

# **Stepping Out**

## *A Journey of the Soul*

**Kim Laliberte**



# Stepping Out – A Journey of the Soul

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# INTRODUCTION

*“There isn’t a need for more books. The world needs more books written by people who have been with God.” -- Allen Arnold, Ransomed Heart Ministries*

I love Walter Mitty. His story resonates with me. In the movie, *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*, an ordinary man is the personification of a boring, uninteresting life. He is a man who is misunderstood, mistreated, ignored and almost invisible. When the “ping” to the girl of his dreams on social media fails to respond, even his geeky social media support guy feels sorry for him, suspecting a client who really has no life! *“Well, have ya done anything? Been anywhere?”*

Mitty spends most of his days in the basement of a major magazine he works for. His job as the magazine’s photograph librarian is to catalog and protect the fruit of other people’s dreams, people who actually are living out their fantasies. Mitty adopts these fantasies as his own, living his life through them. He has no life, no story. Or so it seems!

But, in truth, *everybody* has a story. Mitty’s is lived out in his fantasy dream-life where the hero easily conquers every hardship. Every person who has ever looked askance at him or failed to see him somehow begins to see him for the hero he is and, of course, in the end, the hero always gets the girl.

When the most important photograph of his career is lost, Mitty is propelled on a journey to find the photographer, enabling him to actually *live out* the adventures he has only imagined. In the midst of the journey, he learns how to live life outside of the basement.

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To my way of thinking, I have just described the Christian life. I saw in this movie the great adventure God desires to call each of us to experience. Unlike Mitty, who goes on the journey alone, we can move forward knowing we are never alone! Through this movie I was moved to evaluate my own life in the “basement.” And I wanted more. Jesus said in *John 10:10*, “*The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy; I came that they [His sheep] might have life, and might have it abundantly.*”

In some ways, I cannot relate to Mitty’s empty life because I have a good life. I have been a believer since I was a teenager and have loved Jesus and served Him faithfully. I’ve had many opportunities to teach, speak, and lead others using the gifts He has blessed me with. Where I can relate to Mitty is his desire for *more* in his life. This is reflected in my life journal which I’ve kept since age fifteen. It contains many statements like, “*What IS the abundant life Jesus is talking about? Is this it? Or is there more?*”

Over the past several years, I have begun to explore the possibility of *more* – the adventure of walking *with* Him, not just doing things *for* Him, pondering questions like, “*Why haven’t I experienced more joy, more miracles, more of everything His Word promises? Why wasn’t I experiencing life outside the basement that others seemed to be enjoying? Why was I experiencing so few miracles in my life while the Bible states we should expect many (a lot more)? What was missing?*”

It turns out I was missing one very small piece in my thinking. It was something hidden in plain view that I had read many times in the Bible over the years but had somehow missed. It was the first part of *John 10:10*, “*The thief only comes to steal, kill and destroy...*” I don’t remember ever reading it until recently – and *that*, for me, was the missing piece to the un-lived abundant life! As I began to search out the *whole meaning* of *John 10:10*, I began to see there was a reason I was still in the basement and not living the abundant life Jesus was actually calling me to live. Many believers get stuck here too. Our inability to experience “more” is due to things in our souls we are not

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aware of. Things that, like weeds masking as healthy plants, are buried in the soul. We are not aware of them, believing instead lies like, *This is just how I am; this characteristic is part of my make-up; I'm not that way!* This book will help expose those hidden areas so you can receive healing.

I write for (and in some ways from) the frozen soul. There are those of you who, like me, sit in church Sunday after Sunday, enjoying the sermon, liking the worship, loving the people but then walking out with a deep unsettledness, thinking: *"Is this it? Isn't there more?"*

One of the most important lessons I learned was that I was to be *a part of* the battle. I thought that when I became a Christian, God was going to fight my battles and I could just wait on the sidelines while He showed up and solved things. *That is NOT the believer's walk!* As I grew, I learned that He has gone before me and has already secured the victory. He gives me the weapons to go in and take the victory, leading the way and fighting alongside me. That is a different way of seeing for me. He *does* fight my battles, but it is with His strength and power in and through me. It was as I *stepped up* that change began to happen. It is a completely different way of living the Christian life! As I did these things, my life began to shift and change. I began to see and to experience freedom. I wasn't afraid. I knew who I was and I knew Whose I was. That has made all the difference! And that journey is the basis of this book.

