin, my dad managed to come downstairs and told me that if I wanted it, to just raise my hand.

When the bidding began, though the house was lovely, in a nice neighborhood and at a decent price, I just couldn’t raise my hand! There was a pause in the bidding while the auctioneer called out a higher price and waited for another bidder. My parents kept looking at me, waiting for me to raise my hand, but I couldn’t! Finally, the house was sold to another bidder. When my parents asked me why I didn’t raise my hand, I could only tell them that I just couldn’t do it. (It just wasn’t God’s will.) Shortly after the auction was over, my dad got completely better, and they even went out to eat at Hoss’s, one of their favorite restaurants. It seemed that the sickness lasted just long enough to discourage me from bidding!

But, what was to be asked of me next would really put my faith to the test.

## Chapter 4



**A**s the effort continued to take The Foundation for IUP under IUP's wings, one day it was approved! That meant that on a certain date in the near future, The Foundation employees would have all the same benefits as IUP employees, including a free college education for their families! That news was so thrilling to me, yet I started feeling strongly that I should quit my job! God reminded me that He is my provider and would provide everything that my kids' needed, including a college education. What a step of faith He was asking me to make; definitely one of the biggest of my life!

As I struggled with this major decision of quitting my good job of seven and a half years, with all the security it provided, and just when they were giving me a free college education for my kids, even though I had a

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strong desire to move to New York, I still didn't know if I could do it.

Quitting my job was a sure sign to me that God was, indeed, calling me to New York. Bill and Dana both felt that I was to come and never let up trying to convince me, always writing in their letters to me to "Send the resume!" My kids knew my whole story and took everything in stride. As I contemplated my decision, a message that was preached from the Times Square Church pulpit by Pastor Don Wilkerson, entitled "Why Sit We Here Till We Die?" kept coming to mind, along with this pressing question: "*If not now, when?*" I knew that now was the time. If I had bought the house in Indiana, I would have been stuck there for at least ten years! God had other plans.

Finally, after much thought and prayer, I turned in my letter of resignation. My office threw me a nice goodbye party and wished me the best of luck in my future endeavors and relocation. My boss left me with a very nice letter of recommendation.

As I sat down with Human Resources during my sign-out process, the representative went over everything I was giving up, and I had to sign it all away, including my kids' college education. It was one of the hardest things I ever did! I felt like I was signing away my life and, indeed, I was. As I packed up all my belong-

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ings into one box and walked down the long flight of stairs to my car, it was hard to fight back the tears, wondering if I did the right thing. Part of me wanted to run back and say, "Just kidding!"

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The next morning after I quit my job was so incredible! Ever since I accepted Jesus as my Savior, I always woke up feeling a wonderful peace. I definitely expected to have peace when obeying such a huge call from God, but, in addition to peace, He gave me something more: He gave me *Joy!* "Joy unspeakable and full of glory!" as it reads in 1 Peter of the Bible. Wow, I never expected that! I had no regrets; just peace and joy! The scripture reads:

*Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: (Peter 1:8, KJV)*

After a Christian brother, whom I didn't even know very well, learned what I did, God put it on his heart to help us out a little, financially. He would often show up with an encouraging card with a little money in it. That

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was so precious to me because I knew he didn't have much to give. But it helped us out so much because, though I had a life savings of twelve thousand dollars saved up in an IRA, I had no other money nor income. I started holding some yard sales which helped a bit but, even without a job, God somehow provided for all our needs. I so loved being home full-time for my girls and to have more time for God. It felt wonderful!

## Chapter 5



**A**fter quitting my job, I started knocking on some doors for my move. I knew that the first thing I needed to do in the process of moving to New York was to start applying for jobs. I thought I'd start looking in New Jersey because I wasn't ready to work in the city yet. Bill and Dana started sending me the Want Ads, and I knew that I needed to "make a job out of getting a job". I had only one year of college and no degree so I was going to have to rely on my experience. I wrote a resume and made multiple copies of it, as well as multiple copies of my letter of recommendation. I left my job being a manager but was willing to humble myself and go back to secretarial work if I had to. I was willing to do anything God gave me. I had applied for countless jobs, always typing up and including a nice cover letter, but I never heard back from most.

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I also sent my manuscript of my book, *Angel In White*, to Pastor David Wilkerson, hoping that maybe he'd relate to it and have some ministry for me within Times Square Church. But he sent it back with a little thank you note, unread I'm sure. I didn't really expect him to read it, but since I had included a letter telling him that I was from his hometown and that I felt I had a similar calling to His, I thought that, at least, he'd have his secretary or his wife, Gwen, read it and highlight points of interest. Gwen had once said that she felt it was her ministry to read each and every letter that was sent, but I guess they were all just too busy and probably had tons of things sent to them. That was a closed door.

On one of my trips to Times Square Church, one of the church's ministries called "The Hannah House," which housed abused and troubled women, was there. Bill had often spoken of them and thought that it might be a good ministry for me since God seemed to be leading me into helping troubled women.

The women came to the morning service and ended up taking the two rows of seats directly in front of me. I felt compassion for them and thought that this may be a sign from God, so after the service, I decided to speak to the head of the ministry about it. The head at that time was a woman who seemed very stern and didn't make me feel very good about talking

to her. I told her that I felt God was calling me to Times Square Church and maybe to a ministry at "The Hannah House." She looked at me with a coldness, and asked, "Well, where's He calling you: to Times Square Church or The Hannah House?" She didn't seem interested in anything I had to say. She brushed me off and I could see that there was no point in pursuing it any further with her. I felt sorry for the women in the program who had to deal with her; she didn't seem very nice or godly. It was another closed door.

Back at home, I got called for my first job interview! It was at the private and prestigious Kent Place School in beautiful Summit, New Jersey, working in their main office. I had no idea about the towns in New Jersey but Summit quickly became one of my favorites, and still is, even to this day. New Jersey sure was a beautiful state, and very well-to-do. It being called "The Garden State" seemed very appropriate to me. I drove the five hours there and the interview went well, but they hired someone else who lived in New Jersey. I found that it was much harder to be hired when you had to relocate. Yet another closed door.

I was very disappointed because I really wanted it, but I kept on pursuing other things and kept searching. I had gotten a lot of rejections but finally got an interview working for the owner of a prestigious real estate

company near Summit, as her Administrative Assistant.

The interview with her and her Vice President went well, and I awkwardly ran into her again when, after the interview, we were both having lunch at the same nearby diner. I don't know if they took that as a sign, but they called me shortly afterward, and praise God, I actually got the job! I was thrilled that she hired me and hoped that she would be happy with me. Finally, an open door!

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Due to all of the losses I had gone through in following Jesus, I had developed a severe talking problem, especially when talking on the telephone. It felt like Satan had a stranglehold on my throat which made it hard to speak. It was bad, and I just couldn't seem to overcome it. I hoped that it wouldn't be a hindrance to me in my new job. I likened it to the Apostle Paul's thorn in the flesh in the Bible. Paul wrote:

*And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me,*

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*lest I should be exalted above measure.  
(2 Corinthians 12:7 KJV)*

Starting my new job in New Jersey meant that I had to find a place to stay. Again, God opened up a door for me almost immediately. On one of my recent visits to Times Square Church, Bill and Dana had introduced me to Karl and Judy, a couple with whom they were living. They were all renting a big house in Glen Ridge, New Jersey. Karl took a liking to me, and when he found out about my calling and my need for a place to stay, he said that they had an extra bedroom in their house and I could stay there! Wow, another open door!

