

BODYLIFE

The Simplicity of Following Jesus

June 2008

THE POWER OF LIVING IN LOVE

By Wayne Jacobsen

I know it has been a lot time since I've produced a new issue of BODYLIFE. Life has taken some crazy turns for me since the last one I wrote in September. I will still continue to do these from time to time, but they will not be often or regular. This one is a bit different as well. Here are three related snapshots of what it means to live in the love of God.

Live Where Love Leads You

So, I ended up with a publishing company. I'm not sure how it happened. I was helping a friend with a book he had written. I helped rewrite some of it with another friend, then represented it to the publishing industry. I wasn't a very good agent. I couldn't find anyone in the industry who thought it was worth publishing. So the author, another friend, and I decided to publish it on our own.

And we did. Then *The Shack* started climbing the best-seller lists and other companies wanted to buy it from us. To our surprise one of the largest publishers in the world approached us to enter a partnership with them, not only to help us *The Shack* to a larger audience but also help with my books and others we think are worthy of publishing in years ahead.

They bought into the vision of what we were doing and thought there was a significant space in the reading public for that vision.

So we formed a partnership with the Hachette Book Group, where we maintain our unique identity as Windblown Media. We can do just as much publishing with them as we want to, and yet are not obligated to put everything we do through the Hachette machine. They made it clear all along that they wanted to help us not hinder us. And while we were working things out with them, *The Shack* rose to the very top of the New York Times Best Seller List.

How did all this happen? Believe me, we have had some amazing laughter about it all. No one saw this coming and yet simply responding to him each day has brought us into a place we could not have conceived or conspired to get to.

But that's true about everything I'm involved in at the moment: nothing I'm doing today, I set out purposely to accomplish. My plans for my life were very different than how things have turned out. Funny how that is! As a twenty-two year-old, freshly graduated from college, and newly married I had so



You don't have a soul. You are a soul. You have a body.

C. S. Lewis



MINISTRIES

7228 University Drive • Moorpark, CA 93021

RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED

many dreams and visions of the things I thought God wanted me to accomplish. I had confused my ego with his calling, my dreams for his and had assumed I knew what outcomes God had in mind. My first twenty years on that course proved horribly frustrating as I could not convince God to honor my agenda. The last 14 years have been filled with ever increasing joy and gratefulness as God's purposes have overrun my own. And in every way he did something immeasurably beyond anything I could have asked or imagined.

BridgeBuilders began because God asked us to go love people at my children's public school. That one decision started a chain of events that has allowed me to sit in rooms at the most incredible gatherings of deeply conflicted people and help bring about peace. *Lifestream* started as a way to encourage people to experience a closer walk with Jesus and more relational engagements with others. That led to books, travel and website resources. *Windblown Media* resulted from simply helping a friend to tell a story God had put on his heart.

Perhaps being fruitful isn't a matter of starting something, following a five-year plan, and achieving it. Perhaps it is a matter of simply being able to respond to the people and situations around us with his love in our heart and his voice in our ear. For most of my life I have drawn too direct a line between what I think God wants and what I must do to get it. It seems Jesus warned us about that: *If you try to save your life you'll lose it. If you try to be first you'll end up last.*

He only asked us to love, one day at a time, whoever is before us in whatever circumstance we meet them.

Everything else he wants to do will flow from that simple reality.

We have filled the world with ministries people have started to accomplish some great thing for God. Many of them never go anywhere. There are a

“ ***My first twenty years on that course proved horribly frustrating as I could not convince God to honor my agenda.*** ”

lot of people who come to Hollywood to be a chaplain to the stars. They set up a ministry, beg for money to fund it, and then try to

find a way to connect with those people. We do the same with missions and youth ministries. Start a program, fund it, then try and try to get people to take advantage of it.

What if we just started loving the people God puts before us each day, can you imagine what would spill out of that in terms of opportunity, ministry and even growing fellowship?

I think we have it all backwards. Jesus didn't ask us to start ministries. He didn't ask us to accomplish great things. He simply asked us to love others the same way we are loved by him and that will be enough for the whole world to know that we belong to him and that they can too.

People ask me all the time how they can start a house church or connect with other brothers and sisters on a similar journey in their region. Many

This snail-mail version of *Lifestream.org* is made available free to those in the US who cannot receive it via the web. The full issue is posted on-line and includes a downloadable pdf file for those who would like to print their own copies. Subscribing via the web helps us hold our costs down.

