

Birth of the Miraculous, Heidi Baker 2014)

[Because the Bakers live in such a desperate part of the world and look for the most difficult cases through which to display the love of God, they experience more than their share of tragedy and sorrow. I know of no one who has faced greater challenges to their faith than Roland and Heidi Baker. It is the army of children cared for by the Bakers' ministry that are some of the best at bringing a miracle to an impossible situation. Heidi highlights the central key of keeping intimacy at the center of your journey and being lost in love with God. She shows that this is how to be fearless and find hope and perseverance in the hardest moments.]

Mary's example teaches us that sometimes the most spectacular miracles will get us into spectacular trouble. Mary's gift had harsh consequences. Not everyone sees the wisdom in giving everything away before going to sit with the destitute in bombed-out 3rd world streets.

When I was 16 years old, the Holy Spirit overshadowed me. The 1st thing that happened was that I lost all of my friends. Soon after that I had to give up a man I loved with all my heart. A few years later I met the man I would marry, Roland. When we eventually got married, we left immediately for the mission field. We had 1-way tickets and \$30 to our name.

When I was 18, I attended a meeting at what is now Vanguard University. The man stood there and said God had told him that He was giving him a city. Then I saw an open vision of Jesus. I cried out to God that if it was true, I wanted Him to give me a nation. It seemed to me that if God could give someone a city, He could also give someone a nation. At a later conference Randy Clark was preaching. He stopped and put his hands on me and said, "God wants to know, do you want the nation of Mozambique?" I screamed "Yes!" with everything within me. He continued, "The blind will see; the deaf will I hear; the crippled will walk; the dead will be raised; and the poor will hear the good news." Since that time our movement has seen more than 10,000 churches planted in and around Mozambique. Branches of the work have spread to more than 30 nations worldwide.

Being pregnant comes with great weight, discomfort, and inconvenience. What will you do when carrying God's promise begins to strain you? People in the world sometimes abort their babies because they don't want to make the sacrifices children require. The church has sometimes done the same thing with the promises, prophecies, and wooings of God. We have said yes in worship when we felt moved but then aborted what God asked us to carry when things started to feel difficult or inconvenient. God does not like abortion! It breaks His heart because when we carry that which He placed

inside us to full term, His lost sons and daughters—those He planned to reach through our laid-down lives—can come home.

I met Jesus on an Indian reservation in central Mississippi in a Baptist church. The next night I was baptized by the beautiful Holy Spirit at a Pentecostal Holiness church. Five months later at church during worship I was taken up in a vision and heard the audible voice of God for the first and only time in my life thus far. I heard Him say, "You will be married to Me. You are called to be a minister and a missionary to Africa, Asia, and England."

Even though I was told women did not preach, no one tried to tell me I could not love and speak to drug addicts. I looked for places where people were sad, broken, sick, dying, and desperate. I have been doing that for more than 37 years now. Those are still my favorite kinds of places to be. I found out that the broken and dying are always hungry. They are always desperate. They know they are in need. *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:3)*

God has predestined every one of us for fruitfulness. We need to be familiar with a place of divine intimacy in which we are so consumed by the Holy Spirit that we will nurture and protect the seed He places in us. We need to fearlessly step out and activate His promises. It is intimacy that gives us the grace and strength we need to push through suffering, pain, and inconvenience. Fruit always follows intimacy, and God is calling us to exponential fruitfulness.

If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here (Ex 33:15) **Developing a life in God's presence above all else is the only way to fulfill our God-given destinies.** When we spend time in the secret place, our passion and hunger for Jesus grow. It is only as we abide in His presence that the most precious treasures can be born.

God longs to increase our appetite for Himself. If we will eat and drink of Him, He will bring us into a relationship that will transform us into His likeness. People often ask me what the secret to sustainability is. The secret place is the secret. If you think you know how to live in the secret place but there is no fruit in your life, you have not been there. **To the degree we are united with God's heart and in love with Jesus, we will be fruitful. All fruitfulness flows from intimacy.**

I have a confession to make. I have no idea how to prepare for conferences and meetings. I simply live in communion with God, where fruitfulness can flow. Preparing my life to overflow is the only way I know how to prepare.

He has called each of us to live in His presence and to stop for the one He puts in front of us each day. Becoming

familiar with God's Word and His presence is a lifelong journey. The Lord was pleased with Moses because he would not consent to lead Israel without God's presence. **His method for changing your nation is you.** You are the salt. You are the light. Moses told God, *If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people (Ex 33:13, 14).* *The Lord replied to him, My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.*

Just as natural rivers always flow into low places, so the river of God always flows into the lowly places. The lower I go, the deeper toward the heart of God I find myself.

I have learned that you cannot do very much while you are only ankle-deep in the river of God. When you are only ankle-deep, you may still know the Holy Spirit. You may have profound convictions. You may have charismatic gifts. You may see some of God's power. Even so, **most of the time you will be confined to activities you know how to produce and control.** You will be walking on your own and relying on your own plans. We can choose to go as deep as we want to go. God's power and presence are much more powerful than our ability to stand in our own strength. **God wants to take us beyond what we can control.** He wants to take us to a place where we can be moved in any direction purely by the flow of His presence. Anyone who has ever worked in our ministry understands we are in way over heads. It bothers some people. In fact, we are so far in over our heads that if God does not show up through supernatural provision, people will go hungry. Every day thousands of children look to us for their daily meals.

