

**20/20 Publication**

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**QUARTERLY QUOTES**

What an absurd thing it is to pass over all the valuable parts of a man, and fix our attention on his infirmities.

**James Addison**

Reputation is what men and women may think of us; character is what God and the angels know of us.

**Thomas Paine**

Regarding your spiritual life, be open, simple and like a child. In the depths of your spirit be like a drop of water lost in an ocean, and be no longer conscious of yourself. In this enlarged condition see and enjoy everything from within God. Within yourself there is only darkness, but in God there is only light. Let God be everything to you...God's love is like a weight within us, causing us to sink deeper and deeper into God.

**Madame Jeanne Guyon**



## *Preaching to the Choir*

By Jaque Shank

*And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 1 John 5:11-12 (NIV)*

Wow. “He who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” You know how God layers revelations—a little here—a little there? Well, that’s what happened with this. Reading it this time on my walk through the Bible pierced my heart as never before. I love it when he slays me to save me!

Here’s what I realized once more: The Son **is** the essence and *character* of the Father. Not only that; she who *has the character* of Jesus has life; she who *doesn’t have* the character of Jesus doesn’t have life. Verse 20 “...we know also that the Son of God has come and given us understanding.”

Watching the way Jesus lived makes it clear beyond a shadow of a doubt that God is not a people pleaser; he is always and only himself—no respecter of persons. So let’s see now; *I have no life until I am simply myself—true to who I am—neither pretending nor acting for anyone.* I have to ask myself; can I (lovingly) question or challenge others without fearing what they might think of me? Is it okay to be different—to love Jesus more than Christianity—more than falling for the trappings of religion? Verse 21 “...Dear children, keep yourself from idols.” Do I turn people into idols? Do I feel the need to love what they love and hate what they hate—do I forfeit my freedom just to “fit in?” On the other hand, do I hold people at arm’s length so they won’t really get to know me? Do I play it safe? More to the point; *do I live a risk-taking, life-giving life or a fear-filled “stay within the lines” sort of life?*

## Preaching to the Choir, cont.

*He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him. John 7:18 (NIV)*

Psalm 51:6 says “You desire truth in the inner man...” which amounts to being true to who I really am. Why am I so religious with the truth? How come I conjure up ways that make it impossible (especially for myself) to grasp? Am I that unwilling to live the Truth that came to *be* my life? Do I really *want* His life?

Let me put it another way; Jesus *is* God’s character. His name *is* God’s character. Why would I think that *saying* I love Jesus *is the same as* loving Him? Have I unwittingly grown callously religious—thinking I’m in service to Jesus so I can believe *all is well*? Pious people are easily convinced of their own good acting—*good enough to please God*. Yikes! How do I compromise myself to gain the approval of others? And what about my many opinions?

*An opinion is just “a belief or judgment that rests on grounds insufficient to produce complete certainty—a personal view, attitude, or appraisal.” (online dictionary).*

Aren’t my opinions what I think on my own? Why am I so invested in them? Do I actually think I know what I think I know? What do my opinions have to do with the character of Jesus? Does he give a hill of beans about what I or other people think, or is he really just interested in how I live

from *his life* in me—with how *his life* causes me to love and enjoy his presence? I never noticed Jesus holding opinions; he didn’t need them. He spoke the truth whether it made him popular or unpopular. I’ve also noticed that my opinions are flavored by what I want to change. “I wish she didn’t act that way; she does that because she’s selfish and doesn’t understand how she makes everyone else uncomfortable” or “I don’t think he should use words like \_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_; it makes him so unlovely to be around.” I dress the truth either in ruffles or alley trash; doesn’t matter. I do it all on my own, according to my liking. I also realize how my opinions grow from the *independent-self* illusion. Pure rubbish. I want God’s opinions—I want to think what he thinks.

Jesus is simple. Truth is truth; it is what it is—always has been—always will be. It never needs to be defended. Love never fails. *Period*. Then what would love look like if I let him live my life? *Me*—just as I am in Him; just as He is in me—where truth is brave but not reckless—bold but not unloving—unattached but not uncaring.

