

THE FAMILY “TIPPING POINT” LETTER

How we can reclaim our families

June 24, 2008

TO: Anyone interested in sharing the book, *God Who Are You? And Who Am I?* one-on-one or with a group:

It's exactly 8:08 a.m. this Tuesday. It's time to get in formation.

January of 2008, my husband Jim and I went to a Church in the Workplace conference in Atlanta, GA. It was a “Reclaiming the 7 Mountains” of culture: Family, Arts and Entertainment, Business, Education, Government, Media and Religion [to bring it down to a relationship]. We had high anticipations in finding more guidance from the Lord in what we felt this year had in store for us, because the number eight means “new beginnings.” Upon arriving at the hotel we were taken to a room at the nineteenth floor, but someone else’s things were there. We had to go all the way back to the lobby to get another room. We were escorted to room 808! I left the convention with what I felt was a mandate to do my part in reclaiming our families for the Lord. Over and over I heard that until this happens none of the other six will fall into place.

On June 1, I began a new devotional. It explained about how geese fly—in the Fall—in “V” formation and how the flaps of their wings provide an uplift for the next one in formation, supporting it, decreasing its work load and conserving its energy. Then it said, “A solo goose could never complete the trip, but in formation the youngest, the oldest, and even the weakest get there. In other words, they do collectively what they could never do alone” (*The Word for You Today*, June, July, August, 2008).

As you know if you’ve read the book, in 1994, the Lord gave me an experience with geese that left me with great joy as I knew I’d just seen how the Rapture would happen [details are in Module 10]. The geese spiraled upward, circling round and round until they leveled out falling into rank after rank of small groups. Suddenly, they met up with other geese that they seemed to know as they squaked and honked; then together they flew into the sun/Son. [The second vision, in 1995, an awake type, is posted on my Web site and is in Module 11 of my book.] It’s taken me a long, long time to see what the small rank after rank meant. Now, I know it means small groups meeting together, and I believe that’s where we are headed.

My goal is to encourage small groups to meet and study who God is before we meet Him face to face. I want to help speakers who would like to put this book on their back-of-the-room booktables, or to support fundraisers, or any retailer whose desire is to help disciple believers to become the mature bride. As I continue to share, I hope you will see that it’s not about me or *my* book. We are in something so much bigger than any one of us, but it has to start with us. And, I believe we will come to see that in *small group formation*, we can do collectively what we could have never done alone.

If you have not yet read the “The Story Behind the Cover,” please stop and do that now.

We CAN Reclaim Our Families

We have all been given a mandate and an assignment to reclaim our families. This seems like such a tall order, but I can hardly believe how the Lord has shown me that it really is possible! Jim and I were waiting at the airport near Seattle to come home after delivering our daughter and her three sons to Washington upon her

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husband’s return from Iraq and where he will be stationed. A book in the airline bookstore, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* by Malcolm Gladwell, caught my eye. The words *tipping point* were used at the conference like we should know what they meant. I didn’t.

Gladwell tells the story of how in late 1994 to 1995 the makers of the Hush Puppies shoes were thinking of phasing them out, when suddenly, without any effort on their own, the shoes regained popularity—until they were in every mall in America. The reason? A handful of kids started buying out the Ma and Pa stores and reselling them—while they wore them (to the clubs and bars of downtown Manhattan). It was total word of mouth that spread like a virus—like fire.

The Law of the Few

Gladwell explains how that virus can spread until it’s an epidemic. He writes, “The tipping point is the moment of critical mass, the threshold, the boiling point. At that point, change happens quickly” (Little, Brown and Company, New York, Boston, London, 2002, p.12). One of the rules of the tipping point is the Law of the Few. It only takes a few to make it happen. He tells about Paul Revere as a young boy who heard the rumor from a British army officer that there would be “hell to pay tomorrow.” Paul knew that meant the British were coming tomorrow and woke up the households of the militia on his midnight ride with the indelible words, “The British are coming!”

The next day, the two sides met face to face; several hundred soldiers confronting less than a hundred militia—at the beginning of the American Revolution. Lives were lost, but the following year, victory was claimed for an entire nation. It all started with a little stable boy with enough passion to start a word-of-mouth epidemic.

Interestingly, at the same time William Dawes rode in the opposite direction from Paul Revere, but none of his people got the message until it was too late. How could that be? The people did not wake up to the reality of what was happening—probably because Dawes did not believe in its reality [my opinion only]. He was just not convinced himself, and the people in his sphere of influence paid the ultimate price for it, or maybe he merely put flyers under their door without opening his mouth. That is just too tempting; it only makes us think we’ve done something.