Bill and Dana both had lived with me for a while and, now, I was going to live with them! What a beautiful exchange of blessings! I moved into my little room in the big Victorian house with great joy.

It was such a blessing having a communal living situation with these Christians. Karl and Judy had a baby daughter as did Bill and Dana, and we would all sit down to dinner every night and fellowship together. I loved it.

I started working at my new job in September 1993. I would drive home almost every weekend to spend time with my kids, who had moved in with my parents until I got settled. By this time, I was thirty-six years

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old, and my daughters were sixteen and fourteen.

Amusingly enough, I was thrilled to have to drive the busy Garden State Parkway to get to work and to commute with so many cars and people! During my thirty-mile commute in Pennsylvania, I was practically the only car on the road, and I always felt like nobody in the world worked but for me! But now, I finally felt like part of the real world, and it was exciting!

But on my first day on the job, I arrived about twenty minutes late because I had some difficulty finding the office. They weren't pleased about it but gave me the benefit of the doubt.

But, unfortunately, my boss and I clashed spiritually. She was a Christian Scientist so didn't mesh at all! I'm not sure what she was expecting, but I was humble enough to try my best to make her happy. Even so, at the end of the day, the woman seemed to hate me!

One of the main parts of the job was using the telephone, which was my thorn in the flesh. Rather than leaving her written messages, she required that you leave voice messages for each missed call. I'm sure that some, actually most, of my messages sounded like a woman being strangled, and she probably wondered what the heck was wrong with me.

I'm sure that she wanted an assistant like her son, the President, had - but I was a far cry from her! She left

colorful, "sing-song" messages that weren't me at all.

Regardless, I was still so happy to be there, to actually be living and working in New Jersey, and going to Times Square Church. Whatever price I had to pay to be there, I was willing to pay it. I was a humble servant of God and worked heartily as unto the Lord as the Bible teaches. In Colossians, it reads:

*And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily,  
as to the Lord, and not unto men;  
(Colossians 3:23, KJV)*

As the weeks went by, I started feeling stronger that my boss wasn't happy with me. One day, the President's assistant asked me out to lunch. I didn't realize until later that my boss had put her up to it, to try to talk to me about what I was doing wrong, and what she expected. Being the owner's assistant was a big job, and I guess I just wasn't cutting it.

After a while, I noticed that she stopped giving me work, a sure sign that something is seriously wrong, I learned. She gave me one huge job of organizing her messy bookshelf in her office, which she knew was almost impossible to do because I needed to be at my desk answering the phones and doing my work. She was setting me up for failure. I tried my best, but as humble

and cooperative as I was, after only two months, she *fired me!*

I was devastated but was told not to feel too badly because she had fired the other two or three assistants who were before me! Still, I had never been fired from a job before and it was a huge blow to me and my already fragile ego!

Just before one of her executives did the dirty work of telling me they were letting me go (I guess she didn't want to do it herself), I had made coffee and was taking a tray of it into her office for her and her guests. When she saw me coming in with the tray, she yelled "Nooooo!" I didn't know why then, but later realized that she must have thought that I was already told that I was fired, and that I was coming in to dump coffee on her to take revenge! I would *never* have done such a thing! I had to laugh at how poorly she thought of me.

Once I was told that I was fired, silly me still wanted to stay and finish out the day, but they escorted me out immediately. The only good thing that came of it was that she, at least, had the heart to pay me for the following two weeks, which I desperately needed.

But having that job caused me to make some major decisions that I was now going to have to rethink, now that I lost it.

## Chapter 6



Once I had gotten a job, I started the search for an apartment for me and the girls. I learned how few and far between apartments were, especially in the area in which I was looking, and at a reasonable price. To make things harder, we had a cocker spaniel dog, Toby, whom we loved dearly and was part of the family, so they had to allow pets.

I was searching in and around the vicinity of my job which was in New Providence, just a few miles from Summit. I learned that you had to get the local newspaper, *The Independent Press*, the night before it came out and be one of the first ones to call. They typically set up a time to see it at the same time for all interested parties and you had to either be the first one there or be lucky enough to get picked if you weren't. It was a very difficult process and I was rejected many times, being a

## EXPECTING PEACE, BUT GETTING JOY!

single mother with a new job, two kids, and a dog.

I didn't know the Jersey towns and neighborhoods at all but God knew how important it was to bring my girls to a nice, safe town with a good school. The transition was going to be very difficult for them, so God knew He had to put us in the right place. The area He picked for us was just perfect and is still one of my favorite parts of New Jersey to this day.

God put us in the cute little town of Stirling, about thirty miles down a local road from Summit, and about 45 minutes west from the city. It was the perfect town for us; very small, safe, and near a very good high school, Watchung Hills Regional High School. It was as close to Barnesboro as you could get in Jersey, so I hoped the transition wouldn't be too hard for my girls. The high school was big because it was regional, but that's where God chose to put them.

The following ad for an apartment that I saw in the Classified section of the local newspaper caught my eye. I called about it immediately, and actually got it with no trouble at all!

**STERLING. Cozy charming.**

**Walk to train, 2BR 2nd fl Deck**

**W/D \$895/mo incl utils. Avail**

**Dec 1. 908-xxx-xxxx**

God gave us a two-bedroom apartment on the second floor of a big two-family house that allowed pets! It had a washer and dryer in the basement that we had access to. It also had a nice big deck overlooking beautiful trees, and a fenced yard! God went over and above what we needed by giving us a nice apartment that not only allowed pets, but had a *fenced yard* for our dog! We didn't even have that back home. I was so touched by how God cares about the smallest details of our lives! These scriptures come to mind about how much God loves and cares for us:

*Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?  
and one of them shall not fall on the  
ground without your Father. But the very  
hairs of your head are all numbered.*

*Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value  
than many sparrows. (Matthew 10:29-31, KJV)*

*Now unto him that is able to do exceeding  
abundantly above all that we ask or think, unto the  
power that worketh in us... (Ephesians 3:20, KJV)*

As the ad read, the rent was \$895 per month. That was huge for me but reasonable for the area it was in, and for what we were getting. I needed \$1,345 to get in: one month's security deposit plus a pet deposit of \$450. I managed to dig up the funds, primarily from the two

weeks extra pay I received from my boss who fired me. Coming from Barnesboro where I paid my parents \$200 a month by check, but which they rarely even cashed, I couldn't imagine paying \$895 per month, but I had to trust God for it. So I signed the year's lease, wrote a check for \$1,345, and the apartment would be mine on December 1st.

Next was the move. Moving all the contents of my big four-bedroom house from Spangler, Pennsylvania to Stirling, New Jersey was going to be a monumental task! I went home on the weekends to start packing up our lives into boxes, and it was gut-wrenching. I'm the type of person who has a hard time undecorating and taking down the Christmas tree every year; this was so much harder, even though it's what I wanted. It took me many trips home to get it all done and ready to be moved on moving day.

My friend, Karl, whose house I live in, was kind enough to offer to drive the five hours to my home in Pennsylvania, help me rent and pack up the big moving truck, and move me to Stirling, New Jersey. What a blessing it was to have someone willing to do that for me! I'm forever grateful to him!

So everything was set. I had a job, an apartment, and a mover. The lease on the apartment was signed and we had set a moving date for December 2nd...and

then I got fired!