What catapulted me on the journey occurred during a time when I, without even being aware of it, stepped out of Jesus' footsteps and went my own way. There are two ways of looking at "stepping out". Some writers speak of stepping out as positive and faith-challenging such as when Peter stepped out of the boat to get to Jesus. (Matthew 14:28) I speak at it from a different perspective. We are called to follow in Jesus' footsteps. When we step out of those footsteps, it speaks of being in disobedience and, from my perspective, sin. That is how I saw my journey described in Part One of this book. Part

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Two of the book chronicles how God led me back, teaching me strategies and weapons of war. In the midst I experienced deep joy, peace and freedom that I had rarely experienced prior to this time. In this book I plan to give you as many of the tools as I have learned during that time to use in your own life.

This book begins with salvation. From there we will journey straight on through life into what it means to walk in Jesus' footsteps and we will learn to recognize what life outside the footsteps looks like.

This book may present some challenges to you in terms of how you see the Christian life. Many of my own beliefs were challenged as I walked this journey. We might explore things you disagree with. Some subjects may rub against your long-held beliefs. It is up to you how you choose to respond. For me, some of my long-held beliefs needed to change to get soul healing. I had to move outside of my comfort zone to get answers. I had to throw myself on God's mercy, and surrender what I thought I knew and believed to be sacred truth. I had to become solely dependent on God's Spirit and His Word to reveal the truth that I did not see or understand so I could obtain freedom. I am not a scholar. I do not claim to be a theologian, and I do not claim to be correct in every way. I am just telling you my story and how God began to heal me.

I will use my painful story of sin, blindness and disobedience as a teachable example. We will explore the concepts of forgiveness, pride, repentance, cleansing, obedience and more. By using my life and my journey as a template, I will show you how the enemy sneaks in to try and steal our birthright in Christ; how he legally gains the right to harass us; how he seeks to kill, steal and destroy what God has given us.

We will look at several Bible passages and many stories. Each time, I will ask you to stop reading this book and pick up the Bible. I am asking you to read each passage as though you have never seen it before. Be open to a fresh Word from Him. His Word is more important than reading *this* book. *That* Book is where change comes



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from. I may also ask you to ponder and interact with the passage to see how it speaks to your own life. There is a companion study guide available to help you interact more fully with the principles in this book. At several points in the book I stop and ask you to write out what you see, think or feel.

I will share with you the *weapons of war* that I am learning from the Scriptures and from other believers who are farther along in this journey than I am. We will use the microscopic lens to examine some Bible passages that have shifted the way I live and see. Together, as we unpack my story, I'll help you unpack yours so that you will gain insight into your true calling in Christ.

If you are expecting a dramatic story of an outward fall and restoration, where my sin is “out there” for all to see, you will be disappointed. You will not find it here. My story is of the inner journey, the wounded and frozen heart. That is the more common one among believers who have known Him or served a long time. I speak to leaders, considered strong in the faith by some, giants of the faith by others. I speak to all of you who are on the journey, especially to you Jacobs (Genesis 32:26) who will not let God go until He blesses you with freedom and wholeness. I speak to all of you who want “more” – a deeper walk with Jesus.

### Questions to Think About Before You Begin

Before we begin the journey, let me ask you some questions, some of which I hope to explore with you in this book. I invite you to ponder, pray and consider how your soul would answer:

- Assuming you believe that God has more for your life than you are experiencing right now, why do you think you are not experiencing it?
- Are you feeling stuck in your walk with God, frustrated, unfulfilled or have a vague dissatisfaction with living the Christian life the way you have been?

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- Are you willing to open and expose your heart to God's Spirit so He can reveal to heal, even if it is painful and challenging?
- Are you desperate enough to take the plunge if you knew God wanted to deliver you from negative thinking, life in the basement, lies, brokenness and things that keep you down?
- Are you willing to let go of deep, long-held thinking patterns, such as: *everything depends on you, you are alone on the journey, God does not care about the things that concern you, He does not speak or answer your prayers, or He does not really love you?*
- Would you be willing to go where God's Spirit leads even if it is outside of your personal comfort zone?
- Do you really believe Jesus can rescue you and restore to you what the enemy has stolen from you?
- Are you willing, if God reveals through His Word, to let go of some doctrines and beliefs that are not working for you?
- Are you willing to learn how to pray differently, seek differently, and follow differently, if He calls you to it?
- Are you willing to move off the sidelines into the game if God calls you to join Him there?

