

## *Chapter One: Out of Control*

The illusion of control steals our joy-why you ask? Because this thief brings along with its two sidekicks known as expectations and comparison- when our expectations are not met-there is disappointment and anger. Your friend gets exactly what she asked for and you are left holding the “no fair banner”  
What is perfect? Does it exist? Ummm no

How is God allowing you to break today?

What is he asking of you?

What do you need to lay down at the foot of the Cross and allow his mercy and grace to seep into?

Is there someone or some situation that keeps coming to your mind for comparison? Examine why this person or situation is causing you concern.

Write it out. Draw it out. Give it to him. When we give our very selves, our children, our marriages, and our work over to God, miracles happen, peace abides, and we can be brave in the scared. We can survive the very worst that life brings us, and we can even do it with joy, because “for God all things are possible” (Mt 19:26).

Matthew 7:7-11

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Which one of you would hand his son a stone when he asks for a loaf of bread, or a snake when he asks for a fish? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him.

## *Chapter Two: Blame Game*

We attach expectations to our beliefs—this becomes our truth and when it doesn't go our way everything collapses. We look for someone to blame instead of handing our disappointment and disillusionment over to God.

Now, be honest with yourself.

Are you playing a blame game?

Are there choices you feel guilty about?

What regrets are you hiding in your heart right now?

Can you find your way to letting them go?

Not every decision you make will end the way you think it should, but strangely enough, that's okay. Remember that taking responsibility isn't the same as taking blame. It took me a long time to figure out that when you play the blame game, nobody wins. We all regret decisions and second-guess our choices. That's part of our human frailty, and God understands this. But if we spend our lives playing coulda, woulda, shoulda, we'll miss out on God's bigger plan. His plan uses every choice for our good—even if we don't see it or understand it right away.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, on your own intelligence do not rely;  
In all your ways be mindful of him, and he will make straight your paths.

## *Chapter Three: When It Rains*

Because I did not trust God, I placed my need to feel independent ahead of Him—I desired self-sufficiency above all.

Don't believe the lie the Deceiver whispers into your ear—the lie that you don't need God, that you are better off without him. The rain does come. Sometimes, it feels like it will never end. Tell God you need him. (He already knows that anyway.) Put out your hand, my friend, and allow Christ to lift you up from the mud. I promise you will not regret the choice to take his hand in trust.

How are you handling the hard in your life?

Is there something you keep trying to handle on your own?

What is keeping you from letting go and giving it to the Lord?

Have you refused help or been too ashamed to ask for it?

Sirach 2:1, 5-6

My child, when you come to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for trials. . . .

For in fire gold is tested, and the chosen, in the crucible of humiliation.

Trust in God, and he will help you; make your ways straight and hope in him.