



The manifesto

S E E K I N G
T H E S T I L L

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Shell

PHOTOGRAPHY

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Cease striving to control your life, restless soul. You're missing so much. With eyes narrow and hands clenched, you're asleep to Inspiration around you. Your control keeps you stuck, rooted only in this chaotic world. And so you struggle. You worry. Your life is consumed with worst-case scenarios and what-ifs.

This is no way to live.

Let me show you a better Way.



I see it in your eyes. I hear it in your words. You are tired, anxious, busy, worn. There is not enough time in the day, you say. Hustle defines you. Comparison defeats you. Results matter and relationships suffer. You live your life fighting a future that never comes. Life is something you wade through, not enjoy.

I have been there. I am there.

What if there was a better way? The Ultimate Artist, the Creator of every wonder is offering you so much more! A life so full and so free. You know this deep within. The call beckons you, but also unsettles you because it's risky to trust Someone you cannot see. To depend on a God you cannot touch. And yet, you need Him. You know. You need a way to see truth, to breathe, to rest. A way to let go and trust. The divine is swirling around you and wants to be within you. Lose the chains. Stake the claim. It is time to seek the still.



I felt it early, even as a child. The bone deep desire for *something more*. Do the right thing. Get the good grades. Don't cause waves. Control is my addiction and approval my vice. I am chasing, always chasing. Trying. Yearning. Wanting. Numbing. I live in bondage...to myself. The fatal flaw of humanity is a chasm of need I cannot fill. But I try, oh how I try. Much of the striving is good on the outside. It is a mask. A charade. A sneaky thief.

*Lose the weight.
Kick the habit.
Get the job.
Buy the home.
Earn the money.
Seek the praise.
Have the child.
Be the best.*

In blindness and captivity I try again and again and again. I am hostage to the illusion of my control, but it's never enough. My health suffers, my mind twists, my soul withers dry. Yet, I keep trying, insane to expect a different result.



The bondage of my humanity comes with staggering costs. At times a lightning bolt breaks me open; more often, tiny pebbles bring the avalanche tumbling down. I find myself broken and bleeding. No amount of striving, searching, or doing makes me whole. The shattered pieces are painful in this delicate vessel that is me. The darkness is thick. The blackness, consuming. I am empty. My efforts work only for awhile. The revelation comes slowly, but it comes.

I cannot fix myself. I need a healer.



Every story must have a hero, and you've been trying to make that hero you. You are NOT the Hero of your story, darling. No, you are the wanderer, the broken. You are UNABLE to work your way out of your life's web of hurt, pain, lies and heartache. It's true. You are the one who needs to be rescued. Oh, how your soul longs to be rescued!

They call Him Jesus and say He's God's own son. I heard about Him as a babe in my mother's arms. She sang of Him. He is there in the fabric of my years. I prayed to Him and learned of Him. I believe He died and rose for me. I knew I would see Him in heaven, one day. But here's what I didn't know. I didn't know that HE was the answer to my longing, my need, my everything. HE is the hero you've been waiting for. It is not a church or religion or doctrine that finally sets you free. It is a Person, and His name is Jesus Christ.

And Christ, the true Hero sees you here, hurting. And He is so good and so true and so full of light and love that He cannot bear to leave even one broken soul separated from Him. Not one. Not you. This Hero doesn't do what you expect. He does not flex His muscles or call in an army. No, the Hero does something much more radical. Something so shocking, so undeserved.

The Hero takes your place.

He takes your darkness and gives you His light. For yesterday. For today. For tomorrow. And forever.

And you? With the weight of being a hero off YOUR shoulders and your darkness resting squarely on HIS, you now have a way to dance with one foot in this world and the other in eternity. Your future beyond this human body rests securely in the loving arms of God.

The Hero gave you that gift.

And now, you live the rest of your limited days in this world responding to that great sacrifice of love until you fall asleep and wake to see your Hero face-to-face.



There's no dramatic moment of revelation, rather a journey that continues still. In the darkest pit of fear and longing, I called to Him. I begged Him. I screamed at Him. I came clean of my pain, my wrongs, and my shame. He met me there. And He loved me still. So I keep bringing the darkness to Him, minute by minute, day by day. It is messy and hard. So hard. But He is always there. Waiting for me to come. Little by little, light shines through. A shedding begins. Layers of my life fall, and I see them clearly for the first time. In the ray of His light, the truth comes forth. I fight battles, but He wins the war.