Whenever I am home in Pemba, I like to swim out in the ocean. It is one of my favorite ways to get into the secret place. Beneath the water it is easy to feel hidden in God. There are no distractions. When I dive, I get to experience a new and different realm. Through my mask a different world greets me, like another dimension. God's kingdom too is a different realm, and when He calls us there, He is calling us to a new dimension. If we want to stay there, we have to be able to breathe underwater in the supernatural real of His kingdom, where His manifest presence surrounds and holds us like water in the ocean's depths. When I try to surface and breathe outside the place of His heart, it no longer feels right to me. If I come up and feel the atmosphere of human religion, it hurts me. I sink back down inside his heart, and I ask Him to keep me there. I've also learned that if you live immersed in the Spirit, you do not get so exhausted. The hardest time to walk is when coming out of the water. We have to be able to breathe in His atmosphere without coming up for the world's air.

God tells us that if we would let Him give us His heart and mind, then we could also begin to do what He does. His river flows through us as a consequence of the intimate love found in the secret place.

He poured out His Holy Spirit and sent a host of beautiful ministers to our movement. As it says in Ezekiel 27:6-9, swarms of creatures and fish were found in this river. God has given us a powerful promise: Where ever the river flows, life will thrive. If we would let God give us His heart and mind, then we could also begin to do what He does. His river flows through us as a consequence of the intimate love found in the secret place.

If we pursue Him above all else, fruit simply happens. People often ask us how they too can grow thousands of churches within a few years, as has happened in Mozambique. We laugh. We do not know how to do it. At Iris we simply love God, love our neighbors, and spend time in God's presence. He is the one who chose to use us.

At all times God desires to increase our fruitfulness and to prune us. This can seem painful at times because we do not understand what is going on. But **while He is pruning us above the ground, He is also multiplying our root system below.** As He cuts off unyielding branches, our roots dig ever deeper. I found that one of the ways to cultivate the vineyard is to invite Him to prune me. If we do not understand His heart, passages such as John 15:1-2 might cause us to imagine God is mean. It is backward to try to love Him for the sake of fruit. Rather, we should desire fruit because we love Him. He is so in love with us that He will not allow dead branches to hang from our trees.

Jesus says, *If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you (Jn 15:7).* What do you find yourself wanting when you abide in Him?

The relentless drivenness in my personality did not leave me after my encounter at Toronto, but I found out it was one of the many things that had to change. I thrive on holy chaos. Most of the greatest miracles Rolland and I have witnessed occurred during our most difficult personal trials. When our circumstances were the most stressful, food started multiplying. The blind started to see. The deaf started to hear. Some of our pastors saw people raised from the dead. I have been shipwrecked, beaten, carjacked, stoned, and threatened with knives and guns.

You must learn to wear your own shoes and never put on anyone else's. Sometime when visitors come, we can tell they were expecting to see a lot of misery. They show up and seem surprised that our children are happy. We tell them this is because God did not leave them as orphans. They have been adopted. They have family. They are full of love. In fact,

our children are often the one who minister the Father's heart to the visitors. They are not orphans—and neither are you. He asks you to give love as freely as you have received it—not just to those who deserve it but also to everyone he puts in front of you.

If I lie down and love the One who is worthy—if I will fear Him, trust Him, and have faith in Him—His mercy upon a jar of clay like me will be enough to let me carry some of His glory to a lost and dying world. Hunger always delights the heart of God. People often asked me why we see so many more miracles among the poor than among wealthy, comfortable westerners. The answer is simple: The poor know they are in need. *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled (Mt 5:6).*

Walking out the promises of God means making practical decisions. If God has called you to be a healing evangelist, you may need to read about great healing evangelists of the past. As usual, after preaching I asked them to bring me the blind, deaf, and disabled.

For Mozambique I am the wrong color and gender, from the wrong socioeconomic background, with the wrong educational background. Once I told God how wrong I thought I was. I felt Him say that was precisely what would allow Him to birth something *supernatural* through me. If you want to birth the miraculous, you cannot afford to waste time getting offended. Offense stops you from carrying the promise to full term, and you really never know what God plans to do with a situation that offends you at first.

I try to pray for 3-5 hours every day. I pushed through 10 years of university to complete a PhD in systematic theology. He loves to dwell in those who love Him, to rest inside those who must have more of Him, who do not care

what it takes, who are desperate for Him. The Lord looks across the earth for sons and daughters willing to be fully possessed. The Lord looks for a resting place. As we walk obediently in the paths He sets for us, He reveals more details about what we've been created to do and how we are to do it. I believe the Lord, in His kindness, reveals our destiny to us in stages. He shows us His dream and His desire for the world. Part of my destiny is to see 1m children brought home and cared for within my lifetime. My 2 daughters are Elisha and Crystalyn.

If I hadn't obeyed the Lord when I was 16, I would not have been able to receive my next promise. Now, as we build the university, I clearly see why God led me to get my PhD. When we started Generation Won/Iris Zimbabwe in 2008, Zimbabwe had gone from being one of the most prosperous nations in Africa, called the *breadbasket of Africa* to being the poorest nation in the world.

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