These are some of the hard questions I have I had to ask in my own life. The answers I came up with pretty much rearranged my life, changing everything! I cannot tell you if this book will help heal your brokenness or not. Making the changes talked about in this book is up to you working in cooperation with God's Holy Spirit, Who resides in you.

I have come from the place of believing God did not love me enough to do these things *for me*, to the place of seeing and experiencing His deep love for me and freedom in my soul that I never believed

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possible. I will walk this journey with you to help you see and experience His love for *you*.

When you get to the end of this book, my hope and prayer is that you will see this book as written by someone who has been with God. I deeply desire for you to walk deeper with Him. I'm not "there" yet. I'm on the journey too. I'm just, as the old saying goes, "one beggar sharing bread with another."

It will be wholly a work of God's Word through the Spirit of Jesus resonating in your own soul and calling you. You can trust me that the Word of God is wholly better than anything I can say. But you must be willing to **Do. The. Work....** as He leads you.

We are all part of the unfinished story. So, are you ready to step out of the basement? Let's move!

Kim Laliberte

San Diego, CA  
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### Primary References

In the writing of this book there are several helps references I used often. I am grateful for:

*The Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* – William D. Mounce

*Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* – W.E. Vine

*Expository Dictionary of Bible Words* – Lawrence O. Richards

*Unger's Bible Dictionary* – Merrill F. Unger

The series by Spiro Zodhaite, Th.D: *The Complete WordStudy Old Testament* and *The Complete WordStudy New Testament*

The series by Spiro Zodhaite, Th.D: *The Complete WordStudy Dictionary of the Old Testament* and *The Complete WordStudy Dictionary of the New Testament*

# *Part One: Stepping Out – How We Step Out of Jesus' Footsteps*

*“The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and  
destroy; I came that they might have life, and  
might have it abundantly.” -- John 10:10*



## *Chapter 1. You were Meant for More*

*“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” -- John 10:10b (NKJ)*

*“Over the margins of life comes a whisper, a faint call, a premonition of richer living which we know we are passing by. Strained by the very mad pace of our daily outer burdens, we are further strained by an inward uneasiness, because we have hints that there is a way of life vastly richer and deeper than all this hurried existence, a life of unhurried serenity and peace and power.” -- Thomas Kelly, A Testament of Devotion*

### **Looking for Life in All the Wrong Places**

She carried the answer with her the whole time but she did not know it. The power to go home was available to Dorothy during every part of her journey to Oz but she was clueless on activating it. She spent most of her time in Oz seeking the wrong solution. When the house dropped on the Wicked Witch of the West, the Ruby Slippers became Dorothy's. The only warning she received was never to take them off for they, *“must be very powerful if her sister wants them so badly.”* It was not until the very end of the journey, when the Wizard failed her and sailed away without her that Dorothy learned the truth: the Ruby Slippers were the key to getting home all along.

This story is not unlike some who trudge through the Christian life wondering why there is no power in their own life when the Bible is full of promises of overcoming power, joy, victory and a promise of abundant life. I know that feeling. I have been there. Perhaps you have too. But I am going to tell you right up front that there is more.

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There *is* victory. There *is* joy. There is much, much more to this life than we have ever dreamed possible. The Bible says we are overcomers, not we can become or we might be overcomers. Emphatically, we *are* who He says we are and we need to learn how to live in that victory. Like Dorothy's power to go home, the power to live it has been within you from the moment you invited Jesus Christ into your life.

You were meant for this – abundant living. That is what Jesus said: “*I have come that you might have life and that you might have life more abundantly*”. If you are like me, you ascribe to the adage, “*God said it; I believe it; that settles it.*” Okay, that's settled, so why am I not experiencing it? I have explored this concept over the years, wondering about it myself. Because of the pain of separation I was experiencing from God, I began a desperate search for a way back. Surprisingly, after poking around in some dusty books that have been sitting on the library shelf for years, I think I have some ideas about it. What I found was not what I expected.

