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Foreword

by Jack R Taylor

I have read many testimony-type books that, while interesting, have limited scopes of influence and interest. I find this book by my friends Ras and Bev Robinson, providing an almost unlimited potential for blessing as well as human interest. Any one of a dozen subjects relating to obstacles in maximizing life would make it a worthwhile read. These obstacles have been addressed in easily understood first-person terms and the study provides a practical guide to a truly overcoming life.

Here is a fast-moving, hard-hitting, gut level confrontation with self-defeating behaviors in which we have all found ourselves engaged, and when Bev is through telling her story-lesson, the reader is apt to say, "Well if she can do that so can I!" Thank you, Bev, for your willingness to be vulnerable and to speak plainly, sometimes with "disarming rawness."

I like the wide range of emotional appeals. About the time I was ready to be lost in pity, I would read something that struck me really funny and find myself laughing instead.

The dark threads of Bev's early life blend into beautiful patterns of form and color and move toward a beautiful tapestry we all admire.

I recommend *Who Am I and Why Am I Here?* as a must read.

Jack R. Taylor, President
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Dedications

I dedicate this book to my family, my children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. There are seventeen of us now. Seventeen stockings hang on the fireplace to fill at Christmas. The stockings show our family tree. I make a new one at each birth of a child. In those stockings, no one knows who gives what to whom. We each play Santa with one another and that is the way it should be.

Ras and Bev
Robin and Jonas
Kevin and Jeanette
Joshua and April, Rebekah and Dennis, Rachel and Shane, Katy,
Bryce, Jaxon, Cade, Heidi

Never in my wildest dreams could I think family could be so good. There are many blessings and as in any family there are also challenges which arise from time to time among ourselves. We work them through with honesty, integrity and love and continue believing the best about each other. We celebrate each other's birthday in grand style affirmation which says to each how important each is to the other.

Lord, thank you for my family.
May each generation love You more than the previous generation.

PREFACE

I have heard many people say they would like to write a book one day, and quite a few have told me through the years that I should write a book, but I never had the desire. I thought it would be terribly boring to sit before a keyboard trying to organize thoughts enough to put them on paper. Encouragement from others finally gave me the impetus to start writing. I haven't found it boring at all. In fact, I have found it very challenging and hard. Once I started and was in the midst of writing I read one day a Scripture that expressed the way I was feeling.

*“O, LORD, my heart is not proud, nor my eyes haughty; Nor do I involve myself in great matters, Or in things too difficult for me.”
(Psalm 131:1)*

Writing has certainly been difficult for me. I'm not gifted in organization and writing, especially writing a book, requires much organization of ideas and themes. Actually, I didn't even learn to type until just a few years ago. When writing papers in college, I would take a sample of my handwriting and appeal to the professor that I didn't type (and didn't have the money to pay a typist). Somehow, I got by with it. I think since I was working toward microbiology and chemistry degrees, my professors were not as strict about how my work was presented as they were on what was presented.

I have found writing to be a lot like having a baby. The idea of conception is fun. The realization you are pregnant is exciting. The rest of the months alternate between morning sickness, the glow of life within, it's too late to turn back, what in the world were we thinking, the expectation of birth, and the fierce determination to deliver the goods.

God's answer to my finding writing too difficult for me was found in Scripture like most things that have been difficult for me,

“Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?” (Jeremiah 32:27)

Well, Lord, I guess it isn't! That's one important message of this book—nothing is too difficult for God. Everything we do, believing it to

be of eternal value, is too difficult for us and requires the presence and power of the Lord. Only when we come to that realization will we be on our way to knowing who we are and why we are here.

This effort would be incomplete without the section “A New You.” There is no one whom I have heard teach this subject with more life and balance than Ras, my husband. He has loved me and I have loved him into growing into more of what God wants each of us to be—healthy, whole loving persons.

