

# RECLAIMED

*Taking Back What Was Always Ours*

By Venita Welcome

*Upcoming Book • The More Project LLC*

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*Words and postures stole something from me.*

*And it will be words that give it back.*

— Venita S. Welcome

*Jacob lost his birthright and his identity through deception — through words twisted to serve the enemy's purpose. But God did not leave him nameless. He met him in the dark, wrestled with him until morning, and gave him a new name. Israel. The restoration did not come through force. It came through a word that told the truth about who he really was.*

*That is what this book is.*

***A new name. Waiting for you.***

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## Introduction: He Went into Our Camp

I rejected the word the first time God gave it to me.

*Mystic.* It felt dangerous. Too close to something I didn't want to be associated with. I had spent enough years watching the enemy dress himself in spiritual clothing to know that not everything that glitters is holy. So, I pushed it back. Thank you, but no.

Except God didn't take it back.

So I did what any good scribe does. I researched. I went looking for the origin of the word, its history, its home. And what I found stopped me cold.

Before you think I am New Age, cultish, evil, or whatever comes to your mind — let me share what a mystic is.

***A mystic is a person who desires to walk so close to God that they listen for Him and see Him in everyday life.***

For me it looks like words exploding in my being until I have to write them down. It looks like feeling injustice so deep within me that it becomes fire in my bones. It looks like connecting with God in ways I never could have imagined or manufactured on my own.

That is a mystic. Nothing more. Nothing less.

*Still think it sounds dangerous? Keep reading.*

I want to tell you what happened when I started sharing that word publicly.

The pushback came fast. Someone said it sounded New Age. Another said the connotation didn't align with Christian faith. And if I am honest — I understood their resistance because it was my resistance first. I had the same reaction before I did the research. So I did what many of us do when people we love get uncomfortable. I considered putting it down. I didn't want people to leave the table. I didn't want the word to become a wall between me and the people I was called to serve.

*So I was going to compromise.*

And then something rose up in me. Not pride. Not stubbornness. Injustice.

*Why do I have to put this down because people don't understand it? Why does their discomfort get to determine the boundaries of my calling? The enemy dressed this word up in New Age clothing precisely so that the people called to carry it would hand it back. And it worked. On me first. And on the Church for generations.*

I held the word. And the moment I held it — it opened.

I held the word. And the moment I held it — it opened. It was bigger than I thought. What began as one word became a theology. What felt like a personal title became a key that unlocked a conversation the entire Body of Christ needs to have. And, this is what the book is about.

Now let me ask you something.

We are so quick to put labels on ourselves that originated from the language of darkness. Depressed. Anxious. Fearful. Sad. We wear these words without hesitation, without research, without anyone asking us to explain ourselves. We share them freely. We build communities around them. We introduce ourselves by them.

But say the word *mystic* and suddenly there is a committee.

**I am not comparing a calling to an emotional state. I am comparing how quickly we accept one and how hard we resist the other. Both are words. Both shapes how we see ourselves. The question is why darkness gets a free pass and intimacy with God requires a defense.**

Something is wrong when we accept the vocabulary of darkness without question but demand a defense for words that draw us closer to God. That is a double standard — and it is costing us our inheritance.

The word was never his. It was always ours. The Desert Fathers were mystics. Julian of Norwich was a mystic. A.W. Tozer was a mystic. The word had a rightful home in the Church long before anyone contaminated it.

But that is what the enemy does. He doesn't create. He raids.

He goes into our camp, takes what is holy, contaminates it just enough, and watches us back away from our own table. And we do it. We leave the words. We leave the postures. We leave the practices. And we call our retreat discernment.

It wasn't just *mystic*. He took *meditation*. He took *contemplation*. He took *breath*. He took *stillness* and *presence* and *awakening* — words and postures and practices that were always meant to connect us to God — and he repackaged them until the Church was afraid of her own inheritance.

Meanwhile we kept the words he left behind. The ones that disconnect us from God, from hope, from presence. And we called that normal.

When the Church lost her language — when she handed over mystic, contemplation, breath, stillness — she didn't just lose words. She lost the neural and spiritual pathways those words were building. She lost access points to God. Generations of believers grew up without the language and without the practices that wire the nervous system toward encounter with Him. And then we wondered why people could sit in church for decades and never feel His presence.

**Nothing was wrong with them. The pathways were never built.**

The enemy did not just steal words. He performed a neurological intervention on the Body of Christ.

This book is about going back to get what we left.

Not borrowing from culture. Not flirting with the counterfeit. Going back to the original. Recovering what was always ours. Because we were not born into spiritual poverty. We have an inheritance — in words, in postures, in practices — and it is time to claim it.

**I am a Christian mystic and scribe. And I am done letting the enemy have what belongs to the Body of Christ.**

*I almost put that down. I am so glad I didn't.*

We all get to choose this. Every believer has the right to draw closer to God — in presence, in stillness, in encounter. That is not reserved for a special few. That is your inheritance too.