I bought into the preaching and testimonies that told me when I came to Christ I would have an abundant life full of peace, joy, and love. It was more of a lifestyle of what He could do for me rather than who He is. And, to some extent, I have experienced all that and more. But honestly, I have always had a sneaking suspicion that there really *was* more than I was experiencing. I wanted *more of Jesus*, not just a better life on the outside. I wanted a deeper walk, more fullness, more depth, more Spirit. I was greedy with desire for more abundance and more of Him in my life. I knew I was meant for more but I did not know how to find it. And I am not alone. As I have talked with people and spoken to groups at churches, retreats and luncheons, I have repeatedly heard the cry for more. People were asking me the same questions I was asking God and myself.

As I am writing this, I have on my desk a list of nineteen people who are studying my *Acts Project* book. I asked the leader to send me a list with one prayer request from each person: “*I want to be led by the*



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*Spirit.*” “*I want to be closer to God.*” “*I want to hear Him more.*” “*I desire a deeper relationship with Him.*” “*I want to love Him more.*” “*I want to heed Him when He calls.*” Yep! I’m not the only one. So, what does it mean, this promise called *abundant living*?

### Let the Bible Explain It

I think the best place to start is by looking at the parable or story where Jesus’ actual words are used. Before I do this, however, I want to encourage you to go to the actual Scriptures to read the verses I write about. *Those are the inspired words. Those are the words that can change you forever. My words can only lead you to the well. You have to choose to drink from its healing waters.* And every time I ask you to read a passage, I want you to stop and pray. Ask the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Jesus), Who is our Teacher, our Guide and the One who leads us into all truth, to speak to your soul. Even if you think you have not heard anything, I want you to exercise faith and believe that His Word never comes back empty and will at some point take root (Isaiah 55:11-12). We will explore the concept of why the words of the Bible fail to take root in your soul at a later point in the book.

According to William Hendriksen<sup>1</sup>, a parable is “*an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.*” In John 10:1-18 we encounter the parable of the Good Shepherd. Listeners in Jesus’ day understood sheep and shepherds since it was common to see shepherds herding their sheep into and out of the fold (sheep pen), heading toward green pastures for rest and restoration. Let’s stop here and read the parable found in John 10:1-18.

In telling the parable, Jesus spoke of robbers and thieves who do not enter into the sheepfold by way of the door, but some other means (John 10:1). It is interesting and, of course, significant that Jesus distinguishes between robbers and thieves. A *thief* is one who comes in by stealth to steal a treasure. The Greek word is *kleptes*. We get the word “kleptomaniac” from this root word. A *robber* (Greek *lestes*)<sup>2</sup> is one who creates rebellion or insurrection.

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So we learn that the thief comes to steal by stealth and the robber comes to stir up the sheep to rebel against the shepherd. Jesus was speaking to (and about) the Pharisees and leaders of the day, but there are always layered meanings to the stories in the Scripture, which make the words timeless and applicable to every life in every generation. We will look at this concept in more depth later in the book, but for now, think about this from the concept of the enemy sneaking in to our lives, trying to steal what is ours through faith, and attempting to incite us to rebel (commit sin, step out of Jesus' footsteps) against the Shepherd.

Jesus, in further explaining the parable, tells His listeners that He is the Door by which the sheep enter (10:9) *and* those who choose to go in through the Door will be saved and find pasture. Jesus is the Door to every blessing in the believer's life. Every opportunity God gives us comes from walking in His way, through His Door. Think job opportunity, living situation, promotion, ministry opportunity, healing. We also learn from this parable that Jesus is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep (10:11). Between verses nine and eleven comes a verse that most believers have heard, most certainly taken out of context, and may not understand fully. That group included me.

Let's look carefully at John 10:10. We're going to get to the first part of that verse later, but for now let's just look at the second part, "*I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*"

- "I have come that they [His children] might *have*..." The Greek word *have* is *Echo*. It means, "To have; to hold on to; to wear; to possess." <sup>3</sup> With those possible meanings in mind, read John 10:10 again using some of those definitions. What do you see? "*I came that you might hold on to...*" "*I came that you might wear...*" "*I came that you might possess...*" What does this say to you about how you *have* abundant life? What would it look like in your life?

