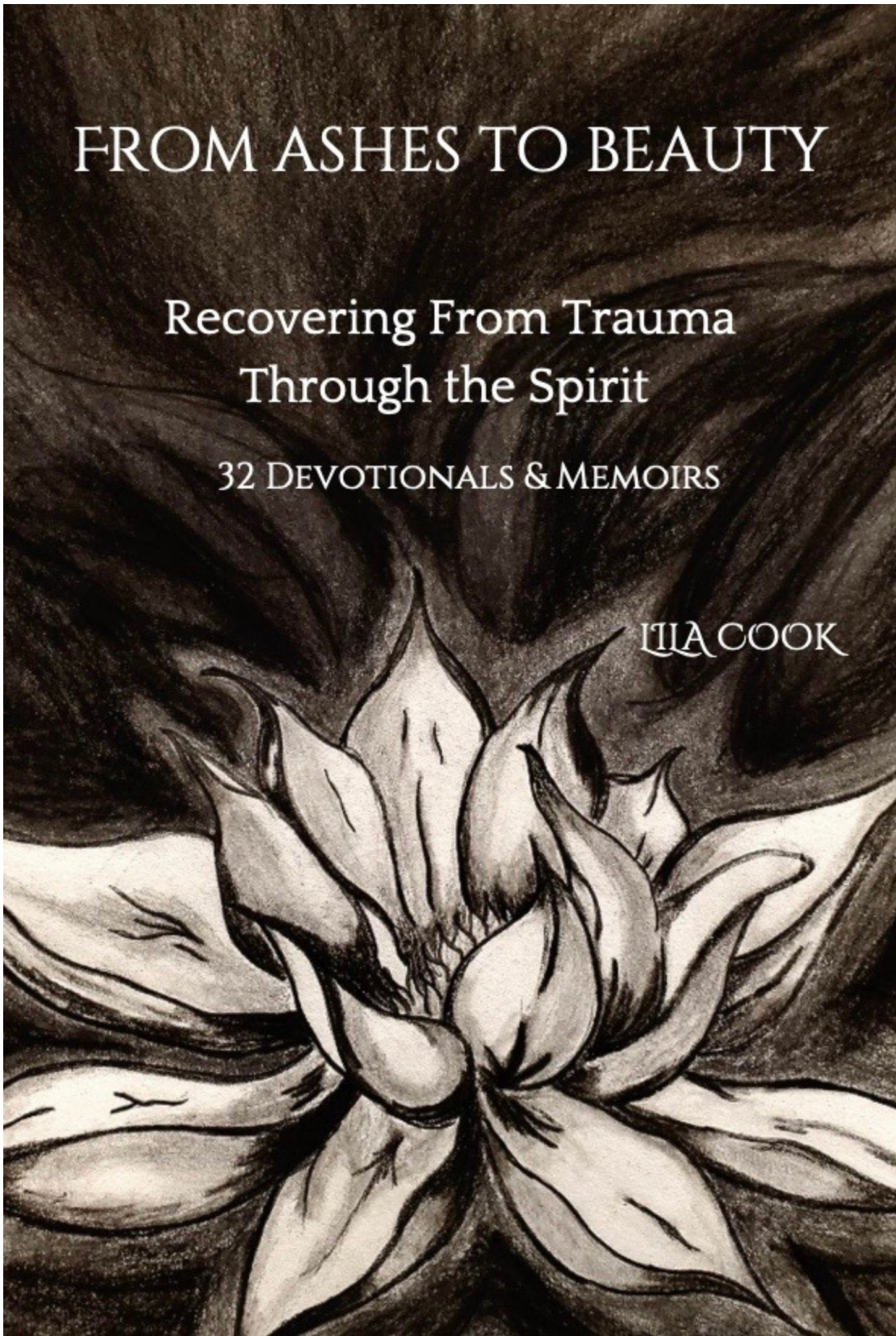


FROM ASHES TO BEAUTY

Recovering From Trauma
Through the Spirit

32 DEVOTIONALS & MEMOIRS

LIA COOK



Knowing God's True Nature

Scripture

John 4:16 (NIV)

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

Discussion

Knowing God and understanding his nature is key to enjoying a face-to-face relationship with him. Many people know *about* God, but not everyone understands his true character. Scripture makes the point that God IS love. The terms “Love and God” are used interchangeably. Because you have love within you, you live in God, and he lives in you! The fact that God is within you is Love's/God's response to his creation. Abba adores what he has created, and he longs for a relationship with you. Love never fails.

Memoir

Though I was introduced to the church at the age of four years old, I Still, did not grasp the concept that God loved me without conditions. I struggled through mid- adulthood without understanding Father's true nature. I viewed God as my judge and someone I had to please to make it to eternity. I was continually searching for Abba's approval, desperate to know him personally. During my adult years, I began to look to Father for a revelation of his love and grace. His love overwhelmed me because love never fails!

Prayer

Father, I bring your beautiful creation before you and I pray over them, that their eyes be opened to your generous mercy and your unconditional love for them.

