

Finding Your Purpose by Following Your Heart, Heaven Talk



January 3, 2015

Ezekiel: How are you? (to Clare)

Clare: (laughs) A little frazzled from trying to get this room together. We're going to get a real studio going here pretty soon.

Ezekiel: All right!

Clare: It's only taken us three hours to set up for this! Well, tonight I just want to mention that we have people who've been writing in to us who feel very lost right now. They need direction for their life. We've been praying about it and I really felt the Holy Spirit nudging me this morning to do a "Heaven Talk" on this subject, so we can give you some things to consider. And the reason why is because I think both of us have found our life path and are very happy in the ministry that the Lord has given us, and the life that He's given us. BUT, He sure writes straight with crooked lines! (laughs)

Ezekiel: It takes a while!

Clare: Oh my gosh! It's only been, basically, 30 years. Ah, 22 years, 24 years of following Him. Someone wrote us and asked us for a word for the New Year, and I wrote back to them and said "Follow your heart." And that's what this is all about, because Jesus dwells in our heart. And if we listen to the movement of the Lord in our heart, then we can't go wrong. If He tells us what direction we're going and how it's going to end, we tend to try to engineer the path ourselves. But rather than that, He tells us little bits at a time. And He asks us to be lovingly obedient. Sometimes it looks like we're going nowhere and doing nothing, and sometimes that is the most productive time in our lives. And I think that you'd agree with me, maybe, that contentment and peace are really key.

Ezekiel: Yes, that's a good indicator.

Clare: OK, so I'm going to ask you some questions.

Ezekiel: It's interview time.

Clare: So, how long have you been a Christian?

Ezekiel: Oh, gosh, almost 30-something years.

Clare: OK. So, when did you begin to feel deeply dissatisfied with your life?

Ezekiel: Well, you know, I came to the Lord in 1985, I was about 25 years old, something like that. I had the honeymoon thing, like we always do, for a good year - maybe two years. But after having worked in ministry: inner-city and mission work, and also living in Christian community settings, I just felt that

there was something more. I really longed for a deeper, more intimate walk with the Lord, as much as ministry, if not more so.

Clare: Yeah, I know that you were in ministry for a while before we met. Was that deeply satisfying for you? Did you feel that that was your path and you were fulfilling something?

Ezekiel: Well, you know, it was at the time. I think if I look at it, it's almost like there are phases.

Clare: Yeah.

Ezekiel: This was like the born-again experience and the afterglow and the first days, weeks and months and few years of ministry. As a singer, and songwriter, visiting different churches and outreaches - gosh, I was on top of the world! I could sing my heart out to the Lord and try to draw people into that relationship with Him.

Clare: And I have to say, you really did a wonderful job with that. I remember in Arkansas when he would come up and sing a song, I was always so glad! Because we were checking out the Catholic Church at the time, and he would come during the Offertory and sing a song, and the anointing was so strong. I felt the Lord so strongly - it was beautiful. In fact, I started praying for you then, just as a brother, praying for you that you would find a way to be in full-time ministry instead of having to - I guess you were working for the Health Department?

Ezekiel: That's a good point to bring up - yeah, you know we don't always, as you know, just jump right into the mission field or ministry or whatever. But we kind of have to make our tents along the way, especially when we first get started. So it's like an IBM shirt and tie one day and then on my time off and weekends, I'd just kind of have my mission duds on or whatever.

Clare: So, that was a phase and that's the "write straight with crooked lines" part - that was a phase. I remember you began, even in that position, you were feeling dissatisfied with your life. You felt like there was more.

Ezekiel: Yeah, again, not only did I want to be in full-time, full-time ministry - I wanted to be in full-time, full-time fellowship with the Lord.

Clare: In love with Him full-time!

Ezekiel: I wanted to spend more time with Him.

Clare: Without distraction - yeah.

Ezekiel: Without having to stop for this and be interrupted by that. I really wanted some "tuck in" time.

Clare: And you felt that in your heart, you felt that drawing you in your heart.

Ezekiel: Yeah, deeply.