*"My God, what do I do now?"* I thought. I couldn't even imagine going through with it without having a job and with no money. I didn't know how I was going to pay the huge rent even with a job, let alone without one. And how could I make this huge move of everything I own without having a job?

This situation that I found myself in tested my faith to the maximum! I was going to have to do some serious praying about this one!

## Chapter 7



**I** prayed and considered the facts. God gave us the perfect apartment, and the lease was already signed. I hated the thought of going back to the landlord and breaking the lease and then having to start the search for an apartment all over again. I also had my house packed and ready to go and the moving date was already set. Plus, I hated to change things for Karl after he had gone out of his way to do this for me.

After much thought and prayer, I made one of the hardest decisions and greatest leaps of faith of my life. I decided to go through with the move! I was going to make this major move of all my stuff into an apartment in New Jersey with no job and no money! To me, this was like jumping off a cliff; either God would catch me, or I would fall and die. I moved on faith in God who

brought me this far and never let me down yet!

Moving day came, and Karl and I made the long trip to western Pennsylvania in my car. We spent the night at my parents' house, and in the morning, we drove to Indiana where we rented a big Ryder moving truck for three days. My dad and Karl spent hours loading up the truck. I kissed my kids goodbye and told them I'd be back for them soon. Then we pulled out waving goodbye to my mom and dad who stood in the front yard of the empty house watching us leave; dying inside, I'm sure.

When we finally made it to Stirling, Bill and some friends were at the house ready to help us unload the truck. Finally, after much work, it was done.

After everyone left, I sat down in my new apartment with mixed feelings. On the one hand, I was so happy that this miracle had actually taken place and that I had really moved to New Jersey. On the other hand, I knew that I was in a desperate situation with no job and no money to pay the rent!

It was a huge step of faith, and only time would tell if I would sink or swim.

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Little by little, I began unpacking the boxes and

putting everything in place. I got my kids' room set up as nicely as I could, hoping that they would like it and be comfortable there.

Come Monday morning, I knew the first thing I needed to do was to start looking for a job. I got the local newspaper and started applying for jobs that I thought I might be qualified for. Miraculously, within only two weeks, I got an interview at a software company in lovely Chatham, working with their production team. I was so happy because I was so desperate for a job! The ad, that had been posted on November 19, 1993, read:

### COMPUTERS

**Leading investment Firm seeks a responsible & detail-oriented prof'l to join our production team. Process data, test software, create & test products in a PC environment. Knowledge of DOS & PC Batch processing a +. Excellent oppty for self-starter who is returning to the work force. Send resume with salary to...**

At the interview, I had to fill out an application. They left me alone in the conference room to do so. It was all pretty standard until I came to this one question:

*“Have you ever been fired from a job?”*

That question stunned me because, of course, I was just fired from one! I didn't know what to do! I was so afraid that if I answered “Yes”, they wouldn't hire me. But if I answered “No”, I would be lying, and God would know. What a predicament I found myself in for someone who was so desperate for a job!

At the end of the day, I was a Christian and no matter what the consequences, I couldn't lie. So I wrote “Yes” with a little explanation as to how my boss was a very difficult woman and that she had fired her two or three other assistants before me. She just took it in stride, and to my surprise, she hired me anyway! I couldn't believe it; it was a miracle! God was testing me and, thankfully, I passed the test - though I was surely tempted to lie!

Of course, I accepted it, and it turned out to be the best job I ever had. Plus, they started me out at a very good salary; much more than what my previous job's salary. Everything about it was so wonderful; well, except for one little thing. In addition to a standard work-week, I was required to work the first few days of every month, no matter if they fell over a Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday. Plus, they were about fifteen-hour days. This

was a necessary part of the business. The Production Team, a group of four women, was responsible for processing data and sending monthly updates, via diskettes, to our clients. In my situation, I was able to do it, so it was fine with me.

The name of the company was Randall-Helms, which provided its own software to major brokerage services companies, such as Morgan Stanley. My commute to my new job in Chatham was just lovely; it was all beautiful, country roads. We worked in the heart of Chatham in a big, old Victorian three-story house that was converted to an office. It even had a front porch. We all felt like family. It was a very special moment in time for all fifty or so people who worked there, and many of us still keep in touch to this day, always expressing our love for being a part of this great phenomenon.

At the beginning, the job was so simple; I did nothing but copy diskettes for the first few days! And to get paid so much for doing it? I just couldn't imagine it. Of course, it got much harder as I learned my real responsibilities, but I loved every minute of it. I loved working for a software company with tons of computers in the office, rather than being someone's assistant. How God turned things around for me!

After getting this great job, I drove into the city every Tuesday night for the Tuesday night service at

Times Square Church. It had become my favorite service and, although it was a bit of a drive from the city back to Stirling, it was nothing to me after having to drive 6 hours to get there and back from Pennsylvania.

I was so happy to be living and working in New Jersey and able to go to Times Square Church regularly. I remember being surprised one day when my boss asked me when I wanted to take a vacation. "Vacation?" I replied. "Every day here is a vacation to me! I don't need anything more." She just looked at me like I was crazy, but that's how I felt and how happy I was!

On most weekends, though, I would make the long trip home to be with my girls. My joy wasn't going to be complete until I had them with me. I started by taking our dog, Toby, to live with me first. I'd take him back and forth with me on every trip. He was such a good companion on our trips. He would just curl up on the front seat and sleep the whole time, never disturbing my driving. I always stopped at the McDonald's in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, our halfway point, for a bathroom break and lunch. I'd always buy him a cheeseburger, which he just loved. Toby was my best friend who loved me unconditionally!

My girls were both in the high school band. Lacey played flute and Lindsay the saxophone; both were "first chair". I never missed a recital nor a holiday perform-

ance and made it a point to come back anytime they had one. They had their friends, their school, their grandparents, and their whole lives back in Pennsylvania. Moving them to New Jersey was not going to be easy, no matter when the move took place.

## Chapter 8



**L**acey was in the middle of her Junior year, and Lindsay, the middle of her Freshmen year. It was a very difficult time to move them, plus they both had boyfriends. They really wanted to stay and finish out the school year, but Lacey wanted to stay until she graduated! I wanted to do the right thing by them but I just couldn't bear not having them with me; I loved them so much! And I couldn't bear not having my family together if Lindsay were to come and Lacey were to stay.

After much thought and prayer about what I should do, I finally decided to move them out with me in the middle of the school year, after midterms. I drove out on a weekend in January prepared to move them to New Jersey with me and Toby. They wrapped things up at school, packed all of their belongings, said good-

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bye to all their friends, family, boyfriends, and their beloved grandparents. Hurting them in any way hurts me deeply, even to this day, and though things worked out in the long run and they would never go back to live in Barnesboro, I still question if I did the right thing. I did it out of love, but was it selfish love on my part, not being able to live without them? It still pains me to think and write about it all these years later.

So I ended up taking them out of Northern Cambria High School in Pennsylvania and enrolling them in Watchung Hills Regional High School in New Jersey. They started in January 1994, at the beginning of the second school term. Lindsay adjusted remarkably well, but Lacey didn't; and I still cringe at the pain I put her through. I think that she harbored a lot of resentment towards me for it and I don't know if she has ever truly forgiven me, even though, when she was old enough to make her own decisions, she chose to stay in New Jersey.

