

PATHWAY TO



CALLING ALL WORKERS

The Harvest is Ripe, the Worker is YOU!

MICHELLE E. CASWELL

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By Michelle E. Caswell

Dedication

To my First Love, Savior, and Healer.
You chose me at my worst, so now I live to be my best for
You.
I pray that this book brings You tons of glory, because You
deserve it all!

To my amazing husband, you were so worth the wait.
Thank you for having my back through this journey of life.

To my kids...you inspire me to be better. I love you like
crazy! Here's to you.

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Author's Story

I grew up a wild child with huge dreams.... I wanted to be a counselor or a professional barrel racer and ride in rodeos like my dad, who was a calf roper. I wanted to be the rodeo queen—carrying the American flag on my horse, and racing around the arena with the crowd cheering as they stood to their feet and placed their hands over their hearts while the national anthem played.

I rode horses almost every day when I was little—practicing for the “big day,” wearing my pink dance-leotard. Yes, I said pink dance-leotard. Every time I fell off, my dad was quick to say, “Dust yourself off, and get back on the horse.” Now that might sound cruel to some, but it taught me to be tough—not to let anything knock me down and keep me down. It was a lesson I needed for the times ahead, not just for riding.

I started my first “business” when I was six. My best friend and I started a candy shop out of her playhouse—we did chores to make money, and then took that money to the little store to purchase “penny candy.” By the time we opened our store, the candy had gotten old, so that didn’t work so well. My second business was making homemade perfume out of the lilac tree in our yard. We took five-gallon buckets filled halfway with water, put in the flowers, and then began stepping on the petals with our feet—like how they make wine in the old country. I didn’t make it very big in either of those businesses, but that never stopped me from

trying. I always had high aspirations, and was told to get my “head out of the clouds” on many occasions.

My parents were practicing Christians at the time, and had my little sister and I in Godly environments regularly. I developed a really good relationship with Jesus—I always knew He was there. We would hang out together, talk, and play. I used to make up songs for Him. *Train up a child in the way she should go; even when she is old she will not depart from it.*

— Proverbs 22:6 (pronoun change mine)

At the young age of six, all Hell broke loose in my home; things moved from good to really bad—*fast*. I remember sitting in the back seat of the car. My mom’s new boyfriend was driving, and my mom was in the passenger seat with my little sister in between them. My big strong cowboy dad was sitting on the front porch of our house with his head in his hands, and his body shaking from crying. I tricked myself into believing that divorce meant *moving*, so we were on our way to our new two-story yellow house in the country, and my dad was going to follow us and meet us there. I can still see that imaginary house in my mind. When my mom left my dad, we left our home, our horses, our bunnies, our dog and cat, my best friend, and our church. My whole life changed in a moment. I vowed never to make any of the same choices she made.

Overnight, I changed from a happy, outgoing, funny, dreamer—who was a daddy’s girl—to a scared, sad, angry, rebellious child. My mom transformed from a stay-at-home

mom who rode horses and went to church all the time, to an alcoholic who worked two jobs, and had a lot of men in her life. God was absent; she got as far away from Him as possible. My dad went from a present daddy, to a very distant dad; we went from seeing him every day...to every other weekend...to occasional afternoons and holidays.

I know now that they both played their part, but at the time, I blamed my mom for everything. I knew it was wrong, and I made sure to tell my mom *over and over again*. That decision set my feet on a path away from the Lord, and all that He stood for. However, I never stopped talking to Him and I never stopped hearing Him, but I was angry—because, in my opinion, He was the one who could have stopped it, but didn't.

When someone gets put in a bad environment, they often turn bad themselves. *Bad company corrupts good character* (1 Corinthians 15:33 NIV). Around the age of seven, was the start of being molested. I started cussing, smoking at 12, shoplifting, fist fighting, bullying others, and really messing around with boys. When I turned 14, it was another big year for me—I was raped as a virgin, was kicked out of the house, and started drinking and using drugs. All of this happened the same year that I gave my heart to Jesus and got saved—however, my life didn't change; it got worse. I wanted to be a virgin when I got married. I wanted to have a normal life. A normal family. But that's not what I got.