Song from YouTube

God Really Loves Us: Crowder & Dante Bowe.

Chosen Before Time Began

Scripture

Ephesians 1:4 (NIV)

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight

11 Timothy 1:9 (NIV)

He has saved us and called us to a holy life - not because of anything we've done, but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time

Discussion

Imagine! You were chosen in Christ BEFORE you were born and even BEFORE the foundations of the earth. You can not work your way or earn your way into God's grace. Rather, it is a free gift to you, and it is manifested through the finished work of the cross in Christ.

Memoir

When I learned that we had all been in God's plans from the beginning of time, I felt self-worth and God's approval for the first time in my life. My life, up to that point, had no purpose except for the pain I had endured. Knowing that God thought of me before the beginning of time brought the security that I had always longed for throughout my entire life!

Prayer

Abba, thank you for extending your grace and favor unto me. Not because of anything I can do or I have done, but through what Jesus has done. I'm grateful that you chose me before the beginning of time! God called me to live a holy and blameless life. I realize that I can't live this life holy and blameless on my own. This lifestyle can only be accomplished IN Christ Jesus and through his grace. Scripture points out that this is Abba's choosing. This has nothing to do with my works, as you have chosen me before the foundations of this world, and by your grace, I will live a holy life.

Song/YouTube

The One You Love: Chandler Moore

Alive in Christ; Dead to Sin

Scripture

Romans 6: 10-11 (Mirror Bible)

(10) His appointment with death was once off (once and for all). As far as sin is concerned, he is dead. The reason for his death was to take away the *sin of the world*; his LIFE NOW exhibits OUR union with the life of God.

(11) This reasoning is equally relevant to you. Calculate the cross; there can only be one logical conclusion: he died your death: that means you died to sin, and are NOW ALIVE to God. Sin-consciousness can never again feature in your future! You are in Christ; his lordship is the authority of this union.

Discussion

You may be experiencing feelings of being unworthy and you may be sin-conscious and you may believe your nature is under the law of sin and death. Now that you have awakened, you know that you died in Christ, and have been resurrected with him, sin has no dominion over you. God's grace and love do not give us a license to sin, as some believe. Just the opposite is true. The indwelling of Christ living in you causes you to lose the desire to sin or to be sin-conscious. Your entire focus will be on the grace and love God has for you. You are in him, and he is in you! He is yours, and you are his!

Memoir

For most of my life, I felt I was unworthy of my salvation! In fact, I was unsure of my salvation. I also carried a great deal of shame in my heart because of the continuous condemnation I was under from my environment growing up and because of religious teachings of being sin conscious. What I learned later in my life was that Jesus took care of sin once and for all on the cross! When he died, our sinful nature died with him; when he rose, we also rose with him as a new creation! No more condemnation.

Prayer

Father, thank you that your son's work on the cross was sufficient to destroy the power of sin and death (the law). Help me to realize that this is in nothing I can do or have done; rather, the destruction of sin (the law) was finished in the work of Jesus on the cross. Show me your unconditional love and grace over me through your Spirit. Make me aware of my rightful position in you through the final sacrifice of Jesus.

Song/YouTube

Resurrection Power: Chris Tomlin

The Peace of God Over Anxiety and Fear

Scripture

Phillipians 4: 6 -7 (NKJV)

(6) Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be known to God.

(7) And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Discussion

Most often, anxiety is rooted in fear. Fear of not knowing an outcome, fear of what the future holds, fear of how you will survive, fear for your health, and fear of death. Basically, fear of the unknown. Fear and anxiety are not of God because fear has torment, and we have already established that God is love. The perfect love of God sends fear running! If you will closely examine your fears and anxieties, you will discover that much of what you fear and are anxious over comes from your own human thoughts and never comes to pass! That is why we must take our worries to Jesus through the Spirit and bypass our human thoughts. We must put on the mind of Christ!

Memoir

I spent the majority of my life, especially my younger years, filled with anxiety and fear. I believe much of the anxiety was a result of living in an abusive home. I spent my energy attempting to avoid family conflict and not knowing what traumatic event would occur next. This was so incredibly draining and unhealthy because most of my time was spent in a fight or flight mode. It resulted in years of being physically ill and fatigued. Once I learned I could put matters into God's care, the anxiety and fear lifted. I learned to trust again because I finally understood that Abba was reliable and dependable and that I could trust him with my deepest concerns! I learned to have the mind of Christ!

Prayer

Jesus, I bring everything to you in prayer. I know you are approachable, and I know you love me and care for me. I also know that you care about all that concerns me. I'm not imposing upon you when I take everything that worries me to you in prayer. Thank you for giving me your peace, which is beyond my understanding. Help me to think of what you think and say about me,

Song/YouTube

Fear Is Not My Future: Brandon Lake & Chandler Moore

FROM ASHES TO BEAUTY

Continue the Journey

This preview includes a selection from Lila Cook's collection of 32 devotionals and memoirs exploring the Father's love, healing, and restoration.

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