What we desire to get across to you in this book is that, no matter what hardships you have gone through in your life, God desires you to know how much He loves you. He wants to heal any emotional pain you might have and transform you into a healthy loving person. He wants you to help heal others into healthy, loving persons. He desires you to love Him with all your being and love others as much as you do yourself. If you are not loving yourself, then you will always be looking for love. You won't be giving love to God and to others. Our prayer for you as you read is that this book will help you to love God with all your heart and love others as you do yourself. Be blessed as you take the journey ahead.

Acknowledgments

I know this may appear a little super spiritual and like the small child in Sunday school who answers Jesus to every question asked. But I do it anyway and acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the most important person in my life. God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit has changed my life. I can't imagine where I would be had I not given Him the controls. Thank You Lord. I am forever grateful. I love You.

I acknowledge and appreciate my husband Ras first of all. He is the love of my life, my greatest encourager and one who can get things of importance done. I have said of him often he lays a track on which the rest of the train runs. It is through him that God has done most of the healing in my life. I have watched him as he has loved our family and also reached out beyond and loved and helped heal others.

Our children, Robin and Kevin, are the delights of my life. They bring me much pleasure. Ras and I did a lot of things wrong in parenting as well as a few things right, but through the years as we followed the Lord He reinforced what we did right and corrected much of what we did wrong. To see how much they love and serve the Lord and His people is a delight to their mother.

Kathy Bohlin my friend who has worked with us for 36 years I could not do without. Many times I have called out, "Kathy! Please come help me." She has never failed to come or complained in coming.

Many thanks to Peggy Morton and Lynn Oakley. To Peggy, who got the Scriptures all in one style. I don't know which key I hit to make them go awry, but something happened. Lynn, your reading kept me from repetition and helped in getting things in good order, whether I thought it, taught it or wrote it.

I don't believe this book would have ever been produced without Farrar Moore and Sheryl (BC) Cook. They took a very rough manuscript and rearranged it into readable sections and grammatical syntax without changing my style. They both have had patience as I changed and changed again what and how I wanted

to say things. They are very smart girls. Together they had previously compiled a textbook of nuclear physics, so I figured they could handle my humble writings. ☺ Thank you, girls.

Section I

When you look on a map for travel directions, you first have to find out where you are before you can see what direction to go. This section will help you find out where you are. Much of finding out where you are is knowing where you have been.

Follow my example given in this first section and take a look at yourself. Paul says, in I Corinthians 11, to examine yourself. Before repentance and change can occur, we must face the truth of where we were and where we are. Not until we recognize reality according to our perception, can we change to the reality of God according to His Word. He says:

“For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.” (Jeremiah 29:11)

God has designed us as a magnificent organism. When our parts are operating correctly, they work peacefully in marvelous harmony. The body, soul, and spirit are each distinct and yet are one just as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each distinct, and yet they too are One. This is an exciting mystery that can only be revealed by God. As you read this first section, let Him show you that wherever you may be on your journey, you are no ordinary person.

CHAPTER 1: NO ORDINARY PERSON

One day, while driving to the office, I read a bumper sticker that said, “This is no ordinary housewife you’re dealing with.” I pulled alongside the driver of the van and there sat this diminutive, young woman, unaware that God was speaking to someone through her bumper sticker. I imagined that she was on her way to work, the cleaners, or shopping, or to pick up a sick kid from school, or to see her grandmother in the nursing home. Wherever she was going, this was no ordinary woman. Neither are you an ordinary woman or man if you have turned your life over to God by trusting Jesus.

God really helped me in an interesting way to understand that I am no ordinary person. A few years ago, I was in Graceland Baptist Church in New Albany, Indiana, getting ready to teach in a conference. Norma Lindley, a lady in the church, came up to me and told me that God was going to give me a handle on something while I was there. That set the stage for the following life-changing situation.

Lenny Surowski, a former tennis coach, was on staff at Graceland, where he led their evangelism outreach. I had been told what a good coach he was. I knew Lenny and his wife Katie to be really fine people, but I had never experienced Lenny’s tennis teaching skills. I had scheduled a lesson during the week of the conference and could hardly wait. I had never had a tennis lesson. My tennis ability was the result of God-given natural athletic ability and a lot of energy. I was so excited about the tennis lesson as I finished teaching that morning.