And if you are holding something right now that God gave you — something that has drawn pushback, something that feels too controversial to keep, something you are about to lay down to keep the peace — I want you to know what happens when you hold it instead.

***It opens.***

***Come with me. Let's take it all back.***

## **Chapter One: Words Have Owners**

### **A Theology and Neurology of Holy Language**

Words are not neutral. They were never meant to be.

In the beginning God spoke. He did not sketch or gesture or signal. He spoke. And creation came into being. Light appeared. Water divided. Land emerged. Life breathed. Everything that exists came into existence through the spoken word of God. Language was not a tool He used after the fact. It was the act of creation itself.

And then He named things. He named the light. He named the darkness. He named the expanse. And then He gave the man the extraordinary privilege of naming the animals — not as a trivial exercise but as an act of participation in the divine order. To name something in Scripture is to declare what it is, what it carries, and where it belongs. Naming is always an act of ownership, identity, and destiny.

The enemy knows this. His first move in the Garden was not violence. It was not force. It was a question designed to reframe a word.

*Did God really say?*

He didn't attack Eve with a weapon. He attacked her with language. He took a word God had spoken — a word of life, boundary, and protection — and he reframed it as restriction. He made holy language sound like deprivation. And it worked.

It has been working ever since.

## The War We Are In

The war we are up against is not primarily a war of weapons or even circumstances. It is a war of words. Not positive thinking — that is too shallow, too self-help, too focused on managing feelings. This is something far more serious and far more foundational.

Words shape identity. Words direct the nervous system. Words open or close access to the presence of God. What we speak over ourselves repeatedly — internally and externally — does not just describe how we feel. It forms who we become. It tells our whole being where to live.

When we say depressed, we are not just naming an emotional state. We are building an address. When we say anxious, we are not just describing a feeling. We are constructing a dwelling. The nervous system hears these words, recognizes them as home, and begins to organize itself around them. What we rehearse we reinforce. What we reinforce we inhabit.

This is not about denying pain or pretending difficulty does not exist. It is about understanding that language is formative — and that the Church has largely handed the vocabulary of formation to the enemy without a fight.

## What We Lost When We Lost the Language

When the Church lost her language — when she handed over mystic, contemplation, breath, stillness — she didn't just lose words. She lost the neural and spiritual pathways those words were building. She lost access points to God.

This is not metaphor. This is neuroscience meeting theology at the same table.

Every spiritual practice carries a biological function. Contemplative prayer slows the nervous system and creates receptivity. Breath prayer anchors the body in the present moment where God dwells. Stillness — true, intentional stillness — shifts the nervous system out of survival mode and into a state where encounter is possible. These are not merely feelings. These are physiological conditions that the Holy Spirit moves through.

When the practices disappeared, the pathways went dormant. When the words were surrendered, the identity those words were forming dissolved. Generations of believers grew up without the language and without the practices that wire the nervous system toward God. And then we wondered why people could sit in church for decades and never feel His presence.

## **Nothing was wrong with them. The pathways were never built.**

The enemy did not just steal words. He performed a neurological intervention on the Body of Christ. He removed the practices that created biological conditions for encounter. He replaced holy language with the vocabulary of darkness — words that build pathways toward disconnection, toward fear, toward a self-defined by its wounds rather than its inheritance.

And it worked. Quietly. Generationally. Without anyone sounding the alarm.

## The Invitation

What language are you living in? Not just what you say out loud — but what you rehearse internally. What words have become your address?

Because you were not given the spirit of fear. You were not named Anxious or Depressed or Broken by the One who made you. You were named before the foundation of the world. And it is time to find out what He called you.

This is why reclaiming the words is not a theological exercise. It is not nostalgia for old church traditions. It is the restoration of the whole person — spirit, soul, and nervous system — back to the conditions God designed for encounter with Him.

***The war was always about language. And it is time for the Church to fight back.***

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## CHAPTER OUTLINE

- 1. Words Have Owners** — *Language was always His. A theology and neurology of holy language.*
- 2. The Stolen Lexicon** — *The words taken from us and what they really mean.*
- 3. The Stolen Postures** — *The body was always a worship instrument.*
- 4. The Stolen Practices** — *Straight from the Temple. Straight from Scripture.*
- 5. The Counterfeit Strategy** — *How he works and why we keep falling for it.*
- 6. What Fear Cost Us** — *The inheritance we left on the table.*
- 7. I'm Sick of Him** — *Holy anger as fuel for reclamation.*
- 8. Recovered** — *What it looks like to pick it back up without apology.*
- 9. Teaching It Forward** — *How to bring your community with you.*
- 10. Claim Your Inheritance** — *The words are yours. The postures are yours. Come get them.*

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**Reclaimed is coming.**

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