After the rape occurred, I got even angrier and chose never to be a victim again. Instead, I became a predator, which led me to becoming a sex addict. Everything I said I *never* would be—I became—and then some. I became a teenage mom, a drug addict for 16 years, an alcoholic, a two-time divorcee, had two abortions, and was on state assistance—the more I focused on my anger and all the things I swore that wouldn’t become, the worse I got. The more that I tried to move towards better choices, the more bad choices I made instead. I had absolutely zero understanding about the grace of God; I had no idea that *He* could make me good, and I had no chance at accomplishing it on my own.

After hitting rock bottom *again...*the Lord began to bring powerful women into my life. They mentored me out of my horrific lifestyle, and poured hope into me—*I could live a different life.* I chose to go to a Christian rehab, and I finally decided to give my *entire life* to Jesus. There’s a huge difference between giving your *life* to Jesus and only giving your *heart*. Over many years, I took the steps needed to heal from the traumas in my past. I am happy to report that I have never backslid into drugs, and I remained celibate for almost seven years prior to marrying my husband.

The Lord told me that I would be a leader of leaders, and that is the direction of this ministry. I have not appointed myself, rather the Lord has appointed me. I started at ground zero, and the Lord has continued to raise me up to various leadership positions. Now He’s calling me to teach others

what has been taught to me. The revival has started in my own heart, and now I'm compelled to start a revival in other people's hearts everywhere I go and venture to.

I believe that the way I achieved healing in my life was effective and long lasting; and it gave me a huge passion for mentoring. I choose to mentor out of my own story of healing and the power of the Holy Spirit. My story has given me authority with those whom I'm called to mentor. As I looked over the process of mentoring that I have done over the years, I noticed that there were five dynamic steps I would take individuals through. These steps are amazingly effective and I am about to share them with you.

I went to a Christian rehab to get the initial healing that I needed in my life. The healing journey there became a gateway to go on and become Head Staff of, which was a position second to my Director. After a year and a half, I left there and got a job at a Christian ranch for single moms and fatherless kids. There, I became the Women's Minister, working with every woman living there—which was upwards of 30 women—and all the women who visited, which was around 400.

After four years, I left the ranch and began working at the church that had been used to save my life. I was the ministry and event coordinator. This included teaching Bible studies to the youth, as well as counseling women and girls through trauma and difficult times.

I have shared my story on countless church stages, ministry banquets, and now through my blog and this book.

The Lord has been so good to me; He has redeemed me, and set me free from every addiction. He has restored my mind, healing me from all my mental disorders. I have achieved over eight years of being clean and sober. He has firmly placed my feet on solid ground, and I will not be moved—because He is in me, and has full reign to do whatever He wants through me.

About two years into my healing, the Lord spoke to me and said, “Michelle, I am giving you back EVERYTHING that Satan stole from you. EVERYTHING.” Ever since then, He has been true to His word—I even got my *innocence* back. Imagine that. I have been blessed with forgiveness from my boys, and a good relationship with both of them, as well as a restoration of my relationship with my parents who are both clean, sober, serving God again, and present in my life. I have also been extremely blessed with a godly husband whom I absolutely adore, and two stepdaughters who I love very much. I’ve gotten more back than I knew was stolen.

Several years ago, I started a ministry within a ministry called the Sisterhood: I mentored upwards of seventeen Girls, ranging from ages thirteen to fifty-two. We met nearly five days a week, all together in my home, or sometimes outside when it was sunny. We were on a journey of becoming *Purely His* together through Bible teachings, encouragement, and accountability. We learned together, served together, and healed together. The relationships that were formed were real and lifelong.

The Lord gave me a vision one year before starting that group: the Girls would get to a place where they were healed enough to go back into their neighborhoods and into their circle of influence and start similar groups, and the process would just keep repeating itself—*disciples making disciples making disciples*. I pictured several of us telling our stories on a large stage, the audience full of women being mentored and mentoring. Breakout sessions would take place for different struggles, led by women who were set free from that particular struggle and understood. The women would receive more healing, hope, and freedom. It wasn't until years later that The Lord revealed that men were also going to be a part of this ministry of *disciples making disciples*.