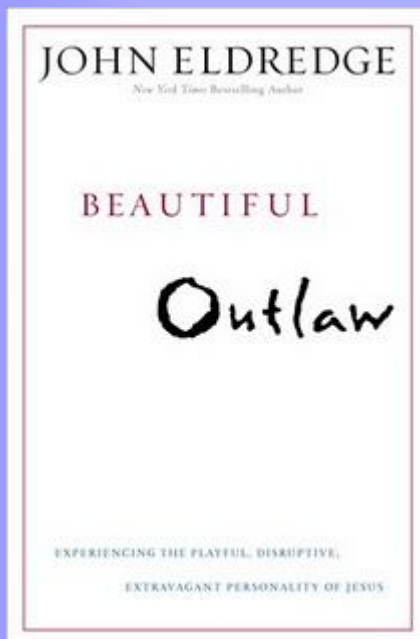
When I live to honor him—the Truth—I have life. Until then I live less than life—not honoring the One who sent me. Jude 21 says, “keep yourselves in the love of God.” I want God to look at my life and see me *allowing* him to love me to the *utmost* degree—that’s when I truly love others. I want to hold my opinions lightly, ready to drop them in a twinkling-of-an-eye so I may thrive by His Character and Name alone—so I may be just *as he is* in the world.

## Preaching to the Choir, cont.

So perhaps when I speak truth I will be misunderstood, *yes*, like he was. Perhaps some will wish I was dead, like they did him. But I'm tired of defending what I've decided on my own is true and expecting others to measure up. I've judged their character by whether or not they meet the criteria created with my own opinions. I not only pretended for others; I created expectations that they would newly invent themselves for me! How unreal. How delusional. How pathetic! But such is the condition of the human heart apart from Christ—a negative piece of the puzzle, a slab of black velvet to which the Diamond Life of Christ came to save and display HIS own life. I want that life. I *have* that life. *I love you Jesus*—keep the eyes of my heart open to know who *you* are in me. Then I will do only what I see you doing. Amen.

*Because the stakes are so high, even though you're up-to-date on all this truth and practice it inside and out, I'm not going to let up for a minute in calling you to attention before it. This is the post to which I've been assigned—keeping you alert with frequent reminders—and I'm sticking to it as long as I live. 2 Peter 1:12-13 (MSG)*

—Jaque



Friends, I want to recommend a book—so good in my opinion, I felt compelled to give away several for Christmas. The book is **Beautiful Outlaw** by John Eldredge. This is a book that *needed to be written* for such a time as this, about the *personality* of Jesus—a Jesus many may have *never* known, and those who have will want more of. Please do yourself a favor and get one, savor it, and thank God for a greater revelation of Jesus. (Jaque)

## *Jaque on Video!*

We are excited to announce that Jaque has been working on a project in collaboration with Keller Media to provide video messages for use with our course *Miracle in the Mirror*. These will be available for use in classes as an alternative to the audio messages. The videos were recorded during the recent *Miracle in the Mirror* class in Abilene, Kansas and should be available for use in the Spring.

Due to costs involved in a project of this magnitude, we want to give you the opportunity to seek the Lord regarding a designated donation toward this project. Currently the cost is estimated at approximately \$1500 and the students in Jaque's class have already donated \$500. We are asking the Lord to inspire other Visionwriter students, Visionkeepers, and Withworkers to participate with further donations throughout the month of January. Deadline for donations will be January 31st. If we receive above and beyond the required amount, the excess will go into our regular ministry funds.

The videos are fairly simply arranged with one camera angle on Jaque as she teaches her audience and we are looking forward to receiving the finished product for review in January. Thank you for your help with this!

**To DONATE:** Visit our website at [www.visionwriters.com](http://www.visionwriters.com). Locate the Donate button at the top of the page. A drop-down will appear as you scroll over the Donate button. Click on Designated Donations to find the list of current projects. Click the Donate to The Video Project Via PayPal button located directly under the Video Project description. Follow PayPal instructions. Once again, you have our gratefulness for your support.



### *Noteworthy Student Quotes*

“Journalizing took an otherwise superficial Christian and convinced her there was more to Christianity than what met the eye. Visionwriters gave me a tool for becoming a true seeker of God.” R.G., CA

“Journalizing is my path to higher thinking for it is God’s way of leading me to the mind of Christ.” A.H., CA

“Journalizing is like a winnowing fork in the hand of the Lord. He uses it to toss the grain of our lives into the wind so the chaff can be blown from the wheat. He is after a holy people, a people surrendered for His use. Journalizing His Word by His Spirit is one way He accomplishes that goal.” S.M., NM

“Journalizing takes a sketch and creates an entire vision.” L.B., CA



## *Paint Your Pretty Picture*

By: Sara McDaniel

During our recent online Miracle in the Mirror course I was once again reminded of the circular nature of Vision-Passion-Discipline-Vision etc. When we feed our vision (of God) we'll simultaneously be feeding our passion (for God) and thus our discipline (to seek God). Conversely, if we are disciplined, we will feed our passion and increase our vision.