© Copyright 2008 by *Lifestream Ministries*
Permission is hereby granted for copies to be made and distributed free of charge.

7228 University Dr • Moorpark, CA 93021
(805) 529-1728 • Fax: (805) 529-5709
email: waynej@lifestream.org
Web: <http://www.lifestream.org>

Pictures has talked about doing a documentary on the backstory of the book and sponsoring a forum to discuss the theological debate it has spawned. ♣ Also the exposure of my two books, *He Loves Me* and *So You Don't Want to Go To Church Anymore* in over a million copies of *The Shack*, has created a new wave of interest in both of those titles. It has also brought a number of new people to the resources of *Lifestream* and *The God Journey*. ♣ Jess Glasner, a sophomore at Westmont College is my new personal assistant for the summer. It is her voice you might hear when you call as she handles orders and other details for me. She is a godsend this summer, but we will be looking for a longer-term solution at summer's end. ♣ As part

of *BridgeBuilders*, Wayne has been invited to help moderate an initiative in Utah this fall to help identify principles for a more civil debate in American politics that seeks the common good rather than the self-interest of politicians. I know, the chances for success are slim, but I love that folks are trying. ♣ With all the changes going on in our lives it has given both Sara and me a lot of time to reflect on this incredible 14 year journey we have had as part of *Lifestream*. We are incredibly blessed by all the ways our lives by have been enriched by the people we've met and by watching this growing passion in the world live in Christ relationally. We will continue to work with *Lifestream* even as our time is shared with *Windblown*. May God lead us all by his grace!



BOOKS by Wayne

- **HE LOVES ME! Second Edition (\$12.00)**
- **SO YOU DON'T WANT TO GO TO CHURCH ANYMORE (\$12.00)**
- **AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS (\$12.00)**
- **THE NAKED CHURCH (CURRENTLY OUT OF PRINT)**
- **TALES OF THE VINE (\$10.00)**
- **THE SHACK (by William P. Young, in collaboration with Wayne) (\$15.00)**



CD COLLECTIONS by Wayne

- **HE LOVES ME! as read by Wayne Jacobsen** (4 CD set - \$16.00)
- **JAKE COLSEN Book as read by Wayne Jacobsen** (5CD set - \$20.00)
- **TRANSITION: From Religion to Relationship** (8 CD set - \$30.00)
- **LIFESTREAM SUPERDISC** - (All our Audio Collections in mp3 format on 1 CD - \$25.00)
- **THE GOD JOURNEY PODCAST Archive I & II** (2 CDs in mp3 format - \$12.00 each)
- **FINDING YOUR PLACE IN THE BODY** (4 CDs - \$16.00)
- **THE HEART OF RELATIONAL CHURCH LIFE** (CDs - \$16.00)
- **LETTING JESUS TAKE SHAPE IN YOU** (4 CDs - \$16.00)
- **THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX** (4 CDs - \$16.00)
- **THE SECURITY OF FATHER'S LOVE...** (CDs - \$16.00)

Please see our website for a complete list of CD collections

SHIPPING AND HANDLING
up to \$20 • \$3.50
\$20.01-\$50 • \$5.00
\$50.01 - \$100 • \$7.00
> \$100.01 • 6.5%

For credit card orders, priority mailing or volume discounts, please call our office. Sales tax will be added for California addresses.

**Lifestream Ministries • 7228 University Dr • Moorpark, CA 93021
(805) 529-1728 or email orders to office@lifestream.org**

it can have on you. It seems as if the institution will do anything to keep people from fellowship with Jesus and with one another because of its fear of losing control, even if lives will be destroyed.

Frances in Germany,

First of all, I just wanted to say a huge 'Thank You' to the Lord and you for having the Jake book published in German. I'm thrilled to bits. I have already recommended it to a friend who is on her way out of the box, in fact she rang me today to say that my contacting her with the link to the book was a huge encouragement. Secondly, we thought that we would end up helping other people who thought in the same way, to come together. We tried that over the last year, and it failed. I realised again, on a deeper level, from reading what you wrote, that Jesus is the way, and the path that He takes us on will look different from how he leads others. He'll bring us where he wants us to be in His time.

Check our website for more letters we couldn't fit here.