I was so excited about the dream that the Lord had given me; I immediately started making plans. Someone in leadership, however, told me that my dream was from Satan, and anything that took me away from that current ministry was not from God. My heart was crushed, my excitement was crushed—and although I didn't agree or believe this leader, I was taught in rehab to obey my leaders as unto the Lord, so I did. I learned a lot from this man, some good ways of doing things, and some wrong ways of doing things, but that's another story entirely.

Fast-forward a few years, just months after I got married in 2012. I was with my mentor, friends from church, and my son at a Hillsong (popular Christian band) concert in Portland, Oregon. I decided to tell my mentor about the

dream God had placed in my heart so many years before. The dream was bubbling to the top again, and I wanted to pursue it. I thought that she might agree with what the leader in the past had said, but her response was quite the opposite: “You should TOTALLY do it Michelle. God put that dream in your heart a long time ago, and He has brought it to the surface again.”

I could barely contain my enthusiasm...okay I didn't contain it at all. “THANK YOU LORD!” The music started, and it was the song “The Stand.” As tears streamed down my face, I said, “I'll do it Lord. I'll do it, no matter how afraid I am of someone stopping me again.”

He replied, “NO ONE will stop the plans I have for you. NO ONE.”

I told Him, “I'm ready to share the stage now, Lord.” Before, I had viewed myself as a *loser* for so long, I had become prideful when God healed me and granted me success in ministry with women. The success was so fulfilling, I wanted the glory all to myself, which I now know is totally wrong. When I said I was ready to share the stage I had no idea that my husband would someday be on that stage with me.

About a year after we started the ministry Purely His, my husband started feeling led to be a part of what we were doing—to take on the men's side of our ministry. It is the delight of my heart to work in ministry with my husband—and hopefully the rest of my family at some point, that's my prayer anyway.

One of the greatest lessons I have learned through founding this ministry is “Do not put God in a box.” I thought this ministry was going to be by women and for women, but the Lord had a different plan. Purely His is a Christian mentoring ministry for men AND women of all ages and backgrounds. It is for anyone who wants to choose to go “all-in” with Jesus, and desires to get “unstuck” from anything that stands in the way of a lifestyle of complete surrender to HIS calling.

I felt alone most of my life before that time. Looking back, I wish someone had taken me by the hand sooner to show me how to live like a Christian. How much heartache would I have been saved from? I believe very strongly in the power of mentoring—through authentic relationships. I have been mentored, and continue to be mentored, by women who know Jesus and make Him known to me. They continuously point me back to Him, and I do the same for others. I heard a really good quote once: “He gave His all for me, so I’ll give my all for Him.” God has saved me and set me free from so many things; I want others to experience the same freedom and joy I now have. I am absolutely compelled to help others in ways that I have been helped. My desire is to connect those who are alone and hurting to the One who promises to NEVER leave them—*Jesus*.

Thanks for reading my story. Now, let me share with you how I mentor. I hope it helps.

Sincerely,
Michelle

Chapter 1—The Harvest & the Worker

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” — Matthew 9:35-38

The Harvest

Everyone needs a friend. Too many people feel alone in this world. You probably did at one time too. Since the beginning of this journey with Purely His, I've been asking the Lord, "What do you want us to do?"

The Lord keeps saying, "*The harvest is ripe, but the workers are few. Go after the workers.*"

There is no shortage of people wanting and needing help, but there is a huge shortage of workers. Does it interest you to join me in rescuing the ones who need help? Let's face it, someone *is* harvesting, but the Christian church needs to take it up a notch. We as His Followers need to be doing more.

Jesus is coming back soon—and I for one, don't want to waste the opportunity to do what He's called me to do. We can and should show our love to God by doing what He says which is to go *into all the world and make disciples of all nations* (Matthew 28:19). Did He just say that to church

leaders or pastors? No. He commanded all of us to do it. God says, “*If you love Me, keep my commands,*” (John 14:15).

