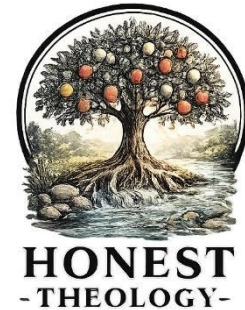


Breathless Anticipation



I'm a New Jersey girl, born and bred, but I married a traveling man. Born in Scotland, raised in England; his first job was in Abu Dhabi, next came a career that took him to Hong Kong, and I finally met him as an immigrant transport to New Jersey. (How we met is another post!) I spoke English and Pig Latin (proudly); he spoke German, French, a smattering of Chinese and (lately) Spanish.

The differences didn't end there. He was an extrovert; I was an introvert. Supremely confident, he was willing to tackle just about anything (like being an aerobatic pilot). I was born riddled with anxiety and liked to hide in a closet.

But we made a great match. He flew too high sometimes with his ideas and I sailed too low in my worries so we met in the middle. Without knowing the term, we championed an [egalitarian](#) marriage that would become a shining example of compromise, blessings, faith, stewardship, and integrity – personally, spiritually, and even professionally. C.S. Lewis describes a Christian marriage as a lock and its key – two mechanisms that only work fully when joined together. I loved that analogy.

Another difference we had was that he was a lapsed church person and I was still a passionate church attendee. I remember saying before we got married, “I want to raise the children in faith-based home like I grew up in” and his immediate response was, “If they turn out like you, I’m all for it.” The good little Christian girl that I was, I (foolishly) knew that I would be the “spiritual example” in the union. In those early years of our marriage, I would sit by myself in church listening to his plane buzzing above me. One Sunday he came down in dress slacks and that was that. That was thirty-five years and three wonderful children ago.

Remember, I was born with anxiety. (My mother describes me as a newborn screaming uncontrollably when she would try to take me out of the house.) I would grow up anxious about every aspect of my life. As I write this, it is, besides my faith, the defining force of my life. I would even go so far as to say that my original foray into faith and believing came as a result of the promise that I would “never be alone if I asked Jesus into my heart.” Almost all my memories, even the best ones, are remembered with and shaped by the worry that I couldn't ignore. Numerous rescue contingencies were always percolating in my mind. (*I am*, consequently, a great asset in natural, familial, personal, and professional disasters, btw.)

So yeah, I was influential in his return to church attendance. Yet consistently, he has been the driving force behind *me* and my spiritual growth. He championed and encouraged me as only a loving, know-me-better-than-I-know-myself partner could do. Put it this way: I have always had to work at being the kind of person Jesus Christ called us to be; he comes by it naturally.

Traveling man that he was, he regularly came home from work and would say, “How about Ohio? Maryland? Paris? Saudi Arabia? Brazil?” We got close enough that we actually visited a location in the U.S. (with the three kids) and my anxiety was *off the charts*. I remember him looking at me and saying, “Don't worry. Doesn't God always look after us?”

WHAM. The [Spirit](#) within me made me face some hard questions. Why did I *consistently* fight and avoid change? Why was I always certain that “things” would be worse? Was my life

getting better or worse following God's lead? Could I look back on really stressful times and acknowledge that *as a result of staying the course God had set*, we were (shockingly) better off? The really hard question was if I had chosen to put my *eternal* existence in the hands of God, why was I worrying about where I lived *now*?

The phrase “Breathless Anticipation of Things To Come” was born out of my constant anxiety and my husband’s lovingly shared spiritual perspective.

Why not, instead of negative anxiety what-ifs, try to imagine the amazing possibility of things being better? A tentative thought of [hope](#) and [peace](#) emerged: could I change a lifetime pattern?

That tentative thought of hope has become my battle cry for peace. There have been times (try living with teenagers) where I have stood battled and bruised amidst smoking ruins with my sword hanging limply in my hand and still believed in that *breathless anticipation of things to come*. “Where are you, Lord?! I’m in desperate need here!!” And, [miraculously](#), (YES, MIRACULOUSLY), those blessings have come true.

The [confident](#) mantra of Breathless Anticipation has yet to be disproven. In my conferences, I share my tragedies, disasters, epic failures, and continual fears (yeah, I’ve still got ‘em) and speak honestly of my consistent, God-blessed rescues. It has been a perfect example of God working miracles through my [weakness](#)!

This is a personal choice perspective. It is, in the midst of tragedy, chaos, and pain being able to *look* with Spirit-led eyes to the presence of God in that exact moment. [God goes](#) before us to prepare our path, behind us to encourage us, above us to watch over us, beside us to befriend us, and beneath us in troubled times to carry us. I am proof of that. I offer this honest testimony so that you can choose it, too.

Scripture to maybe check out:

- [Psalm 139](#)

Bibliography notes:

1. For this post I used The New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition put out by the 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Feel free to research your own translation or look up the many translations that are available on [Bible Gateway](#).
2. I talk about C.S. Lewis’ analogy of marriage being like a lock and a key. That’s found in his book *Mere Christianity* in chapter six entitled (you guessed it) “Christian Marriage.”

What are your thoughts about this post? Email me and let me know!
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