Almost immediately after getting there, Lacey broke her toe and had to be on crutches. Because the school was so big, her classes were scattered across the campus, some of them being a far walk. The school gave the students only 2 or 3 minutes to get to their next class after one ended, and she struggled to make it on time, on her crutches and with many heavy books on her back. And they didn't give her any leeway for her

condition. That was hard for her, on top of everything else.

Lindsay made a ton of friends almost immediately, both at school and at church. Lacey was shy, like me, and had a harder time making friends at both places.

On Sundays, I would take them to Times Square Church (TSC) in the city and stay for all three services: 10 am, 3 pm, and 6 pm. Then I would drive all the way back to Stirling, some 40 miles away. We would leave the house at about 8:00 in the morning and not get home until about 10:00 at night. And then they had to do their homework and be up early for school the next morning. Looking back now, it was a bit much but I noticed how God always made a way and helped them at school for being in His house. Even back home when we'd go to the Sunday evening 7 pm services, God did the same.

I would always go to the TSC Tuesday night 7 pm services by myself, leaving directly from work since it was closer than Stirling. I'd leave my kids home on that night.

So the girls started to adjust. New Jersey did have a lot of places to go, things to do, and it was always exciting going into the city. I always felt that we had the best of both worlds—a safe, small-town to live in, with the big city just next door.

Lindsay got a new best friend, Jessica, whom she met at school and with whom she still sees to this day. Lacey started waitressing at the Italian restaurant down the road and became best friends with a local girl, Denee. I even got a new Christian best friend, Elizabeth, Dana's cousin. We had been inseparable for years, and she always kept all of us laughing. Things were starting to work out.

Another good thing about going to a Times Square Church in New York City, a church of almost two thousand people, was that my hopes of finding a husband which I still so greatly desired and was still believing God for, seemed much more plausible. There were so many single men there, of all types. I felt like a kid in a candy store! I thought that, surely God would lead me to the right man there. But I learned that it was actually harder to meet them because city guys weren't very easy to get to know, and many of the men in the church acted too "spiritual" to be interested in women.

I decided that my "type" was a white-collar, clean-cut, suit and tie, "pretty boy" type of guy, and I met one at a TSC church picnic that the church was having out in Rehrersburg, Pennsylvania. We started talking and I developed a little crush on him right away. But the next morning after the church service, when he was very near to me, he acted like he didn't even know me. That's

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when I realized that things were a little different here than they were in my small town and that finding a husband may be even more difficult.

During my time there, I did actually date one guy from the church, but he just wasn't my type and the relationship didn't last long; maybe only a month or two.

So even at Times Square Church in New York City, finding a husband was challenging. But, it wasn't up to me anyway: it was up to God.

## Chapter 9



**T**he driving age in Pennsylvania was sixteen so Lacey already had her driver's license when we moved. However, In Jersey, it's seventeen, so Lacey had to wait to get her NJ driver's license, although both of us could still drive with our PA licenses and insurance. To get a NJ license, you had to pass their written test.

I also had to transfer my license from Pennsylvania to New Jersey, and take the test. I thought that was ridiculous because I had been driving for over twenty-five years and knew the rules of the road, so I didn't bother to study the NJ Driver's Manual. I don't think Lacey studied much either. We went to the DMV together to take the written test, and both of us failed! We realized that many of the questions were NJ law, and you absolutely needed to study the manual to pass. So we stud-

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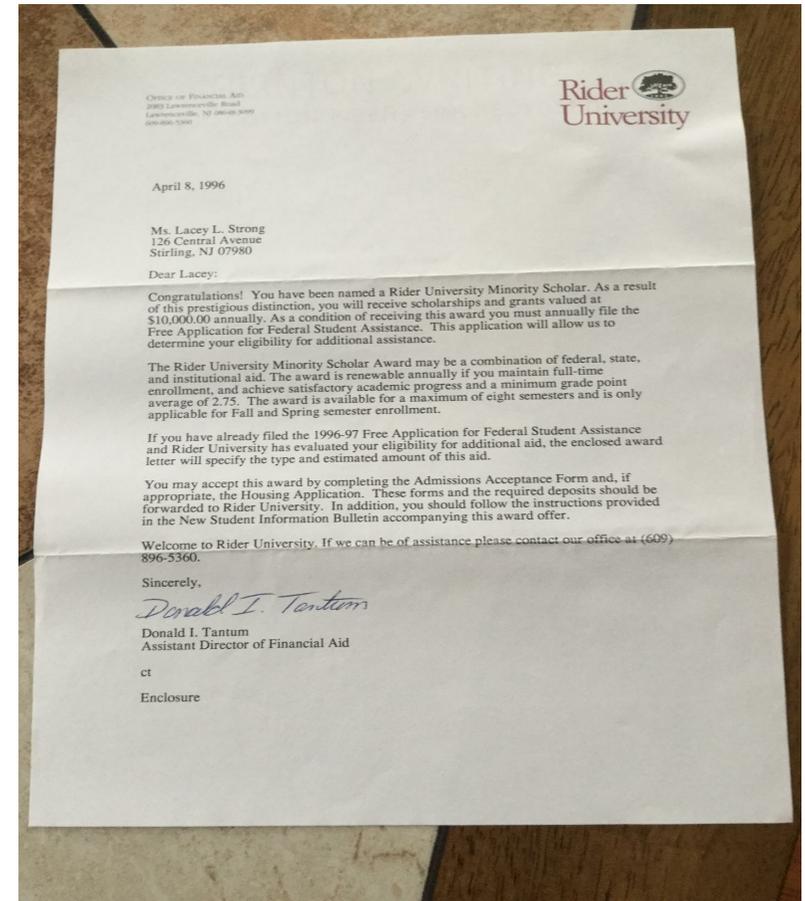
ied, went back, and both passed; me, by the skin of my teeth!

Not too long afterward, Lacey saved up some money from waitressing and bought herself a little red Honda Civic, 5-speed. We were both “stick shift” drivers, so she knew how to handle it. She took out a loan on it, and I co-signed. She learned how to navigate the busy highways and, in addition to driving herself and Lindsay to school, she was soon driving into the city with it. She started driving herself to church on Sunday mornings so that she could leave after the 3 pm service. I understood. She was happy to have her freedom.

In 1995, Lacey graduated from high school and I threw her a nice graduation party. Her favorite uncle, Uncle Danny came, as did my parents. It was a nice time and I was so happy to have my family come for her and to show them where we lived.

One day, an unexpected letter came in the mail for Lacey. It was from Rider University in Lawrenceville, NJ, which is in South Jersey. Rider is a small, private, and expensive university. To my surprise, they were giving her a scholarship to attend their university! They were giving her \$10,000 a year for four years! That’s \$40,000! (See the image of the letter.)

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I couldn’t believe it! Only God could have done this! She didn’t even really apply for it, though she must have filled out something at school. I knew that it was God, making up for having given up their free college at IUP. I was so amazed and grateful!

In the end, however, Lacey decided not to go there.

She really wanted to go to Boston University (BU). She had her heart so set on it that we took a weekend trip and drove to Boston to check it out. But it was so expensive and so far out of our reach that it wasn't even an option. I felt badly that I couldn't give her what she wanted, but it just wasn't reasonable, nor feasible.

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Lindsay had gotten very involved with the church and it filled me with such joy! Her two best friends were Marcella and Shy. Shy was the daughter of the Missions Director so Lindsay ended up going with the church on two separate mission trips to Russia!