WAYNE'S SCHEDULE

- * June 6-8: Lengerich, Germany
- * June 9-10: Hannover, Germany
- * June 11-12: Nuremberg, Germany
- * June 13: Karlsruhe, Germany
- * June 14: Stuttgart, Germany
- * June 15: Bonn, Germany
- * June 16-17: Kaiserslautern, Germany
- * June 18-19: Zurich, Switzerland
- * June 20-25: Geneva, Switzerland
- * July 5-11: Orlando, Florida
- * July 11-13: Melbourne, FL
- * July 14-15: ICRS in Orlando, FL
- * August 22-25: Marquette, Michigan, Northern, Wisconsin, Duluth, MI (tentative)
- * September 6-7: Vineyard Pastors retreat in Cambria, CA
- * September 8-10: New York, NY
- * Septmber 19-20: Visalia, CA
- * November 21-23: Fresno, CA



(continued from page 6)

freedom to our lives that will lessen the financial burden at Lifestream and allow us to underwrite a lot of the free materials we make available to others. I am excited by that new reality.

We still deeply desire your prayers. There are many decisions and opportunities we'll be sorting through every day. Your financial support, however, we will not need in this season. With grateful hearts, we would encourage you to find others whom God might want to help through you—those in great need throughout the world and to others whose time you'd want to free up so they can help others be equipped in this journey.

In Other News...

This spring readers from Lifestream and listeners from The God Journey podcast gave over \$16,000.00 to help with relief in Kenya following the tribal conflicts spawned by the contested election. The need continues there for displaced families, if you would like to add to it! 🎧 The audio book for *The Shack* will be released at the end of June and will be available through Windblown Media (www.windblownmedia.com). Read by Roger Mueller, a well-known stage and television actor, this seven CD set will retail for \$27.99 🎧 We didn't see this coming either. Those reviewers and theologians who have challenged the theology of *The Shack*, some even calling it heresy, have opened a new conversation in the public arena. Who Is God Really? Is he a terrifying bully who wants us to cower in his presence, or he is the Abba Jesus invited us to connect with in love? I can't imagine a better discussion to debunk the bondages of organized religion. Even Sony



are frustrated at past attempts that haven't worked out. While I think we can take advantage of Internet forums, email lists and directories to see if we can find people in our area growing in the same realities, that may not be the best way. I now encourage people just to listen to Father every day and live in love toward the people right in front of you. This has worked for Sara and me in our two recent moves and has brought a wealth of relationships locally that have just grown out of taking an interest in the people around us and discovering others who are passionate for the God we love. We don't have to start or join anything for that, unless of course he asks us to.

I am more convinced than ever that every thing God wants to do in the world will flow from us learning to live in his love and listening to him as we walk through life. This allow the opportunities in our lives to grow organically, rather than through the artificial means of organizing, promoting, and manipulating others. That may be why he told us his new command would simply be to love like we've been loved. 🎧

I Couldn't Let You Go Through This Alone

Adapted from the Lifestream Blog

This may just be the essence of community: "I couldn't let you go through this alone." The first time I heard those words it was from a good friend who walked beside me through the most painful experience of my life. We had shared some wonderful times together, but then he withdrew for a season from our relationship. I was so blessed when we reconnected in the midst of

my trial.

One day I asked him why he had disappeared for so long. His answer? "I could see that you were going to get hurt badly and I just couldn't bear to watch it."

I understood his comment. He had been through something similar and I knew how painful it was for him to walk with me through mine. I laughed, "But you're here now at the worst of it."

"I know," he grimaced. "I couldn't let you go through this alone."

I don't know a better definition for community. It isn't always fun and games. Love will also not let people go through their darkest days alone. As painful as it may be to watch people we care about suffer, love won't let us be anywhere else.

I was reminded of that recently as I read *Tuesdays With Morrie* by Mitch Albom. It's an old book I've wanted to read for a long time. It's about a professor dying of ALS, and a former student who shows up for the last chapter of his life. It offers lessons from the brink of death and many of them are breathtaking. Even though this man was not a passionate believer, he'd come to believe some things that are pretty consistent with the life of Jesus:

"So many people walk around with meaningless life, they seem half a sleep, even when they are busy doing things,

“Love will also not let people go through their darkest days alone. As painful as it may be to watch people we care about suffer, love won't let us be anywhere else.

they think they are important, this is because they are chasing the wrong things, the way you get meaning in your life is to devote yourself to loving

others, devote yourself to your community around you and devote yourself to something that gives you purpose and meaning.”