We are Entering the Age of Word of Mouth

“On playing fields and battle grounds, challenges that would be daunting and impossible if faced alone are suddenly possible when tackled in a close-knit group . . . We are about to enter the age of word of mouth, and that, paradoxically, all of the sophistication and wizardry and limitless access to information of the New Economy is going to lead us to rely more and more on very primitive kinds of social contacts” (*The Tipping Point*, pg. 264).

I heard through word of mouth that it was through a close-knit group of women in the Midwest that the *Left Behind* series took off to become an epidemic. I’ve read that no where. It happened because they started reading them. They put on the Hush Puppies, so to speak, and started wearing them. They liked them so much they were *convinced*—willing to share the story.

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The book *God Who Are You?* is not sharing a fictional series about the Rapture. It is sharing its true reality. The message does not give an escapism mentality of Jesus’ coming back “so we can get out of here.” It’s the message that Jesus is coming for a mature bride, one He delights in, one who will allow Him to take her hand and go where no one else is going. It’s a message of partnership with Him in an interdependent relationship; of teamwork and working together; of being salt in the Earth as He would direct us; of giving our testimony of overcoming, and until we have overcome and reclaimed those mountains, thus fulfilling the Great Commission, He will delay His coming. It’s a book taking the new believer or young Christian to maturity, a book of Christian discipleship where almost 40 stories are told from people in the one area—stories that help mentor a person who has no Bible knowledge or has never been in church. It’s a book not using Christianized theological words, and if one is, it’s explained thoroughly. It also has the potential of bringing a person to Jesus Christ in the first chapter.

When Gladwell says we are going to have to rely more and more on very primitive kinds of social contacts he means we are becoming immune to all the high tech stuff [“high tech; high touch” as my husband has said a thousand times]. The telephone was wonderful, but telemarketing has dropped 50% in the last 25 years because we’ve become immune to answering it. And now, we are getting immune to e-mail. Increase of spam and forwards—good emails, but too much of it—and really good stuff going to the junk folder is causing immunity to it. Nothing can take the place of one-on-one, word-of-mouth, face-to-face interaction. And, I’ve not even touched on the persecution of Christians we’re seeing and will probably see more of—the reason for small group interaction—that will bring in the end-time harvest. The small groups will be like small boats catching the fish.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Last September when we asked women to share their testimony at our meetings all five or six declined. That had never happened since 2001. We felt God was bringing us to a transition, but to what? A core group of us got together at our regular meeting time, the second Saturday of each month, to pray and seek God’s face for the next step. This letter is sharing with you that next step. For each of us, what we do about the birth of this book will be different—some the same. For me, I’ve felt I needed to teach it, but the how, when and where answers were not there. For seven years we’ve discussed the Hebrew names of God, and He showed up when we discussed a particular character of His name—and which I believe will happen with any group who honors His name. I will not teach them any longer to our women’s group. Together, we have tweaked the Bible study portions, and now we must go share it with our neighbors. I told the Lord, “If You want me to ask my neighbors to my house for this Bible study, I ask for confirmation.” Immediately, He spoke to my heart, you are living on number 8, and have been the whole 8 plus years you’ve been back in Fort Scott.” Sure enough, our neighborhood is a figure 8.

In the fall is when geese flock. After Labor Day, I will begin my group. I believe God is calling many of you to do the same. If so, will you please let me know so we can support each other? One thing is for sure, we will continue to get together to pray. If you have no prayer partner, I encourage you to do so. Prayer is where all this began and where it will continue.

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The Lord has also been reminding me from Ecclesiastes 3, verse 7, that there is a time to be silent and a time to speak up, and the time “ye ought to be teachers” (2 Timothy 2:2) is here. Now is the time for me to go and to be willing to speak about these precious truths I’ve kept in my heart. “The day” of the Lord is here.

I challenge you to do the same: speak up, teach up and share up.

What is the Plan Now?

“Look at the world around you. It may seem like an immovable, implacable place. It is not. With the slightest push—in just the right place—it can be tipped” (pg. 259). Gladwell has written a book for Christians although it is not a “Christian” book. He said something else that hit me square in the face—that if Paul Revere had ridden in the middle of day without waking up families in the middle of the night, his message would not have had the impact it did. We are at *the* midnight hour; I feel that more than ever now, don’t you? What a time to be living! What an assignment Jesus has given us—to share with others! The Holy Spirit’s power is moving closer and mightier than ever, and we are right in the middle of it. Can you imagine what it will be like when we see Him face to face?

This is the Scripture God gave me this morning: Isaiah 62: 5, “As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.” This is written to Israel, but we are the adopted. Isaiah continues:

I have posted watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the LORD, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth.

We have our assignment. May we never stop talking and going where He leads—until “the day.” I will be praying for you. Please pray for me. Will you also agree with me that for the United States of America, we shall “no longer be called Deserted, or the name of our land be called Desolate” (see Isaiah. 62: 4).

Until the day,

Ann Miesner