She also joined the Junior Choir and it so warmed my heart to see her on stage singing with the choir in her choir robe. The Junior Choir always ministered at the 3 pm service but, at Christmas, they joined together with the awesome Adult Choir, under Sister Gwen, and it was such a blessing! They actually sang *The Hallelujah Chorus*! It was amazing, and I recorded it and have it on video tape. I could hardly believe that, here we were in New York City, on Broadway, in the Mark Hellinger Theatre (where the church was located), and my daughter was up on stage singing with many stars who had turned to the Lord! It was such a miracle for three girls

from the sticks of Pennsylvania, and I was so thankful!

Also, one year for their Christmas play, their "Mary" had gotten sick so they asked Lindsay to do it. Seeing her play "Mary" and holding the "baby Jesus" in their Christmas presentation was amazing!

Lindsay was also in with the "in crowd" (as I called them), meaning the heads of Times Square Church. She was friends with Patrick Pierre, who was the Junior Choir Director back then, but who later became one of the main pastors.

She was also friends with Pastor Carter Conlon's daughter, Katy, and I remember several times dropping her off and picking her up at their home when they lived in Morristown, NJ, not too far from Stirling.

Lindsay also visited Brad and Lisa Guice out at their home at Lake Hopatcong a few times. At this present time, Brad and Lisa are the pastors of the TSC North Jersey Campus.

At school, Lindsay joined the Watchung Hills High School Band and I was happy to see her continuing to play her saxophone. And I was so pleased to attend her Christmas recital with the band.

She also had gotten many different jobs throughout the years, starting with serving ice cream at an ice cream shop, and then moving on to waitressing.

We made many trips home to Barnesboro after we

moved so that the girls could see their grandparents and friends. We even went home one time so that the girls could go to the prom with their boyfriends. We found them beautiful dresses in Jersey and they both looked so beautiful on that special night.

Lacey's boyfriend actually came out to New Jersey once to visit her but, after a while, both Lacey and Lindsay felt it best to break up with their boyfriends.

Of course, we always went home for Christmas. One Christmas, we had the car loaded up with tons of presents, two kids, and a dog-and then we broke down! It was on the Pennsylvania Turnpike on a snowy Christmas Eve, about three hours from my parents' home.

As we sat there broken down along the side of the turnpike on that snowy Christmas Eve, it wasn't too long before a jolly old man who had a white beard stopped and asked if we needed help. He looked just like Santa Claus! We said yes and, before long, a tow truck arrived and lifted the car with all of us in it up on the truck. The tow truck driver drove us to the nearest exit, which was Bedford, and he dropped us off at a gas station. From there, we called my brother to come to get us since there was no hope of getting the car fixed that night. We were saving our appetites for my mom's Christmas Eve delicacies, but we were left to eat our Christmas Eve dinner out of the gas station's vending

machines. It was pretty depressing as we waited two and a half *hours* until my brother could get there. But, we managed to pull off a nice Christmas after all, and our car was fixed and waiting for us on the way back.

My parents actually made a few trips out to visit us, and they even came to the city with us and attended the Times Square Church Sunday morning service. That was a blessing, but then my mom, being a staunch Catholic, wanted to see St. Patrick's Cathedral, so we went there. Then I took them to Little Italy for lunch, since my dad is Italian. My dad, being the jokester that he is, wanted spaghetti and meatballs, and they didn't have it. He complained to the waiter that he came all the way from Pennsylvania to Little Italy in New York City and couldn't get a plate of spaghetti and meatballs!

He made a joke saying that he bet if John Gotti were there, he'd get spaghetti and meatballs. The waiter's face turned stone cold, as my mother cringed. The next thing you know they were serving him spaghetti and meatballs! My dad was so innocent; he had no idea what he was saying-but he got his way. We had a good laugh about that incident for many years afterward!

As time went on, New Jersey was really starting to feel like home to us; I was so happy with the way things were working out. I found that being in the center of God's Will provided such happiness in life, as King

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David wrote in the Psalms:

*Happy is that people, that is in such  
a case: Yea, happy is that people  
whose God is the Lord. (Psalm 144:15, KJV)*

## Chapter 10



**T**hings were still going well at my job but, in 1995, about two years after I started working there, the owner decided to sell the company. So we were bought out and under new management and a new company name. We stayed for a while in Chatham but then they moved us from the house to a real office building in Livingston. After that, things started to change and it wasn't the same anymore. I started thinking about leaving.

It was through this job that I learned about Remedy, a software developer's application that became my ticket to success. We had been using Goldmine as our client database, which I was just starting to learn pretty well. But the new company was using Remedy, and it was almost thrown into my lap. I was told, "Here, we're using this now." I felt that they wanted me to fail. In-

stead, I excelled at it!

Once I took a close look at this developer's toolbox, it was like a lightbulb went off in my head and I realized how powerful it was; that you could use it to build any type of database! The possibilities were endless. I told myself that, if I could just learn this, the sky's the limit! I knew it, and as time progressed, I turned out to be right.

So I started to teach myself. I started with the thick beginner's manual and read every word of it, from cover to cover. I also asked the guy who worked at the company headquarters in Ann Arbor, Michigan, who was in charge of it for the company, to train me, because our company needed to be merged into the new company that bought us, and I was going to be responsible for it in New Jersey.

After about two years, I had enough experience with it that I thought I was ready to apply for a new job, doing just Remedy, and making more money. I learned that many companies, large and small, around the world used Remedy. The sky truly was the limit if you could become proficient with it. And it wasn't taught in schools so you could, basically, only learn it on the job, and it was too expensive to buy just to learn it - so there was a low supply and high demand for it, which meant money.

So I applied for a Remedy job at a large financial institution. They interviewed me and wanted to hire me. But there was some confusion with the salary; I thought they would be paying me about \$10,000 more than my current salary. So, foolishly, I turned in my letter of resignation at my current job before I received my official offer letter.

My company took immediate action and started advertising for my job. Resumes started pouring in via FAX. And then I found out that the new job wanted to pay me only \$3000 more than my current job! I argued with them and told them that I'd never leave my good job for that amount of money, but they refused to give me any more so I refused to take it. Suddenly I was stuck between a rock and a hard place! I already resigned from my current good job, and I had no other job to go to!

I was just sick as the resumes continued coming in. Then a miracle happened! My boss said that she'd like to speak with me. She took me into her office, shut the door, and said, "What can we do to keep you?"

I could hardly believe my ears! God had really come to my rescue! Playing into it, I said, "Well, I don't really want to leave. Let me sleep on it and give you an answer in the morning." It was hard waiting even until the next morning; I wanted to jump on it and say yes

immediately!

In the morning, of course, I said I'd stay! Whew! I sure learned my lesson from that one; you never quit a job without having a formal letter of acceptance, which included the salary, from the Human Resources department of the next job! I thanked God for saving my job and rescuing me from my stupidity!

A year or so later, after I had almost three years of Remedy experience under my belt, and after working about five years at my current company, I applied for a job with a leading Remedy consulting firm, based in New York City. I went into the city for my interview and, for some reason, even though I was interested, they thought that I wasn't. But they had a contract with a major company in Jersey City and knew that they were looking for a permanent Remedy professional, and thought that I'd be perfect for the job. So they contacted the Vice President who was doing the hiring and referred me.