And this: "Love wins. Love always

wins.”

I loved this book, enjoyed the lessons, but was most touched by this former student who would come and spend every Tuesday with his former professor in the last stages of his disease. He learned a lot, but also gave a lot—friendship on the brink of death.

“Compassion means “to run to suffering.”

At my brother’s funeral a number of years ago one of his best friends stood up at his funeral and said that he couldn’t bear to visit my brother as he suffered the final stages of multiple sclerosis. He wanted to remember him as he was, not in his weakened condition. When he was needed the most he couldn’t bear to go. How sad!

The meaning of compassion is right in the word itself: “come to passion”. Passion in the old English meant suffering. Thus compassion means “to run to suffering”—to be there at the worst moment because someone we love needs us. I love that. A good picture of this are the 9/11 rescue workers who were running into the World Trade Center when everyone else was trying to run out. Compassion means being there when it’s incredibly difficult, not because we enjoy the circumstances, but because we love the person in them.

No one enjoys walking people through dark valleys or through painful reactions, but love says, *I’ll be there for you. I may not know what to do or what to say. But I just can’t let you go through this alone!*

A Plea for Love From the Sudan

By Michele Perry

Michele Perry was born in Florida with only one leg. After getting involved in the house church movement for some years, she sensed God calling her two years ago

to the Sudan to care for children orphaned by violence. She rented a home and started taking in children. She now has 80 children she cares for around the clock and another 150 who come to her school each day. She also has an infectious passion for all things Jesus. You can find out more at: <http://www.changethewayy-ousee.org>. After she read a copy of SO YOU DON’T WANT TO GO

TO CHURCH ANYMORE she wrote me this email. Please hear her words. They are as direct from our Father’s heart as anything you’ll read:

My day got interrupted with your book! A long-time friend told me I should download it, which I did in the London airport on my way home back to the bush of Southern Sudan. Three weeks later I got caught up in your story and my tissue box became my friend. I am a simple little white, city girl from Florida who is now in Sudan taking in orphaned children.

I was really relieved when Jesus called me to move to Sudan out of the west. When I got here I realized it was ten times more religious than anything I have ever seen. Leaders who actually know Jesus estimate maybe only three percent of people here actually know Jesus, really. The spirit of religion is so strong it feels choking at times—totally empowered by a spirit of fear. It is only Jesus as He truly is and His life that will draw them. He is the only one that can fix this mess.

When I was in the simple church movement I came to realize I was training people how to plant churches so nicely they could do it with out God. We were reproducing another box in which we were trying to contain God and saying that our box was better than the other boxes. Now, after nearing two years in the war torn bush of central Africa I don’t really give a rip whether it is house church or legacy church or cell church or open church,

keeping, etc. What a relief! I was baptized when I was 7 but didn’t really trust Jesus for anything until 2002. But I’ve been doing that ever since. This past week has been the first week that I have been able to relax (not easy for me) and just sink into the truth that God really loves me and that I can’t do anything to make Him love me more or less.

Sylvia in Australia,

I have just finished reading *So You Don’t Want to Go To Church Anymore*. God has been doing a deep work in me as I have read a little each day. I will be off to Africa again in a few weeks to share the love of God again and see more lives transformed. A few months ago I asked God to bring me back to my first love again and He has done that in such an amazing way. Through the group on Lifestream Journey and listening to your audio messages, God has changed me again in a way that is so natural and real.

Holly by email

I Just finished reading *So You Don’t Want to Go To Church Anymore*. Thanks for making this book available online! Putting it in a conversational story line was very effective. I feel like I finally have a resource I can refer folks to when they can’t figure out how we see the church! It was so encouraging!

Leanne, British Columbia, Canada

I just had to write to you to let you know how your visit has impacted a number of people here. It was definitely an answer to prayer for us to meet you. I have read *The Shack* and I have listened to the *Transition* series. I am currently reading *He Loves Me* and I have read many articles from *BodyLife*. This is what I knew in my heart but I had not heard anyone articulate it as well as you do. I feel so free and nearly every day now I have a smile on my face that wasn’t there before. The more I relax and settle into God’s every day regular life with me more amazing things take place. Thank you for being a courageous, authentic follower of Jesus and for being willing to share with other people.