At the time of starting Purely His, we lived in a valley in Southern Oregon. Out of the 223,000 people who lived there, 173,000 identified as not being connected to any Christian church. No matter where you are in the world, there is a ripe harvest to mentor and disciple for His Kingdom. Within every community, there is a significant population who need a friend and a mentor who can simply lead them to live a life that is *Purely His*. I believe that we should raise up workers from within the Harvest.

Who better to reach a drug addict than a former addict? Who better to reach someone going through a battle of Cancer than someone who has gone through the same thing? If you have a heart for a certain type of person, then my suggestion is to go reach someone who comes from that background—and watch them effectively reach that group of people. Don’t you wish someone would have come into your life beforehand and helped guide you to walk in a new way, instead of going down a route of further pain and anguish? Who was it that God used to do that in your life? Wouldn’t it be awesome to be that person for someone else and *pay it backward* for what The Father did for you?

We all need support in our lives — whether you choose to lead a group, or mentor one-on-one, the support you provide to others can and will make a difference in their lives. However, we should not overlook ourselves in the process. In fact, I believe that we as mentors and leaders need the most help, because for some reason we think that we SHOULD have it ALL together. The truth is—none of us do. Plus, the more we pour out, the more we need to be filled up

just as much. All too often, we get caught up in forgetting that we too are *Purely His* and need just as much support in our lives.

The benefits of seeing and watching someone reach their full potential in Christ is absolutely amazing. There is nothing like it. For instance:

I met one of my girls when she was nineteen. She dressed in gothic-type clothing, her head was shaved, and she wore a spiked dog collar—yes, I said a dog collar. She was addicted to the attention of men, was very rebellious and full of bitterness. Six years later, she was living her life single and serving Jesus throughout that entire time. She now volunteers a lot of her time mentoring young women, her hair is long, and she dresses very girly now—no sign of bitterness is left on her face. She is free!

Why am I so passionate about this? Because Jesus is passionate about it. It is missing in our churches and the aftercare programs in our communities. Statistics show that most people aren't successful in the long term when attempting to do life solely on their own. Typically, they make it for a while, and then they backslide. The men and women who have someone walking through life with them genuinely experience a life worth living. They are able to stay clean, sober, and out of destructive relationships. There is a major shortage of Christians who are working WITH the Lord to truly help others.

People often feel alone even in a crowd. It's time that we bond together the way that God designed us to. We are stronger together than we are apart. Too many people are feeling alone in this world. We need to take our rightful place in our families, communities, and churches. We need to

make a stand and help others feel a part of the community that is *Purely His* and fully capable of living their best life yet.

Find Someone to Mentor

There is NO shortage of people who need or want mentoring in the world; however, what is lacking is the mentors. Here are a few ways for you to find someone who wants to be mentored.

Tell Your Story: My favorite and most effective way is telling my story one-on-one, or in large groups. As soon as someone hears that I can relate to them—or have been through something they are currently going through—they automatically feel comfortable that I won't judge them. They also feel confident that I know what I'm talking about. It gives me instant credibility. This is the best way that I've found to find others to mentor. This also opens the door for family members and friends of those who are struggling to recommend me as a mentor too.

Talk to Your Church Leadership: Church leaderships are generally bogged down with mentoring, and desperately need help. Tell them your story and the kind of people you relate to best and watch the referrals come in.

Check Your Circle of Influence: The person you're looking for is most likely already in your circle of influence; he or she might be way on the outside of that circle, but nevertheless, they are there. Look around at your children's friends, a co-worker, or the person alone in the back row of the church who slips in and slips out.

Volunteer at a Local Mission: You can offer your assistance at a homeless shelter, resource center, become an

abuse recovery teacher, or offer to lead a Bible study at church.

Start a Purely His Mentoring Group: Advertise what you're doing, and people will come. Once the group attendees get pumped about it, word of mouth will take over from there, because they will not want their friends to miss out. You can start it in your home or church. You will read about Purely His specific opportunities later in chapter 8.