Clare: It's interesting, because when we got married, he tried six ways from Sunday, however you say it,

to get a job, to do some kind of work to bring money in. And the Lord simply would not open a door for him. The Lord would not allow it. He didn't want to really do it, but then he did want to do it. So, then he'd make his best effort to get a job, but the Lord would always snafu it somehow.

Ezekiel: And yet, ministry opportunities began to come in more and more themselves. By the kindness of good hearts, we were able to live a simple life, but a contented life. Peaceful life.

Clare: Yeah. So how would you say the Lord guided you during that time? To make a decision? For instance, when we finally got together - because, I had absolutely no interest in my brother other than helping him with his career in music or with his ministry in music. I had my own things going on that I was doing. But there came a time, after about two years, that the Lord called us to be together.

Ezekiel: Yeah.

Clare: And He opened our eyes. We didn't know for a long time - we were just friends. But, when you kind of made the plunge, because you had to leave your old life behind. How were you guided in doing that?

Ezekiel: Well first of all, the break from the church body, typical church body, and friends, family, whatever, the familiar - the Lord began to really... it's interesting - to begin to call me, like He called Ezekiel. By name! And I didn't put two and two together for a few years. But I remember every day, every morning and every night, He would give me some instruction from the Scriptures. "Son of Man, do this, do that" . . . Ezekiel was a prophet of signs and the Lord would tell him "lay on your side for this many days" or "cut your whiskers and run through them with a sword" or whatever, you know. And I remember the last day, I knew the Lord was calling me to leave, and family, friends and church family can be V-E-R-Y L-O-V-I-N-G. (Holds himself in extremely tight, take-your-breath-away hug). To the point of NOT-LET-GO loving.

Clare: Right.

Ezekiel: And even scandalized - the demons get in there. "What's he running from?" "What's she doing?" You know, weird stuff.

Clare: It was a radical move, believe me, and in front of the whole community.

Ezekiel: The Saturday night, before the Sunday when I left, I remember one thing I did. I just took a little short walk down the road and back. And I thought, "I wonder what it's like to take nothing for the journey?" And I had a couple dollars in my pocket, and I just took them out and threw them away. I just pitched them!

Clare: Well, before you did that though, after Mass ended you walked out . . .

Ezekiel: I was going to say, that night the Lord gave me a Scripture from Ezekiel "*Son of man, cut a hole in the wall and walk through it as they are looking on.*" And I just knew, somehow He gave me an understanding that I was to go to the service the next morning, play the music. When everything was finished after communion time and toward the ending prayer, literally just walk out in the midst of them. And normally people would say "Hey, Brother, how you doing?" and people want to chitchat and

whatever. And I remember, it was almost like a holy numbness that was over me.

Clare: Yeah.

Ezekiel: I got up from my seat, I walked down the center aisle. Just like I was floating almost. And walked right to the back of the church. And I remember different people . . . (reaching out with arm) "Brother, brother, oh hi." And it was like - I just couldn't greet anyone along the way so to speak.

Clare: Yeah, yeah. Greet no one along the way.

Ezekiel: I had to just - I felt compelled to just keep walking. And I didn't know really, I thought maybe I'd just walk to Mexico or something. I had no idea! Never done anything like this in my life. Left my house, left my car, left my job. Left everything. Sent the notice in later, whatever. But just literally, left.

Clare: That was huge, that was like diving off of a canyon wall. And hoping you landed in very deep water, very deep pool of water.

Ezekiel: And I gotta admit - you know, I was walking down this road. And I remember one last person in the parking lot "Brother, what are you doing?" and I said, "Just doing what the Lord said. I'm just walking!" Everybody thought I'd gone loop-de-loop nuts.

But I'm walking down the road, and she and I had been friends for a couple of years. Brother and sister. But even she didn't know what was going on. I'm probably a couple of miles up the road and I hear this car kind of come up behind and ease off to the shoulder.

I hear this soft voice "Brother? Brother, are you OK?"

And I look over and I said "Yeah, I guess so."

"Well, what are you doing?"

I said, "Well I'm walking."

