



# THE *Able* LIFE

Stories of ordinary people in the Carmel family cultivating lives which abide in Christ to build relationships and live the Gospel with everything.

**SUMMER 2020**

## UNEXPECTED HEARTWORK

### *The Story of Rachel Hendrick's Psalms Project*

Through His Word, God works in our lives... He acknowledges our emotions, He heals our wounds and He transforms our hearts. This was true for David 2,000 years ago as he wrote much of the Book of Psalms and it is true today for each one of us, including Rachel Hendrick, who has been a part of the Carmel family since last summer.

Rachel's heart transformation was refueled on a January morning in 2018, when God planted a seed in her heart to add art into her study of the Book of Psalms. What seemed like a "whim" was God moving in a mighty way to work in the hearts of many.

Over the next year and a half, Rachel followed a pattern of reading, studying, painting and pausing. Rachel was drawn to the authenticity of David's emotional and honest prayers to God. Here was the "man after God's own heart" freely sharing a wide range of emotions including praise, joy, anger, jealousy, confusion, depression, peace and trust. These same words and emotions were still applicable to her life today. Rachel saw God at work in her heart - revealing to her that He knew she was, and would, face highs and lows in her life and that He wanted her to share them with Him.



*For the word of God  
is living and active,  
sharper than any two-  
edged sword, piercing  
to the division of soul and  
of spirit, of joints and of  
marrow, and discerning  
the thoughts and  
intentions of the heart.  
- Hebrews 4:12*

As she and her husband faced the pressures of life during this time of study - *paying off student loan debt, purchasing a home, hosting international students, finding a church home and navigating job changes* - it was clear that His Word was living and active in her life. She saw the verses in Psalms afresh, speaking to her in new ways, changing and molding her heart and expressing themselves in her art. Each piece of art that came from her study of Psalms contained a verse which she *"paired with an abstract painting to show how our lives and hearts are messy and free-flowing, not filled with definitive lines and shapes. BUT they also all include gold or copper leafing as a symbol of God, who is always present and there in our mountain high and valley lows."*

Rachel wanted to share her artwork with others - confident they would be impacted by His Word too. But it did not start out exactly as she planned. But God was not done with Rachel or her artwork or working in the hearts of others...



At a time of discouragement, she decided to take her artwork to a local vendor market. While there she met a woman who read through each piece slowly and deliberately... and she wanted more! It was clear to Rachel that this woman had been touched by His Words - of both praise and hardship. God's Word was actively speaking to this woman right in front of Rachel's eyes. It was the encouragement she needed to keep going.

From there Rachel finished her study of all 150 chapters and was repeatedly encouraged to put the pieces together in a book. Rachel laughed at this idea - it was WAY out of her comfort zone. With God's continuous and kind nudging, Rachel began to research a book option...and *The Psalms Project* was born.

BUT how was she supposed to pay for this? It certainly wasn't in the budget! Rachel's heart had been transformed by God's Word and she knew others would be impacted too SO with fully open hands, she began a Kickstarter campaign. She prayed, *"God if you want this book to happen, You will have to fund it. I cannot afford to pay for this, but I know You can."* God showed Himself faithful by exceeding the funding goal and doing so by reaching across borders into 6 countries. It was clear that God had a plan to use Rachel's "heartwork" to transform others' hearts. Rachel shares, *"God takes advantage of our obedient hearts and makes the most of the plans He has for us... more than we can ever imagine. We just have to stay faithful and obedient."*





Each time Rachel reviews Psalms or looks at the project book she is reminded of His sovereignty, might, and power. When she faces anxiety, depression or feelings of helplessness she remembers that He already knows these emotions and how to address them. They are real to Him and so is Rachel.

The Psalms remind Rachel:

- He knows we are going to feel emotions - He created us *and* them
- He is with us in it
- We can still praise Him in the lows

*Mercy Creates*, Rachel's company, is now sharing *The Psalms Project* with others - reminding us that when you don't know what to say, you will never go wrong with God's Word. And it is His Word that transforms and comforts our hearts. When this transformation happens it is our personal artwork.

### What are Rachel's Favorite Pieces?



*God sets the lonely in families* - Psalm 68:6

At a time of loneliness in her life, Rachel found an amazing connection with a group of senior ladies through a knitting club. These women cared for her and her husband through the ups and downs of life. They became family for her here in Charlotte! God knew what she needed and provided it in a beautiful way - a way only He could!

*Our God comes and will not be silent* - Psalm 50:3

God is never silent, He is not in the background of our lives just hanging around and waiting on us. He is actively at work. He may choose various ways to speak to us, but He is not silent. He is a powerful and all-consuming God. Just listen and obey.



See Rachel's amazing gifting on display at [mercycreates.com](http://mercycreates.com).



Carmel is committed to making disciples of those Nearest, our Neighbors and the Nations.

1145 Pineville-Matthews Road / Matthews, NC 28105 / 704.847.8575 / [carmelbaptist.org](http://carmelbaptist.org)