Determine Their Readiness

The most important thing to do when looking to become an effective mentor is to determine if that other person is willing and coachable, because you can't help those who aren't. All you need to know is if they really want help and are willing to do what it takes to get it. There's no reason to force someone to get help when they really don't want it. It's taxing on both you and them in reality. Remember, actions speak louder than words. For example, they may say they want help, but then turn around and fail to show up to your meetings with them, or perhaps, they never follow through on your advice. That's called "giving you lip service." They are simply telling you what they think you want to hear.

Sometimes, we aren't the right fit for a person, and that's okay; find someone who might be able to relate better, and choose to step out of the mentor role. Now...don't use this as an excuse, because that mentee is hard to deal with or stretches you. I'm mainly saying this when you can tell very early on that you two are not a match made in Heaven.

The Worker

“Calling All Workers,” you are an answer to my prayers...I have been asking the Lord to send out His chosen workers into the fields. The good news is that *He has prepared good works in advance for you to do* (Ephesians 2:10). He already has assignments for you, so thank you for joining me as we serve the Lord alongside each other.

Our assignments will most likely be chosen for us according to our past experiences, giftedness, and heart for different types of people groups. You are going to reach those that I can’t relate to, and I’m going to reach those that you can’t. Alone, we are weak—but together, we are going to be so strong! It’s awesome to partner with you. I am SUPER EXCITED because the kingdom of God is about to grow. We each have a circle of influence, now we just need to reach out to those that we have a heart for, and encourage them to go into their circle of influence and reach more people. That is how this discipleship movement will get going and keep going.

Thank you for saying “yes” to Jesus; together, we can flip this world upside down, one person at a time—just like the early disciples did. The Lord said that we would do greater things than Him, and that the way we show Him our love is to do what He commands:

...go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.
—Matthew 28:19-20

The awesome part about what He says there is that we aren't expected to make disciples on our own. Jesus is with us, and He is our helper. I'm guessing you've picked up this book, because you already are a "worker," and have probably found some great tools to help you along the way. I'm about to share with you the things that work for me—and the things that didn't—whether it was through my own healing or through the healing of those I've mentored. I hope these **tools, tactics, and strategies** will help you do what you're already doing...better or more effectively. I do not claim to have all the answers, or the only way...I just know that these have worked for me, and for those I've been privileged to help.

Qualified to Mentor?

Jesus qualifies you. You don't need anyone else's permission.

Answer these questions:

1. Are you a follower of Christ?
2. Has He rescued you, forgiven you, and changed your life?
3. Are you an older man or woman (spiritually speaking that is)?

If you answered "Yes" to these questions, then you are qualified. Now, you just need to learn the skills to be *effective* and help those you have a heart for—versus hurting them further unintentionally of course.

Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have sound faith and be filled with love and patience. Similarly, teach the older women to live in a way that honors God. They must

not slander others or be heavy drinkers. Instead, they should teach others what is good. These older women must train the younger women to love their husbands and their children, to live wisely and be pure, to work in their homes, to do good, and to be submissive to their husbands. Then they will not bring shame on the word of God.

—*Titus 2:2-5 (NLT)*

In this scripture, there is a list of how we should be living—and therefore mentoring others to live the same way. Are you doing these things?

It doesn't matter what chronological age you are right now. You can still be considered older and more mature spiritually. I am physically younger than several ladies I mentor, but spiritually I am older—or maybe just a little ahead of them in some areas— therefore, it qualifies me to help them. There are areas that they mentor me in as well. The beautiful thing about mentorship is that it has the opportunity to cycle back to you and become impactful in your own life as well.

Discipleship vs. Mentoring

I have found that people, in general, are intimidated by the word or concept of DISCIPLESHIP; we choose to use the word *mentor* to avoid that. Let's not get hung up on the word, but rather the concept.

What is Christian discipleship? By definition, a disciple is a follower who accepts and assists in the spreading of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

What is mentorship? Mentoring is a relationship between an experienced person and a less experienced person for the purpose of helping the one with less experience. The mentee

(one being mentored) seeks the advice and support of the more experienced person. Mentors answer questions concerning the tasks that their mentees need to succeed in reaching their goals. The mentor provides wisdom, guidance, and counseling as mentees advance their walk with the Lord.