A few months ago I started an oil painting class, with the aim of improving my amateur skills. Having painted off and on over the years, sometimes in classes and sometimes not, I've learned that I need the class structure to keep me working on something otherwise I never make the time (Discipline). We've heard that we will always make the time to do what we truly love and yet there is also a resistance there. I love to paint but I also avoid it. It's often this way with creative endeavors, and even with seeking the Lord.

My art instructor says that to be a good painter you have to have a vision in your mind's eye that you are trying to recreate on canvas. He also says you should not just try to reproduce a photograph; you need to know what kind of atmosphere you want to create in your painting, so that you attach feelings to it and it tugs on people's emotions when they view it. This gives me pause for thought.

In my journal God told me that in order to overcome resistance, I need to learn to *enjoy* the practical painting journey, just the sheer pleasure of color and moving the paint around on the canvas with a brush. The ideas and passion will then follow. I am usually very intimidated by a blank canvas because I feel I don't know what I'm doing and I want to turn out a masterpiece at my first attempt. I stress and worry about it. Enter resistance! When you think about it, the resistance really comes from root feelings of shame or pride as I think of others judging my work.

The problem when painting in a classroom is that my own vision is lacking. The only vision I have is a photograph or watching what my instructor does as he creates something out of a vision in his own head. I try to measure up as I copy without really understanding what I am doing or why I am doing it. This week he had an uninspiring faded photograph of a few eucalyptus trees on a hill in broad daylight but he imagined a scene near dusk, just as the last rays of the sun were lighting up the clouds and the distant hillside and he painted a powerfully evocative scene straight out of his mind's eye. I watch and copy the preparatory steps he does and learn techniques but I can't see or feel his end-vision and so mine is mechanical and lacks expression and feeling. I don't know where I'm going with it. You need a vision of your own in order to create rather than copy, in order to experience passion and capture it on the canvas so that the work pulls on the emotions of others.

## Paint Your Pretty Picture, cont.

I am sure by now you are wondering how this applies spiritually! Well, it occurred to me how each of us needs to see God for ourselves in order to truly seek Him wholeheartedly and passionately, in order to allow Him to freely paint beautiful pictures with the canvas of our lives that will attract others. Its no good copying others or learning only from what they have seen. We each need to look Him full in the face and see Him with our own eyes (Vision). That vision will translate into meaningful action in our lives (Passion).

*Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame. Psalm 34:5 NIV*

Specifically, we each need to *hear* Him for ourselves in order for our vision to grow! This takes discipline. When all we do is passively read what other people write, or *only* listen to what other people have learned through the fruits of their own seeking we will miss out on true, deep, life-changing spiritual nutrition. That fare is already well chewed, and even though there is undoubtedly still some nutrition in it, and the Spirit can use it, it won't impart true passion to us such as the Spirit gives one-on-one as he interprets His Word directly into our own lives and circumstances. Also, if we go through the motions checking off Bible reading and attending church etc. doing the things we know we "should" do without being disciplined enough to set aside focused time to learn directly from the Lord and His word for ourselves, we won't actually enjoy the journey much. Moreover the picture we paint on the fabric of our lives won't appeal to anyone, and we'll fall easily into the trap of assess-

ing our performance and comparing ourselves with others, alternately pridefully or shamefully. Our vision of God comes from the discipline of seeking and hearing him for ourselves and only then will we have the passion that will pour out in actions so that others are truly touched and drawn to him.

In Visionwriters classes we are being given tools, techniques and the encouragement to be disciplined but the real Life comes into it when we put it into practice. Just as with learning to paint, unless we practice we will not learn or change. As we journalize, we are given the freedom to push the paint around on the paper so-to-speak and enjoy the colors; we become more and more free, overcoming the resistance to surrender with discipline. In seeking God for ourselves, capturing His specific words to us in our particular circumstances, He becomes the One who stirs up our passion and gives us visions of Himself in ways no one else can. This is seen in our lives as we go about our daily business. He is faithful to do it as we are faithful to seek Him. We quit judging ourselves and trying to copy others and we are freed to bring forth unique manifestations of Christ in us as we are obedient to what he shows us.

Jaque says in *Miracle in the Mirror*; '*By discipline we enjoy the journey instead of being consumed with the destination, and that, as new creations, we have to learn to be what we are...not try to be what we are.*'

I will see my destination and reach it *by* enjoying *my* journey, not by artificially trying to copy and reach someone else's journey. I intend to practice and to enjoy putting my colors on the canvas, (and pen on paper in my journals) and to learn to be who I am, letting God teach me and show me His vision of me. No pressure, no judging. I want to stop nitpicking, hesitating, and *trying* to be who I am, and in the process I believe passion

## Paint Your Pretty Picture, cont.

and flow will increase, concern about performance decrease, and my vision of the destination will become inspired. Then I can allow the vision God has given me personally to direct me, always inspired by the visions of others but not trying to copy them or conform to them artificially.