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- “I have come that they might have *life*...” The Greek word *life* in this passage is *Zoe*. It means “life in the spirit and soul.” It does not mean *physical life* (the Greek word *bios*). *Zoe* expresses all the highest and best that Christ is and which He gives to His own. It means life at the very highest level! This is a new approach for me. The abundant life Jesus meant for us to have takes place in the spirit and soul!<sup>4</sup> It does not say, “*I will never get fired from my job, I’ll never have pain or problems, I’ll never experience financial loss, physical loss, I’ll never suffer.*” It says I will have abundance in my soul and spirit and that abundance will help me stand firm in other areas. Beloved, abundant living comes out of the soul. When the soul is healthy, the rest of life is in balance, and we experience abundance or more in all areas of life. **That’s different!**
- Finally, let’s look at the last word, *abundant*. You will like this one. In the Greek it means, “superabundantly, over and above, extraordinary.” It means, “*Spiritual blessings greater than any that have ever been communicated to man; all of the super-added things to make life blessed and happy.*”<sup>5</sup>

You and I are called to live out life at the very highest level! If we are missing out on experiencing life with these wondrous adjectives, we may be missing out on the best part of the believer’s life!

Let’s put it all together: “*I Jesus have come that you might possess, hold on to, wear life in the soul and spirit so that when your spirit and soul are healthy, you will experience all the highest and best which I give to My own; and that you will experience an extraordinary, overflowing, over and above spiritual life, greater than you have ever experienced.*” Wow. I’m in!

Here is the problem I experienced: I was looking for and expecting to live a victorious physical external, successful life on the outside

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without considering the necessity of having to care for the inner life of the soul and spirit.

The Scripture teaches that our lives are made of body, soul and spirit. There is a division among scholars whether we are *bipartite* which means body and soul (which includes the spirit) as two parts or *tripartite* which means body, soul and spirit, three parts. We don't need to get into this issue here. It is not an issue that should divide the believing community. I personally, through my own study, believe we are body, soul and spirit. (*Hebrews 4:12*)

Our spirit is where the Holy Spirit takes up residence when we put our faith in Christ. It is from there that we commune with Christ. It is His base of operation from which He begins the transformation of the soul. The soul consists of our mind, will and emotions – the part where sanctification occurs. It is where the 'becoming like Him' takes place. Craig von Busek explains that, "...*soul and spirit are mysteriously tied together and make up what the Scriptures call the heart.*"<sup>6</sup>

The key to understanding why you are not experiencing the abundant life is to understand that the soul is not automatically changed the moment you accept Christ. Traumas, wounds, hurts and things from the past do not just disappear. Remember all the baggage we bring with us? It is resident in the soul. Over time, as we receive more freedom, our minds are renewed and our souls are freed. The body is sort of like our outerwear. It clothes our soul and spirit.

Our souls are a vast, uncharted continent waiting to be explored. Our involvement with God's story, which comes from the depths of our soul and spirit, is the ultimate reason for life. God wants to take us on a journey to the interior. On this sanctification journey there will be mountains and valleys, peaks and rivers, beauty and badlands, and we will explore them with One in Whose footsteps we seek to walk. We will walk with One who has already been there and experienced all there is to know and more. Your journey will be different from mine and every other person who has ever lived. No two journeys are ever alike, just as no two snowflakes are never exactly the same.

## You were Meant for More

Throughout my life, I have been and still am seeking God's healing in my soul from the wounds, pain and traumas of life that kept me down. But my definition of *abundant living* was skewed and I think a lot of us get stuck right here. I needed to pay attention to the soul and spirit first and, out of caring for that, the rest would follow. Do you see?

It is easier to see what life *outside* the footsteps of Jesus looks like when you understand this concept of what living *in* the footsteps of Jesus looks like. Kingdom Living is a work from the inside out. Jesus says in Matthew 6:33, "*But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you.*" My first book, The Call to Follow Jesus, Studies in the Gospel of Mark, explains it this way: "*A kingdom implies a ruler whose will is the rule of the kingdom. It's that simple. Either He is in charge as He lives out His rule in me, or I am in charge and set up my own kingdom in opposition to His.*"<sup>7</sup> A simple way to understand this concept is to ask yourself, "*Am I in the Christian life because of what God can do for me to make my life better or am I on this journey because of who Jesus is and what He did for me on the Cross?*"

In the next chapter we will consider three lifestyles of the believer to help us begin to unravel more about life in the soul. There is so much abundance and healing to be had!

