

## Make a difference – leave a mark:

While talking to my mother the other day about her up and coming book (*Find cash in your kitchen*) she said to me, "I'll be happy if just one person is blessed during these rough times because of its contents." I tried to encourage her by saying that even though she may never know if anyone were to be blessed by her book she should rest assured that God made this endeavor possible and that He would see to it that it got into the hands of the people that needed its knowledge and wisdom. I went on to tell her that she should be proud of herself for her dedication, diligence and more importantly, her obedience to Him.

This led me to remember when I wrote my first book back in 2005. Two years later, when my family and I had moved to Georgia, I received an email from an address I did not recognize. Almost deleting it, I still felt a nudge in my heart to open it. I am so glad I did. It is as follows:

*Michelle,*

*I am a 44-year-old single mother of two boys, ages 12 and 8 (soon to be 9). I have been a Christian for 15 years. However, even having made the decision to invite Christ into my heart to be my Savior and Lord, I still struggle with feelings of loneliness and depression. Most people would never guess this about me as I have become good at hiding behind a smile or my humor. But I have grown weary of that. I have become more transparent in recent years, particularly the past 5. But there is still so much stored and hidden in darkness deep within my soul that I know is keeping me from being free. I know God can't use me the way He intends with so many "secrets."*

*This morning, with my boys with their dad at his house, I didn't even want to get out of bed. There is much that I could be doing around the house, a walk that could be taken, a book that could be read, Scriptures that could be studied, prayers that could be offered, etc. But I feel empty inside. Isn't that strange how when we're actually so full of "yuk" and "gunk" in our souls that we feel the emptiest? And that not until we empty our souls of that stuff and are set free do we actually feel full?*

*I have experienced brief intervals of "fullness" of life and love but grasp hold of the familiar past of insecurity and unworthiness. The enemy has a way of deceiving us, and I know this, but I struggle with breaking free from his lies and his strongholds. How can someone who was graduated summa cum laude be so ignorant that she continues to stay trapped in a cycle of despair?*

*Today, before I sat down to pay bills and clean house, I felt compelled to come to the computer and type "God, can you hear me?" on my yahoo search engine. A page immediately popped up with a child's book entitled "God, can you hear me?" and halfway down the page your book "God, are you listening?" appeared. I double clicked and sat and listened to the song. Then I clicked on the audio of your radio broadcast. **Then I read all the comments from those who have read your book. And, without having read the book or having ever heard of it before this morning, I feel inspired to do something about my pain. I feel inspired to be transparent and be set free. I just don't know how.***

*I have no idea if you'll actually receive this message, Michelle, but I know that God intended me to log on today and to discover you and your book. God has blessed me with so much talent and ability, including a passion for speaking to and teaching people and a passion for writing, that perhaps He is preparing me to unveil my secrets. I am afraid, though, because of rejection that I have suffered in recent days for confessing a sin publicly. I think, "What could people do if they got hold of all of my dirt?"*

*I am ready to be healed, inside and out. I hope to wipe my tears today and get the courage to go out and buy your book. Meanwhile, if you read this, will you pray for me? I want to be whole and to spend the rest of my days here on earth filled with peace and restoration so that I can fulfill God's purpose for me.*

*I'm glad to have heard your voice today and to have landed on your website.*

*Love,*

*Angela from Indianapolis*

I sent Angela a personally signed copy of my book. I still drop her an email everytime the Lord brings her to my mind and I pray for her often. You see, you never know when you have the opportunity to make a difference in someone else's life. Sometimes you do it without even realizing it- simply by taking a stand, a leap of faith. You may NEVER become aware of it, but the person will know for their life may be dramatically changed forever.

That is the message I wanted to convey to my mother that day and also want to share with each and every person who reads this. I encourage you today to step out, to make a difference, to leave a mark...for that is truly wherein the blessing lies.

*~ c. michelle bryant is a freelance writer and the author of the devotional God, are you listening?*