One day, the V.P. called me about the position and I turned him down flat when I learned that the office was located in the Journal Square section of Jersey City. Jersey City was a dump as far as I was concerned. It was about 30 miles east of where I was living and just across the Hudson River from New York City. Although they were in the process of cleaning it up, it had a bad reputa-

tion and was dangerous. I lived out in beautiful Stirling and had worked in beautiful Chatham. "*Jersey City?*", I thought. "*Are you kidding me? There is no way I would ever work in Jersey City!*" So I politely refused him, and that was that.

About a month later, I received another call from him. He tried to get me to reconsider, saying, "Listen, we have a great opportunity here. Why don't you just come out and visit us, and see what we have to offer? You may change your mind." I thought that sounded fair so I agreed to come out for an interview. I couldn't believe that Remedy had put me in such high demand, but it certainly did.

The trip to my interview in Jersey City was difficult and, of course, I got lost in a bad section. But when I finally got there and got my car parked, from the moment I got there to the moment I left, about four hours later, they rolled out the red carpet for me! They treated me like gold, took me out to lunch at a fancy restaurant, introduced me to every VIP on the floor, then made me an offer I couldn't refuse!

After I left, I still had a very difficult time trying to find and get on the Pulaski Skyway, the main highway way back to Stirling. I knew that the commute was going to be difficult, but I had already decided to take the job. They offered me more money than I ever

could have imagined, and my boss later told me that they were prepared to give me about ten thousand dollars more! But what they were offering me to start, plus starting me out as a manager, plus all of the great benefits, were more than enough so I didn't even think to make a counteroffer.

When I received their official letter of acceptance from their Human Resources department in the mail, which included my salary, I knew that I would be able to give my letter of resignation to my current company. Still, they advised you not to do it until after you passed the required drug test. I had no doubt that I would pass it - although I heard that eating poppy seed bagels could cause a positive result - but, just to be sure, I waited.

From that point on, I left my five-year job at my current company and started my sixteen years career at my new job, where I became a major success and ended as a Senior Director. For someone who said they would never work in Jersey City, I ended up moving there after five years of commuting from Stirling. And not only moving there, but buying my first house (a condo) there, as well! I learned to "never say never".

Regarding my financial success, I have no doubt that God has blessed me so abundantly because I had been a faithful tither throughout my Christian life, giving ten percent of all my income back to God. The Word

of God says:

***Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. (Malachi 3:10 KJV)***

I certainly did prove God on this, and He certainly did open the windows of heaven and pour me out a blessing that there was barely room enough to receive!

For a single mother from a small town, with no college diploma who, for a time, had to be on public assistance just to survive, to a successful business-woman working for a major NYC company making more money than she ever could have imagined, I was blessed beyond measure!

## Chapter 11



Going to Times Square Church full-time was such a blessing to me. On Sundays, Pastor Bob Phillips would preach the morning service, Pastor Don Wilkerson (Pastor Dave's brother), the 3:00 pm, and Pastor David Wilkerson, the evening service. Sister Gwen was the beloved worship leader and adult choir director. The worship was phenomenal, as was the adult choir. The church had many former actors, musicians, Broadway stars, and opera singers that God was now using for His glory. It was heavenly!

I loved it so much that I always recorded the worship with my little tape recorder that I always carried with me. During Christmas and Easter, I'd even bring and set up my video camera to video-tape the special events, especially when Lindsay was part of the choir.

The three head pastors were also very beloved,

### EXPECTING PEACE, BUT GETTING JOY!

and the messages that were preached seemed to come straight from the heart of God. We were always fed the Word of God, and it was such a blessing. Those were the days!

But around 1994, something happened that caused a major church split! Suddenly, Pastor Bob, Pastor Don, and Sister Gwen were no longer there! Plus half of the choir was gone! I, for one, didn't understand, and as the rumors started to flow, I remember Pastor Dave preaching a message about, and against, gossip. He obviously didn't want the congregation to talk about it, but how could we not? How could we ignore such a huge thing that had happened in our church? Sweet Pastor Bob? Pastor Dave's own brother? Our dear Sister Gwen, whom Pastor Dave seemed to love so much? All were gone? The devil had really gotten in and wreaked major havoc in Times Square Church!

I tried to be obedient and not talk about it, and I still don't know the true cause of it to this day; though I have seen some things on the Internet. But I never found out anything from within the church body. Though Pastor Carter, who was a major blessing, became a pastor shortly afterward, and the senior pastor some years later, things were never quite the same, in my opinion. The church never had another choir director, and the choir stopped wearing their choir robes. That always

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seemed a little strange to me, but that's the way it's been ever since, and to this day.

The church split confirmed what we already knew: to keep our eyes on Jesus, and never on a man, because even the best men of God are fallible.

In 2001, Pastor Carter Conlon was appointed the senior pastor of Times Square Church by Pastor David Wilkerson, since he was in the process of stepping down and retiring. David Wilkerson died tragically in an automobile accident in Texas in 2011. To this day, I still have a hard time accepting his death and the way that it happened; the whole thing is very disturbing to me.

I guess there are some things we'll never have answers to until we get to heaven.

## Chapter 12



**I**n 1997, Lindsay graduated from high school. On one of our trips home, she ran into an old flame, Matt, from our hometown. Lindsay had actually gone to the eighth-grade dance with him. Their romance blossomed from that night, and they've been together ever since. They managed to maintain a long-distance relationship for many years while Lindsay went to college and pursued her career goals.

Lindsay decided to attend college locally at Rutgers University, the NJ state university with a very good reputation. From an early age, she knew that she wanted to be a doctor, so she had planned to go into pre-med or whatever type of medical program they were offering.

We paid for it with a combination of financial assistance and student loans. Lindsay studied hard for

four years and earned her Bachelor's Degree. I was so proud of her as I sat through her graduation ceremony. It was a special day.

After Lindsay got her undergraduate degree, a Bachelor of Arts in Biological Sciences, she decided to go to Seton Hall University to be a Physician's Assistant (P.A.). A doctor whom she worked part-time for, convinced her that that would be a better choice for her than being a doctor since she wanted to balance her career and a family. Being a doctor would be all-consuming, and she would have time for little else. So her doctor-friend gave her very good advice that she followed, and she worked very hard towards her career as a P.A.

After she graduated from Seton Hall, which was another proud moment for me, she even did an internship at the prestigious Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland.

Lacey had also gone to Rutgers for one year after she graduated from high school in 1995, but some setbacks had occurred in her life that caused her not to finish. She ended up going to the community college and, like me, became a success without a degree. She ended up becoming a Java software developer, working full-time from her home.

So, in the end, we all became very successful in our

lives by moving to New Jersey. The girls never looked back, and never considered moving back to Barnesboro.

Lindsay ended up marrying Matt and I was able to give her her dream wedding. As I walked her down the aisle, looking so gorgeous in her beautiful wedding gown, with her handsome groom, who couldn't have been more perfect, waiting for her, I felt that it was a testimony of God's faithfulness and a confirmation that I did the right thing in moving my family to New Jersey.

Lacey was her maid of honor and also looked gorgeous. Lacey has a way with words, and though she was nervous to give the traditional "maid of honor speech", she delivered the most touching and memorable speech ever. I was so proud of both of my girls, all grown up now.