*I raise my white flag and
surrender into the arms of His great love.*



My life is my witness. In every valley, every shadow, He is faithful. Answers come, not as I ask, but they do come. The darkest days are the sacred ground where He meets me. In a million little ways He weaves the tapestry of my life. Golden threads crisscross and lives intersect. He provides. He saves. He restores. Time proves His power and might.

*My puny plans hold no weight against His
perfect will.*



Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow never comes. But today, today is a gift unfolding. I know not how I missed it before. The miracles are everywhere. His love, a fountain washing over the world. The trees hint at His majesty, the butterflies promise rebirth. People walk the earth as His hands and feet. Ideas and opportunities appear as whispers of His will. Creation cries out, RECEIVE! Seek the miracles, and you will find them. The divine is swirling around you and in you.

*Open your eyes and you will see.
Release.
Receive.
Rejoice.*



I surrender my life, to take it back again. I worship and adore Him, only to betray and reject Him. The struggle is great, but His Grace is greater. Faith trumps fear. Life triumphs over death. Joy overwhelms mourning. I will forever dance between the tension of my will and His.

I feel him whisper, Do you want to feel peace and joy again? You can't work your way out of this on your own.

*Be Still and Know that I am God.
Psalm 46:10*

So, to seek the still, I do what does not come naturally. What I cannot do on my own. I let things drop. I face my fears. I search for answers, not in my own capabilities, but in the loving hands of my Heavenly Father. I share what I have learned and the mistakes I have made. I'm honest. Raw. Real. I take off my mask. Because real is the only way to help others, to tell my story, to let love win.

It seems so simple.

So strange and wonderful and simple. And yet you can feel the truth pressing into the fiber of your being. You are a spiritual soul having a temporary, human experience, dear one. That truth changes everything. Even in the midst of this messy, chaotic, human life, you are free to float as a feather in Divine wind of love. It's not random - the places you are carried and the people you touch. It's the next part of the story.

And if you try to take back the role of the Hero, you will miss it.

Please don't miss it.

Seek the still with me.

Let's dance.

TO YOU FROM ME

I don't know how this manifesto landed in your hands, but I am grateful that it did. Not because I have everything figured out. But because I USED to think I did.

The words of my manifesto are beautiful, but the process of going through it and out the other side was (and is still at times) quite ugly. It involved physical and mental duress, anxiety attacks, many nights of dreadful insomnia, a hospital evaluation, a diagnosis of Generalized Anxiety Disorder, outpatient therapy, counseling, medication and so much more. My "perfect" life turned into hell on earth for one reason, and one reason alone.

*I am a Messy Miracle who did not want to give up control.
And it almost killed me.*

But it didn't. The Hero was there. And for once, I surrendered and listened and trusted.

I don't know what you believe. I don't know if you've ever had to truly LIVE OUT IN FAITH what you believe. But I know that in desperation, I have. And Jesus Christ saved me from the darkness. To be sure, He also worked through doctors, and medicine, and people. But the way it happened, there's no mistaking the Divine's Hand in it all. If there's anything I have to share and teach, it is simply a gift from Him to you through my mess. I am a broken but willing vessel.

Jesus wants to be a loving source of help and hope in your story, too. He still works miracles and is so much more than what you may believe. Get to know Him. Just give it a try. Read the book of John from the Bible. If you don't have a Bible, Google "The book of John." There's no judgement there from Jesus. Only love and grace and life. What you find will surprise you. It surprises me every time.

Be Still,

Laura
XOXOX



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Laura Fleetwood is a Champion For Your R E S T L E S S soul.

She's a Midwest gal. A wife, mom of two girls, and a sister of sisters. Her career crisscrosses from climbing the corporate ladder and traveling the world to being a stay-at-home mom, college instructor, and now a published author, speaker, and communications director for a large church & school in the St. Louis area.

SeekingTheStill.com is where you can find Laura's vulnerable words for Messy Miracles. There is ALWAYS hope. You are NEVER alone.

Receive a weekly Letter From Laura every Sunday at 1pm CST by signing up [here](#).

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