

When God Disrupts Your Life

The year was 1966. School was over, and my friends and I couldn't wait to get out our swimsuits and meet up at the public swimming pool in town. After changing into my funky one-piece in the locker room, I had begun to make my grand entrance to the pool area . . . only to be upstaged by a buzz that seemed to have everyone in a state of frenzy!

What I soon discovered was that for the very first time, our pool would no longer be segregated. I was eleven years old. I remember that people were holding on to each other, crying, and expressing that they were worried the water was going to change color! Even at that young age, I couldn't believe people would act like that.

On a winter day three years before the experience at our local pool, I peeked out the window of our front room and saw a car pull into the driveway. Two people that I recognized as our minister and the woman who taught my Sunday school class were coming to my house! I remember thinking, *Am I in trouble?*

But I was not in trouble. Don "Pappy" Hinkle and Mrs. Woods had arrived that day to meet with my parents because I had accepted Christ and it was now time for me to be baptized.

On February 10, 1963, as an eight-year-old little girl with my knees knocking and my lower lip quivering, I walked down the aisle of First Christian Church in Hobbs, New Mexico, to be baptized. I remember that day as if it were yesterday. And as young as I was at the time, I have always believed that I knew exactly what I was doing.

That was the day my life was *disrupted*.

When Christ comes into our lives, he disrupts our worldview. The day I was baptized and the day at the swimming pool are interconnected because when God disrupted my life as an eight-

year-old, I began seeing the world through his eyes. That is why three years later on a hot summer day, I was one of only a handful of people who welcomed our new friends of a different race to join us for a dip in the pool.

Matt Summerfield is CEO of Urban Saints, a 106-year-old youth and children's ministry in the United Kingdom. Matt introduced me to this word *disrupt* and his concept of it. It came as a result of his staff asking him to move the midmorning prayer time to the start of their day in order not to be disrupted in the middle of their work projects. Matt thought about it and said no to their request because he felt this disruption was needed as a reminder that God was the one in control of their projects—not them.

Quite often, after we've had a hard day's work building a home with a Mexican family, I get the opportunity to share my disrupted story with students around a campfire. I speak of a night when I was nine years old at Guadalupe Christian Camp, in a setting very similar to the one the students are in right then. When Pappy Hinkle asked the crowd who wanted to commit their lives to Christian service, I jumped up in response and made my way to the foot of the cross that was illuminated by the evening fire.

I hope the students can envision the courage it took for me to stand before the other campers, with the majestic Guadalupe Mountains as a backdrop, and make a promise to be a missionary to the poor.

I have kept that promise, and forty-nine years later I am still living out the commitment I made on that warm, summer night at junior camp. And it wasn't something I put off until I had a college degree in hand that prepared me for the mission field. I came home from camp that summer with a belief that I could change my world—now!

Through this book, my desire is to give you some essential

tools and resources on how to take Christ's disruption and cultivate a mission-focused life. I want you to be prepared to serve others on a short-term mission trip as well as in the community in which you live. This book will also take you through a weekly study of biblical truths illustrated by disrupted stories that I pray will reveal to you daily those around you who desperately need the witness of Christ.

My hope is that a mission-focused life will become a part of the fiber of who you are so that, whether you are impacting those in faraway places or close to home, you are sharing in the cost of disrupted living.

Know that going on a short-term mission trip might take you to a distant place far from the comforts of your home, but cultivating a mission-focused life means that the disruptions aren't over even after you have returned and started unpacking your suitcase.

So be open, because when God disrupts your life, he will probably change you in ways you never expected!

*Excerpt from Disrupted: Cultivating a Mission Focused Life © 2013 by **Gayla Congdon**, published by Standard Publishing (). Reprinted with permission of the publisher.*