Dan in North Carolina

At some point in my journey I was becoming disillusioned with my local congregation and investigated home churches in my area. I talked with a couple of them but it just sounded like organized church done smaller and with less quality. That’s when I wandered across the Jake book. Since then Father has peeled away some additional layers of my own law based approach to Him and led me to remove all expectations from the local organization that we’re a part of. I now see it as a place to connect with other believers as Father leads.

Todd from Arizona

Just finished reading “so you don’t want to go to church anymore?” My curiosity was sparked after listening to your message on “The Father’s Affection.” I must say the book was a very enjoyable read. I’m sure you’ve had lots of feedback on how the book uncannily addressed questions that many believers and church leaders have had in their minds, but maybe never asked out loud. One thing that I did really appreciate was how you wrote about relational life, without being exclusivist or harsh. The book dripped with grace and it has awakened in me the desire to get much closer to the Father again.

Kevin in Nebraska

Becoming free in Christ, what could top that? It’s hard to hold things in when you are on cloud nine, you just have to tell someone! Wayne, a week ago, I didn’t know you existed. After reading your article on freedom, I went on a feeding frenzy and listened to a whole bunch of podcasts, and also the *Transitions* teachings. It was as if I asked the Lord for a bologna sandwich, and he gave me a slab of smoked ribs.

Dave from CA

I don’t know where to begin. I was so impressed by what you had to say in *BodyLife*. I have struggled with this issue for years and like you it was in front of us the whole time. Can’t tell you what a release I felt. It is so hard to move away from the institution and the hold

as I have always known them over the last 12 years. After plenty of “thanks, but no thank you” letters, I started experiencing some pretty significant depression and burnout. A lot of the church work positions that I came across read more like executive positions with a corporation instead of relational service within the body of Christ. Then I came across your website. In the midst of my burnout I began reading your blog postings as well as the Jake book. I laughed, shook my head, cried, and wondered, what on earth is God up to? Clearly I didn’t come across this by accident. While reading the Jake book, I really (was) confronted with the reality that “serving a machine” instead of God and his people is a very real problem. I feel a healthier expectancy replacing my cynicism and I’m much freer from trying to put God in the box of my own limited understanding and previous experiences. I’m coming to a place of reveling in God’s grace and love toward me... and my sense of thanksgiving is growing more and more.

David from Idaho

I just turned 52 and just finished the 8 *Transition* messages. I’m feeling like a babe in the woods, undone and unarmed. What a wonderful place to be—living loved, under an open heaven, asking daily our Father for direction. (This is) a birthday present that will be cherished forever. I once was an ordained pastor, but now a gratefully disillusioned free range believer.

Daniel in Ukraine

Thank you so much for writing this wonderful book *So You Don’t Want to Go to church Any-more!!!* I’ve just finished reading the Russian translation of the book and I’m going to listen to your podcasts. A lot of changes are coming into my life.

Kraig in Ohio

I was first exposed to you from a link to *Transitions* a friend sent me. After my first listen, I had to put it away for a while. It all sounded great and parts made my heart leap from my chest, but I needed to go to Father and make

sure I was not going to be “lead astray” with false teachings. After 3 weeks of prayer about it, I re-loaded it on my iPod and I have worked through it ten times and am now making my way thru your “everything” mp3 CD. I appreciate your willingness to speak truth.

Daphne in Australia

BY GEORGE, I THINK I’VE GOT IT! I have had some amazing things happen over the past few weeks and have an awareness of God’s love in a way I’ve never had. It didn’t come the way I expected it to (funny, that) but wow! I feel as though God put the thought in my mind, “I AM the God you think I AM.” I’ve been two years in the wilderness, listening to others journeys, wondering if I’ll get to the place they have and now can relate to all the things I’ve heard people say. Things about God’s love always struck my heart and I wanted to believe them but there was always this struggle between my head and my heart. Thanks to you and Brad for the lifeline you provided in my wilderness experience.