Lacey never really wanted a big wedding, and she didn't have a serious boyfriend at the time anyway, so I was able to give her her dream vacation to Paris and Greece. She later found a wonderful man, as well, and married him in a beautiful, small ceremony in Central Park, New York City.

So everything worked out, and we were blessed beyond measure. While living in New Jersey, I never really felt led to work at a full-time ministry other than to finish raising my kids. In my heart, I know that I did the best I could, and that, one day, when I stand before God,

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I hope that He will say (from Matthew 25:21):

*"Well done, thou good and faithful servant!"*

**To God be the Glory!**

**-THE END-**

## *Epilogue*



I thank God that almost thirty years later, I was able to remember enough of the details of our move from Pennsylvania to New Jersey to write this second book, a sequel to my first book, *Angel in White*. Though the book is not as long as I hoped it would be, the most important thing was to tell of all the miracles God did for me, and to give Him glory!

As in my first book, I would like to end it suggesting that my readers listen to a Twila Paris song. If you read my first book, you know that Twila is one of my favorite Christian artists, and that the song from my first book was called "Destiny". This time, it's called "Send Me". Like the previous song, I feel that this song wraps up my whole story. Be blessed

Blessing!

Carol Carnevali, October 2021

## *Bonus Feature*

I was living in the NYC area during 9/11 and have included a bonus feature of my own story on the following pages. I thought that my readers would find it interesting.

## *My 9/11 Story*

by: Carol Carnevali  
September 11, 2021

### **20 years later, yet “We Will Never Forget”**

**M**ost of us who lived in the NYC area during 9/11/2001, and survived, have our own personal 9/11 stories. Many have lost loved ones and are still suffering from the effects - and after-effects. Thankfully, I don't know anyone personally who was killed but, in the spirit of “we will never forget”, and to leave a legacy, I wanted to document my story.

\*\*\*\*\*

September 11, 2001 was the most beautiful day you could imagine; warm, still and not a cloud in the sky. You had a sense of peace to see such a glorious day. I was working at ADP Brokerage Services, (later named Broadridge), a financial services company in Jersey City, just outside of lower Manhattan where the World Trade Center (WTC) was located. We had a nice view of the

city and the WTC from the top floors of our 9-story building. From ADP, we could easily take the PATH train from Journal Square in Jersey City to the World Trade Center stop in NYC, which was only about a 10-minute ride under the Hudson River. I often did this because I had parking in my office building which was located just across from the PATH station. Since parking was so difficult in the city, it was an ideal situation for me. I spent a lot of time in the city and often traveled to and from the WTC.

I was living in Stirling, New Jersey, at the time, and commuted to my job in Jersey City, Monday through Friday, which was about a 40-minute drive. My best friend, Elizabeth, was staying with me at the time. Our routine was to drive to Jersey City together every morning, where I went to work at my 9 to 5 job, and she would take the PATH train to the World Trade Center to spend the day in the city, usually Brooklyn. Then she would be back at 5pm for our commute home.

At that time, I was very much into the New York Yankees baseball team, and Elizabeth and I were learning to Swing Dance. Once a week on summer week-nights, the World Trade Center had Swing Dances with live bands outdoors on the plaza. We often went to it.

On Saturday nights, they had a Swing Dance with

a live band at the World Trade Center's famous "Windows on the World" restaurant. It was held at their "The Greatest Bar on Earth" section. We often went to that as well, and just so happened to go on the last Saturday night before 9/11, only 3 days before. It was located in the North Tower way up on the 107<sup>th</sup> floor, almost at the top (it had 110 floors). You actually had to take two elevators to get there, switching at around the 76<sup>th</sup> floor. It was up so high that it was scary just looking out the floor-length windows.

When we recently went on a previous night, one of the guys in the band was bragging that the terrorists tried to bring the WTC down in 1993, but failed, and that they could never bring us down. We shuddered.

On the last Saturday night there, I requested the last song of the evening, and probably *ever*, which was, ironically, "Fly Me to the Moon." I danced to it, we left, and that was it. I remember seeing a bride and groom on our way out. They must have just gotten married there that day.

On 9/11, I happened to have two tickets to the Yankees game that evening up in the Bronx. I was planning to go with Elizabeth, and we planned to take the subway. On that morning, I was running late because I wanted to wear an outfit that was appropriate for both

work and the game, and I couldn't seem to find one. I kept trying on things, then ripping them off and throwing them on the bedroom floor because nothing seemed right. Elizabeth started getting concerned and said, "Come on, Carol! What are you doing? It's late! We have to go!"

When I finally found something to wear, we were on our commute nearing Jersey City where we could see the World Trade Center out at a distance. We noticed some smoke coming out of the top of one of the towers, so we turned on the popular local AM radio station, 1010 WINS, to find out what was going on. They said that there is "a gaping hole" at the top of the World Trade Center! They didn't yet know what caused it but thought that a small plane had crashed into it by accident. (The first plane had hit the North Tower at 8:46 a.m. Please see the attached timeline.) At that point, it was concerning, but didn't seem serious.

When I arrived at work, late of course, I met one of my staff members at the first-floor elevator and he was all shaken up. He had visually seen the second plane fly into the South Tower! (It hit at 9:03 a.m.) Then we all knew that it wasn't an accident, but had to have been done on purpose!

From that point on, it was chaos, as we tried to

work while monitoring the news to hear what was going on. Someone said that the elevators weren't safe so we kept running up and down the stairwell to the 8<sup>th</sup> floor so that we could see the World Trade Center. (I worked on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.) I remember people screaming in the stairwell when realizing what was going on. It seemed they had loved ones there. We watched in horror as the two buildings burned.

At that point, they were still standing. I never could have imagined that they would fall but, when I was at my desk, I heard on the news that one tower did! I ran back up and saw only one tower. It was shocking but I still couldn't imagine that the second one would fall. It did, only about thirty minutes later. The first tower, the South one, fell at 9:59 a.m.; the second one fell at 10:28 a.m.)

Meanwhile, the attacks were continuing in other parts of the country. I was safe in New York, but I heard that a plane hit the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. at 9:37 a.m. My brother often worked there so he was at risk. Then, I heard that Flight 93 went down in Pennsylvania at 10:03 a.m., near my hometown and where my dad lived. I was able to call my dad and, thankfully, all three of us were okay. My two daughters were safe in Jersey, too.

But, ironically, my older daughter, Lacey, had just taken a flight from Newark Airport to San Francisco, just about a week prior. It was the same itinerary as Flight 93, and could have actually been *that* flight. She was accustomed to flying and didn't have too much trouble going to San Francisco, but on the way back to Jersey, she had a strong sense of fear. It was like a premonition. She sat there terrified during the entire flight across the country. Thankfully, she did not take Flight 93 on 9/11!

Being that nobody knew what was next, all flights were suspended and ordered to land. Plus, all transportation to/from the city was stopped and the bridges and tunnels were closed. Many New Yorkers had to walk miles to get home, many covered in ash and soot. Groves who lived in Brooklyn were seen walking across the Brooklyn Bridge. They looked like zombies, and the whole scene looked like the end of the world.

I had been trying to call Elizabeth from the start, but the phone lines were overloaded and making a cell phone call was difficult. When I finally got to speak to her, she said that she was still in Jersey City watching it all go down. She said that they had closed the PATH trains early on, otherwise, she would have been there. It was only by the grace of God that we were late because,

if we had been on time, she would have definitely been there and who knows what might have happened to her. I heard that a lot of people had similar stories of being late, or on vacation, or sick, or something that morning.

