

Chapter 5

The Great Falls: A Choice, A Step, A Leap (Pages 93 - 95)

“My ways are higher than your ways” Isaiah 55:9

When we arrived at the crest where the River created the falls, the foliage opened up. I immediately saw a series of stepping stones leading out from the bank and into the massive River. My gaze followed the stones. I saw they headed straight to the center of the River near the edge of the falls. They led to a large flat rock, perched half in the River and half out, creating the illusion of an Olympic diving platform.

As I took it all in, a thought hit my mind. It felt like the moment I had been T-boned while driving. My mind screamed: *You are going out there and jump to your death!* My legs started to buckle. Jesus held me keeping me from collapsing into a heap. I took another deep breath. The mist flowed in heavy this time, penetrating every cell of my being. Peace came over me, bringing renewed strength that helped me stand upright and steady. With it resolve followed. I faced the end of one life and a new beginning. Death was beckoning. Its arms opened and waiting for me to embrace it and assume the same position as Jesus had on the cross. I was not afraid, which caused me to half smile. My heart knew that obedience to this was right. On the heels of that perception came the thought that I must not linger or ponder death, only focus on what lay ahead.

Jesus let go of me as strength came into my legs. He never said a word. I didn't need Him to. I took a step forward and connected with the first stepping stone. As I brought the other foot onto the stone, the waters in the River welled up and teemed around the stepping stone. The menacing swirl roared “You're crazy. Did Jesus tell you to do this? Step back onto the shore and be safe.” It was deafening, threatening and intimidating. My forgotten safe twin chimed in. *Listen to logic!*

My adventurous twin spoke louder than the chaos. *Staying here on the first stone is not an option. Stepping back onto the safe shore is not an option. Move forward and do so quickly. Obey what you know is your journey.* Pushing fear away, I stepped forward onto each stone and quickly made my way to the flat boulder out into the middle of the massive raging River. I kept a quick pace, my eyes focused on only the boulder. But it was far out and far from Jesus! I couldn't give that thought a place to land in my mind.

I turned to look at Jesus. I needed His approval and reassuring smile, but He was gone! *Where? Why had He left me at such a critical point in my choice to step out and embrace death?* I scanned the shore as far as I could see looking everywhere, yet could not find Him. I was tense and stiff. My mind was swirling with disappointment and abandonment. Fear was again following me. I let my shoulders droop and started to warmly embrace self-pity.

“Why do you doubt?” The voice of Jesus was right behind me. “I told you I would never leave you or forsake you!”

His voice startled me, and I jumped. My startled movement almost cost me going over the edge. Again, Jesus grabbed me and pulled me back, steadying my stance. I was thankful. I wanted to cry and laugh at the same time. I wanted to hug Him and never let go. I took a deep breath of the mist and felt peace and resolve settle into me. I turned and stepped to the edge of the boulder where it protruded precariously over the edge of the falls.

“It is time.” Jesus said calmly.

“I know.” I responded, struggling for air to form my words.

I looked down to death. The distance was great. I became aware of the sounds all around me. I heard the booming sound of the millions of gallons of water rushing with abandon over the falls, and of water churning and boiling around the rocks below. The water that hit the rocks billowed up into the mist that watered all of the land; the same mist I had come to rely upon for life and renewal.

The mist obscured everything below and all I could see was a huge cloud of it rolling around looking like cotton batting used to stuff quilts and teddy bears. That thought made me smile and I held onto it. Resolved, I chose to not think about rocks and the mouth of death, but I would think fluffy batting and soft teddy bears that would cushion my long fall. A fall to certain death upon sharp, protruding rocks, hidden in the swirl of the mist. My anxious thoughts converged, *I'm facing life and death.*

“Look straight below to the thickest part of the mist? That’s the place.” Jesus said with a nod of his head.

I saw it! The place that had to hold the biggest number of rocks creating the biggest volume of mist from the crashing water. My mind clearly saw it all. The old safe twin with its fear of death was trying to surface and take charge of my decision. I wouldn’t let it. I couldn’t! I wouldn’t even think about anything other than stepping off. Not giving up it said, *Turn and take His hand, maybe He will jump too.* The other twin emphatically said, *No.*

“Now!” Jesus said urgently.

With one last deep breath for courage and resolve, I stepped off to my death focusing upon soft billowing batting and teddy bears. My safe twin died in that moment and my adventurous twin embraced my inner spirit, becoming one.