LaVerne in Ohio

What a wonderful series *Transitions* is! I have and am listening to it over and over. It is fresh air! It is windblown! It is revolutionary! I grew up Amish. I did everything religion required, I wore the right clothes, said the right things, testified correctly, combed my hair the right way, went on mission trips, taught Sunday school, prayed before meals, memorized chapters and books of scriptures, I even wore the color of shoes that was required (black). I did so much and it left me so tired!! All my life I have felt a pull to something more, something eternal, forever, beyond, a beckoning. Somehow I knew it was God, but never realized it could be a relationship with the Father. Your stuff is so rich, deep and right! I’m now 47 yrs. old and beginning to live loved! I have lived my entire life trying to find this.

Janet via email

Oh, Wayne, I thank Father for your book, *He Loves Me*. I’m 64 and finally know that Father loves me no matter what!!!! No record

a sitting room, a sanctuary or a stadium—if people are growing in Jesus, walking in love with one another and being the face of His love to the world around them.

I don’t want to have to figure out whether I should embrace, conform, reform or vacate the system. I don’t have the time. Other things are too precious. I just want to do what He is doing and love people. I don’t want to debate what is the right way to have church, because it all can become a box and a prison if not filled with His life. Why can’t we all just focus on Him and fall in love with Him and love the people around us?

I don’t want to figure it all out—I can’t. I was just holding a dying woman in my arms in the hospital here whose family will not feed her or help her because the stench of rotting flesh is too bad and she soils herself and people are arguing if they should meet in homes or buildings. Last week a blind woman saw, this week a woman lay dying in my arms. I cannot figure it out. I don’t even want to try anymore. If I can’t embrace His mystery and love Him beyond my little understanding, I will limit the place I give to His majesty to be revealed in and through my life.

Meet under a tree, rent a cathedral, go on a hike with your family- but love people—learn about love.

Learn of him.

Live in him.

Have an encounter in him.

Live in encounter with him.

Be his encounter to those around you.

That’s what he said to me last night. Can’t we just do that? I don’t have any answers or anything except a heart cry to love each person he sets in front of me and stay in his presence because

I love Him more than I love anything. He is my life.

Thank you for describing the One I love more than life, so beautifully and accurately. It means a lot. I met him face to face when I was seven and He walked into my room. I have read or heard very few who actually describe the One who captured my heart as a little girl.

You have! ☺

Jesus couldn’t have said it with any greater simplicity or clarity: “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:34-35)

Would we dare to believe that his instructions would really be all that we need to accomplish his purpose in the earth, influence the culture the way he desires, find freedom from our own failures and bondages, and find the fellowship that would most glorify him in the earth? I do.

The reason we don’t experience his fullness in our unfolding lives is because we live as if we are not loved. Fearful he won’t take care of us, we believe the lie that says God only helps those who help themselves. The most important thing we can discover is that the God of the Ages wants nothing more than for you to know him as the *Abba*—the tender

Father who wants to sweep you up in his arms and transform you by winning you to the simple reality that no one loves you more than he does.

This is not just an intellectual conclusion; it is a revelation at the core of our being. Ask him to give you that. Pray that he will show you with ever-increasing clarity how much affection he has for you. Only then can life truly unfold! ☺



LIFESTREAM
NEWS

A New Season for Lifestream

Because of the surprise success of *The Shack*, a little book two friends and I published in May 2007, God has opened a wide door for me to become more involved in publishing on a national stage. Understanding this to be his calling has not been easy for me. Three years ago I could not have asked for a more fulfilling life—writing, sharing and meeting with believers who were truly seeking to understand how a real friendship with Jesus plays out in their lives. I published my own things, traveled where God asked and was free to the simple things Father asked of me.

I was glad to be out of the so-called Christian publishing scene, having felt incredibly hampered by the constant pandering to a religious mentality deeply ingrained in Christianity-as-religion that is based on performance not grace, rules and rituals instead of vibrant relationship, exalting the trappings of institutions and leadership instead of the reality of the ever-present Christ, and turning the joy of community into an obligation to sit through meetings, rather than the irresistible opportunity to share the life of Jesus with other followers.



My involvement with *The Shack* has changed all of that. Now #1 on the NY Times Best Seller list and a growing phenomenon, my partner and I were courted this spring to partner with one of the

largest publishing houses in the world—the Hachette Book Group, which was formerly Time-Warner. They want to help us distribute *The Shack* in numbers that would have seriously taxed us, distribute my books to a wider audience, and allow us to bring in four to six new titles each year. They also want to help us build our imprint,

Windblown Media, to represent books of serious spiritual dialog about the God of the Bible, without having to compromise the message to pass muster with modern-day Pharisees.