But, as I was changing into tennis clothes anxious thoughts came, “I hope this lesson doesn’t mess me up. I play pretty good tennis now—at least I enjoy it. He may change my grip or swing and cause me not to enjoy tennis as much. I may spend more time perfecting what I do wrong rather than enjoying the game. This may mess up my God-given ability.”

My thoughts went on and on as I made my way to the court. By the time I got there, the thought even crossed my mind, “I wonder if I did the right thing in scheduling this lesson.”

Lenny was so nice and pleasant, telling me to just relax, and he would hit me some balls to see how I played.

“Uh, ohhh . . . I hope he doesn’t think I can play like an expert. I probably have done the wrong thing in arranging this lesson,” I

thought again.

After hitting me a few balls, Lenny said, “Just relax and keep your eyes on the ball. I want to see what kind of person you are. Right now let’s see if you are a body person. When I tell you to stop, freeze and tell me exactly what position your body is in.”

He said, “Stop.”

But I couldn’t tell what he needed. Apparently, he was looking for more information than I knew to give him.

“I want to see if you are a racquet person,” countered Lenny.

Again the same instruction, “Freeze when I tell you to stop and tell me exactly what direction your racquet is in.”

Again, I didn’t supply the correct information to be a racquet person. At this point, I began to get really nervous, and I was not only hitting the balls over the net, they were going over the back fence!

The next to the last thing he tried was to see if I was a blur person. Lenny continued to assure me all was going well, but I was feeling like a failure. Surely, I could be a blur person.

Lenny said, “When the ball is hit by the racquet, it leaves with such speed that all you can see is a blur. How far out is the blur from your racquet?”

He hit a ball to me—the ball hit the racquet. Oh, meeeee, I couldn’t see a blur. I saw the ball all the way out as it left the racquet. I felt like lying, but that wouldn’t work because then I would have to follow through on further instructions.

I finally said, “Lenny, I can’t see a blur.”

I felt like getting a cramp and going off the court. I was embarrassed at not even being able to see a blur.

Lenny, the good coach he is, didn’t show any concern.

“Let’s try one more thing.” (I felt like the last one being chosen to be on the playground team.) “Watch the seams as the ball spins. When I hit it, when it bounces, when it falls on the ground and rolls around, when it leaves your racquet, keep your eyes on the seams at all times.”

Could I evermore do that? Yes, yes, I could see those seams! I kept my eyes glued on the seams of the ball and began to hit tennis shots like I had never hit in my life. I hadn’t done anything different except watch those seams. Just as he said, I watched the seams, not taking my eyes off the ball.

What had happened? What had turned me from a tennis dunce to a star player? We found out what kind of person I was, and used what I found out. It was that simple.

The lesson to be learned is that we are all different. No two of us are alike. When we find out who God has made us to be, how He has gifted us, and then we keep our eyes focused on Him, fantastic things are accomplished. If just for a second I lost my concentration and began thinking about past shots or about the shots I would like to make, the ball began to go awry. If I thought about making great shots with fabulous form, that didn't work either. If I thought and wished I was a blur person or a body person or an anything else person, I got my eye off the seams.

That is just the way it is when we get our eyes off Jesus for any reason at all—we go awry. He has made each one of us to be no ordinary person. We are unique and have a unique work to do on this earth. Amazingly, He has left the winning of the world and the doing of all the works of Jesus in our hands (Matthew 28:19-20). For sure, it is through His power, plan, and direction that these works will be accomplished, but we must yield to His power and plan and direction. So fix your eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, and obey His voice and get on with doing what He has told you to do. While you are reading this book, He may bring up some things in your life that need healing and changing. That is my prayer for you. I pray that when the last page of this book has been read that you will have dealt with some significant events in your life and that healing will have occurred as these events have been exposed to the light of the Lord. For you are no ordinary person, and your Father God has wonderful plans for your life.

Ras adds the next chapter. This understanding of I Corinthians 5:17 literally changed the life of our family.