Taking it one step further, the glorious thing about this is that in actuality, God is the master artist and He has chosen to reveal Himself to others through our lives. As we focus our hearts and minds on Him, and surrender more and more as we fall deeper in love with Him, Christ in us, as us, will paint the picture of our lives. Amen!

—Sara



And now an original poem by Lesley who has participated in several online Visionwriters courses and lives near London, England.

Lesley writes:

*"Requests and Promises" was written in May 1979 during a time when I was searching spiritually having come to a place where I had lost all conscious belief in there being a God at all. It was an unsettling time emotionally and I had been expressing my feelings on paper in the form of poems for quite a while. I was reminded of this particular poem when taking the "Miracle in the Mirror" course when a fellow course participant mentioned God telling her that she wanted the "wind in her hair", but to slow down for the time being and to enjoy taking one step at a time. Looking at it now it seems to be an unrehearsed prayer from my heart to a God that I wasn't even aware of at that time at all...a true vision writing experience, maybe?*

### *"Requests and Promises"*

by Lesley Whitaker

Give me the wide open spaces  
Give me the wind in my hair  
Give me the love of the living  
Give me a call,  
I'll be there.

Give me a song I can sing to  
Give me the light from your eyes  
Give me a world I can bring to  
All manner of love  
And surprise.

Give me a smile and I'll smile too  
Give me a kiss and I'll fly  
Give me the strength and the hope for  
An end  
To the reasoning why.

I'll give you the wide open spaces  
I'll give you the wind in your hair  
I'll give you the love of the living  
I'll call and  
I'll hope you'll be there.

I'll give you a song you can sing to  
I'll give you the light from my eyes  
I'll give you a world you can bring to  
All manner of love  
And surprise.

I'll give you a smile and you'll smile too  
I'll give you a kiss and you'll fly  
I'll give you the strength and the hope for  
An end to the  
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## About Us

*Visionwriters is a mentoring program with a long-term vision or worldview; one that is committed to a long-term Gospel. Vision either determines victory, or its absence produces despair. God's word imparts vision. Writing the vision helps us sort things out, for thoughts are untangled at the point of a pen. But writing isn't enough if it falls short of application. We help people apply the truth, because truth without application is just information. When truth is applied it is powerful.*

*We facilitate people who ache to hear the voice of Truth and experience a personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ ~ people who want to hear God's voice and open their communication with God ~ those who want answers to their most perplexing questions ~ people ready to admit there is a hole inside and who want to overcome this inner loneliness.*

*Visionwriting, is taking dictation from the Holy Spirit. Because we want to understand God's personal instructions, we write to capture, assimilate and obey them. You will learn how to hear God's voice, have communication with God through a spiritual relation with Him. Through that spiritual relationship you will overcome loneliness.*

## Philosophy of the D.A.R.C.

### **D = Discipline**

God's discipline, sated with love, is our wake up call to righteousness. A renewed mind can't grasp the revelation of righteousness alone; this revelation requires the heart to be awakened by the voice of His love. "Today if you will hear My voice..." (Hebrews 3:7-8). To hear with disciplined intent is to not only agree that God initiated a covenant with us, but to finally agree to fully and personally receive it. A long persistence in the right direction is required if we are going to 'see' the place to which God calls us to abide. We write the vision out of our deep longing to "understand" and then "do" what we see our Father doing.

### **A = Accountability**

Each one of us is accountable for our own personal relationship with God as we bear it in front of others. Because we genuinely want to read so we can run with the vision, we surrender to the Holy Spirit and He leads us to what helps us sort out our thoughts and let go of what isn't true; then we can integrate what is true into our hearts and lives. Here we begin to learn the freedom of open and honest relationships.

### **R = Relationship**

Our relationship with God is central to everything and everyone. It is intimate, up close, and personal. Therefore we are ready to explore ourselves the way God knows us and to drop human judgment in order to receive others and encourage them toward the recognition of all God knows them to be. We are "response-able" as we proclaim the truth—here as "selves for others."

### **C = Community**

We need one another; God made us that way. So community is the place all things finally make sense—where God's promises are realized—where the corporate ache is filled. As we operate in union with Him we lose ourselves and get nothing less than our true selves back. This is when we begin to deeply experience our self-giving nature and where "the whole is defined by the sum of its parts."