So, we ended up with a publishing company and an opportunity to publish into that space and help other authors to do so as well. Honestly, no one saw this coming, but I am excited at the opportunity this affords in the next season of my life. More of my time each week will go to this publishing endeavor, and to help steward *The Shack* into a major motion picture.

What this means for Lifestream, is that I will have responsibilities that won't let me travel in this season as much as I have in recent years. I will continue blog updates and *The God Journey* podcasts to help encourage others on this incredible adventure. If you want to keep up with me, those are probably the best ways to do it since these *BodyLife* newsletters will become fewer and farther between. Eventually we'll discontinue mailing them and only post the content on-line.

We will still maintain our passion to see people connect with the ever-present Jesus—seeing him transform their lives and raising up fresh expressions of the life of his church that will pulsate with his life and share his love with our culture. In fact, I will just have a bigger stage on which to facilitate that conversation. Please keep us in prayer as Father leads you. The doors are wide, but so are the challenges and the conflict from those who want to label us as heretics and keep the Body of Christ captive to the efforts of men. This should be a wild ride.

With that in mind, let me express my thanks to those of you who have over many years been a source of support for Sara and me, that freed up our time to help others without any thought of financial consideration. Also please know that this new venture brings some significant financial

(continued on page 10)



SHARING THE
JOURNEY

Rose via email

I have read and have bought boxes of your books and have watched the lives of people around me change—actually mostly my own with the love of God. All my life I have felt the love of God surround me and yet did not know how to express it and what a joy to discover you have the gift of putting into words what I feel. One of my friends read *Why I Don't Go to Church Anymore* and her comment was “I am being undone” I realised that our concepts and our systems have “done” us and kept us involved with the tyranny of self because we are taught condemnation and self doubt and never enough about Father's love.

Peter in Australia

These past few days my wife and I have been walking around like tranced zombies. Why? Well we have separate iPods and each loaded (and now listened to) the entire Transition series, plus 5 podcasts (so far). We have been walking around the house bumping into each other, generally oblivious to our surroundings as we feast on this stuff. I recall the many discussions with my son (who past away last July) when he would attack the hypocrisy of “religion”. I would refuse to defend it, pointing instead to Jesus Christ. “Yes” he would say, “but you are the only one who thinks that way”. Wayne, at times I was honestly afraid he was right. It is just such a blessing and comfort to discover that we are not on our own, but that there are many out there who “get it” too.

Chad in North Carolina

Hello 'Jake Colson'! I am very thankful that God allowed this book to come across my path. For the past two weeks I have not wanted to put it down! And literally with tears welling up in my eyes I finished it minutes ago. I'm not much of a bookworm, so for a book to have connected with me in such an

emotional manner shows me the validity of your words! I have to say that God did convict me of wanting to read your work more than His, but sometimes I see that can mean reading a fictional book by two guys who are truly seeking His love. Your words articulated so accurately what I have been feeling!

Eunah in S. Korea

A few days ago I read your book, *So You Don't Want to Go to Church Anymore*. It was a very exciting story, and made me reflect on my behavior as a long-time Christian. I have been standardized by the frame of religion and lost the true joy and love of Jesus (I was) originally taught. There are so many Christians in Korea, but we are losing our spiritual influence on our culture and nation. Christians are panicked by hostile circumstances and I believe your book could provide an answer for us.

Amy in California

Can I just tell you that this whole journey is changing me? We took my cousin and his girlfriend out for dinner the other night and it felt so good just to be with them as people and not feel guilty for talking “church” (they are not followers of Christ) with them. Just loving on them was so freeing, and trusting that God will use us in His way in their lives and resting in the fact that He is bigger than anything we could coerce. Lastly, that Jake book doesn't pull any punches! Masterpiece!! Wow.

Dave in Montana

This new found and totally awesome life we are living with Father, Jesus and Holy Spirit is the most amazing adventure I have ever been on. Thank you so much for releasing me that one dark night in my pickup on the way back to our home from our meeting. What you told me was just the beginning, but so profound, and so right. And just the act of speaking permission to me that it was OK to quit trying, opened the floodgates.

Todd from Arizona

I had been hitting it pretty hard this last year, looking for full-time work in ‘church’ settings