I left work at around 3 p.m. and picked up Elizabeth. I had called my Chinese friend who worked in Weehawken, New Jersey. He and his wife lived only blocks away from the WTC. His wife was safe at her sister's place but he needed a place to stay since no one could get back into the city, so I offered my place. My boss, who lived on the Upper West Side of the city, needed a place too, but he found someone close who could take him in since I lived so far away and already had someone.

We drove through heavy traffic to Weehawken, picked up my friend, then went to nearby Hoboken to watch it. The buildings were gone. There was nothing left but a burning pile of rubble. It was still such a beautiful day and hard to believe what just happened. We knew that so many lives had to be lost. The only way back to New Jersey was the ferries, so they were running non-stop, filled to the max with people. When we got back to my place in Stirling, my Chinese friend bawled his eyes out as we sat and watched it on the news.

After the dust settled, life had to go on, though we

knew that nothing would ever be the same again. All PATH trains except to the World Trade Center were still running so I would still go into the city and get as close as I could to lower Manhattan. I don't know why but I wanted to be there. I think that you could only get as far as 14<sup>th</sup> street. Everything below that was blocked off. I remember that the smell in the city was putrid. I'll never forget the workers that I saw on the PATH train who were covered in ash and obviously working at the site. They just sat there with their heads hanging low and the most devastated look on their faces. God bless them!

There was a long line of news trucks parked along the West Side Highway trying to cover the story. They saw me and asked if they could ask me a few questions. I think it was a FOX News station from upstate. I said OKAY, and they put the cameras on me. They asked me an ironic question. They asked if I thought the Yankees should resume playing at Yankee Stadium given the risk of the terrorists blowing up the stadium next.

I said it's funny they should ask because I happened to have two tickets to the Yankees game on 9/11, when they were scheduled to play the Chicago Cubs. I still had them with me and held them up to the cameras. I said that I agreed with the popular opinion that we

couldn't let the terrorists control us and make us stop living our lives, but I would stand with the Yankees and support them in any decision they made. I never saw the interview on TV, probably because it wasn't local. The Yankees resumed playing at Yankee Stadium only two weeks later on 9/25. One fan who went to that game was reported stating the following:

*"We hadn't been to a game all year, and we felt it was important to come and show our support to the economy, but more importantly it will show Americans we can come out to a gathering like this and not be afraid." - (Laura Pritchards, lifelong Yankees fan, September 25, 2001)*

For the next two months, I walked around like a zombie. I don't think I ever smiled. One of the cafeteria cashiers at work noticed and asked if I was okay. It took me a long time to get over it, and my story isn't even nearly as bad as others. Approximately 3,000 souls were killed that day and so many more suffered and/or died later with strange cancers and all types of after-effects. My heart goes out to them.

They took the sign down from my office building because it was said that, if we went down, most of Wall Street would go down resulting in a huge financial collapse. I remember that one of our major clients, Cantor Fitzgerald, was on or around the 104<sup>th</sup> floor in the

North Tower, and lost all 658 employees who reported for work that day! My company worked tirelessly to get them back up and running when they thought they had lost their business. They were so thankful to us for stepping up that way.

From that time on, we were always looking over our shoulders afraid of the next attack. We were constantly monitoring the colored terror alerts, and I was always afraid when crossing the bridges and tunnels. A few months later, it looked like the Empire State Building was hit. I stood watching what looked like smoke coming out of the top of it, and the sound of sirens around, but it was a false alarm and just smog. When the “Sully” plane went down in the Hudson River, we immediately thought of terrorism. I didn’t stop living, but more terror attacks were always in the back of my mind.

Two years later, on 6/29/2003, the PATH train to the WTC stop reopened. It was strange arriving there to the open sky with no building above you. The people who had lost loved ones had posted “Missing” photos of them. There were thousands of them still plastered all over the nearby fences.

There were always protest groups there yelling and trying to hand out flyers stating that it was all a con-

spiracy, and that the United States had systematically brought down the Towers and fired a missile into our own Pentagon rather than a plane hitting it! The conspiracy theories were running rampant. Such ridiculousness was disgusting to me!

I still miss seeing the Twin Towers. The new singular one is amazing, but not the same. I had taken my dad and brother, Dan, to the Twin Towers on New Year’s Eve 2000 (Y2K). We went up to the Observation Deck on top of the South Tower, never thinking about what was already in the works by the terrorists. Dad and Dan were always glad to have had the opportunity to visit the Twin Towers before their destruction.

One of the most disturbing outcomes of this disaster was that some Palestinians in Jersey City, NJ, Paterson, NJ, and around the world were seen actually *celebrating!* Check YouTube to see videos of it. I don’t get it; how can you celebrate when you see such death and destruction of innocent people, including people jumping out the windows to their death? I just can’t even imagine such hatred.

I have a newspaper calling Jersey City “Terror Town” because so many terrorists live there. Right in Journal Square near my office building is the mosque where they built the bomb for the 1993 World Trade

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Center attack.

The destruction of the World Trade Center on 9/11/2001 was the deadliest terror attack in American history. It's been reported that the fires burned for 99 days, that it took 3.1 million hours of labor to clean up the 1.8 tons of rubble, and that only 20 people were found alive in the rubble.

Osama Bin Laden was found to be the mastermind behind the whole thing. The U.S. vowed to take him out and finally did so on 5/2/2011 under President Obama's presidency. Justice was finally served!

In closing, one question that kept playing over and over again in my mind after the 9/11 terror attacks, was:

**How Could Anyone Hate Us So Much?**

## *Afterword*

**T**hank you so much for reading my book! I hope you were inspired and blessed by it. I would greatly appreciate it if you would leave your honest *Feedback* on it, on the site on which you purchased it. Also, if you haven't read my first book, *Angel in White*, you may want to pick it up because it's a prelude to this true story.

Thanks again!  
Carol

## *Books By This Author*

### **Angel In White (A True Story)**

Whether you are a new Christian, a long-time follower of Christ, or just someone who is curious about God, you will find *Angel in White* an inspiring and engaging book that you won't want to put down. It is a true story about a young woman from the same hometown in western Pennsylvania that David Wilkerson was from, and a similar calling to New York City to be a part of Times Square Church, the church that he founded there. It's a story that takes you through her amazing salvation and the many trials and tribulations she faced in learning to walk with God. She learned not only how real God is, but how real Satan is, and the battle between good and evil for one's soul. She also learned how to "count the cost" and go "through the fire", suffering severe heartache, to be made into a vessel of honor for God, trusting that He knows best. The main story-line is about her call to New York and how a naïve, country girl faced all of her fears to go to the big city, as she felt God was leading. Her trips include some gripping moments where the devil tries to steal, kill and destroy; but God triumphs over and over again as the author learns

to hear His voice, and trust and obey Him in all things; knowing that the life God has for us is bigger and better than anything we can imagine and that, truly, He gives us life, and life more abundantly!

## *About The Author*

### **Carol Carnevali**



Carol Carnevali was born and raised in the same small town in Pennsylvania where Rev. David Wilkerson was from. She was saved in her mid-twenties and writes about the amazing journey that God took her through from her salvation to her call from PA to New York City. Carol actually moved to New Jersey (just outside of NYC) in 1996 and resides there until this day. Her books are both inspiring and relatable.

Proof