"Where you walking to?"

"I don't know, the Lord just told me to walk."

And she said, "Well, can you take a ride?"

And I said, "Sure."

And we ended out going to the Buffalo River National Park and got some ice cream on the way. And I didn't know it, but the Lord had told her to get a little room ready down the hill from where they lived. I mean, this is "hillbilly" Arkansas. Ozark Mountains.

Clare: Dogpatch, Arkansas

Ezekiel: Li'l Abner stuff.

Clare: Can anything good come from Dogpatch? (both laugh)

Ezekiel: You know, I go to see this little shop she has with sawdust floors and trees and all this . . .

Clare: The rocks cry out.

Ezekiel: All this Christian art and painting and weaving . .

Clare: Photography

Ezekiel: And she says, "Let me show you something". I walked into this beautifully swept little hermitage room, like a little room in a little cabin, kind of off to the back and the side. Wood stove, floor neatly swept, neatly made little bed, little wash basin, little table, and a simple cross on the wall. And I just saw this and thought, "Oh, this is all I wanted. Just a place where I could tuck in and be with You, Lord."

Well of course, time went on and it was funny - I started having dreams at night about my Sister, as a friend, you know. And in the dreams, she would seem a little friendlier than friend. And I would wake up and "In the name of Jesus, that's my sister! Go away!"

So, I'd try to stay there and be faithful to the Lord. I figured I'd be an old . . . who knows!

Clare: Be leaving for Mexico.

Ezekiel: I didn't know! I just figured - I had no inkling. Our dads, her brothers, her sisters, whoever - they kind of flip out and wonder, "Well, what are you doing and where are you going? Are you going to have insurance?" I didn't know, I just wanted the Lord and I didn't care about anything else at that point. You know, either these words are true in these Scriptures and I'm going to go for it... or I'm not. Because I had begun to feel insulated and lukewarm and too comfortable.

Clare: Too comfortable. Yeah. And then there was, I think you mentioned, there was a sense of something really missing in your life. Some kind of depth, really, really missing. Even as a Christian - I mean... here you're a Christian, you know the Lord, you're writing beautiful, intimate songs about the Lord, but still there was a . . .

Ezekiel: There was a deep calling unto deep. I mean, there was something that I couldn't explain. I knew a lot of it was wrapped up in the Song of Solomon. The Song of Songs - that deep, intimate spousal relationship with the Lord. I know that might sound strange for men, but there was - I know that the Lord created us out of love. Love gives itself away by its nature. But it wants to be returned and received.

Clare: Yeah.

Ezekiel: And many of you know what it's like to love the Lord so much you just wish you could meld together and just be one with Him somehow. And I wanted that, I needed that, I couldn't live without it. I knew I couldn't survive without it.

Clare: And his secular job was an environment that was against that and the secular job really got in the way of that calling. That deep calling unto deep in his heart. And you know, this is one of the things I'm going to say is super important in discovering who you are in the Lord and what your mission is. There has to be a relentless commitment to following your heart and to following the Lord, no matter what the cost. The Scriptures even say: anyone who's not willing to leave behind mother, father, brother, sister, children, whatever - if you're not willing to leave that behind for the Lord's call, then you're not worthy of Him.

People really thought you were nuts, after you'd made that decision, but the call was really strong in your heart. Did you have a peace about it?

Ezekiel: I had a deep peace - in fact, God bless him, the pastor even came out within three days - begged and pleaded, argued and yelled - I mean, he really was going after this lost sheep. I had such a deep peace, that once again, the Lord had given me a Scripture early that morning "When it is heaped upon him, he will sit in silence". And I thought, boy, there's a storm coming - I just knew that the pastor was coming and that I was gonna get it.

Clare: Yeah.

Ezekiel: And through that whole haranguing, I just was able to keep my peace and my quiet. That doesn't mean when he left, I didn't break down and cry to the Lord.

Clare: Yeah.

Ezekiel: But even with that, I still had a peace. I knew I was where I was supposed to be, doing what I was supposed to do. But it was a radical break and a move, and it probably did look freaky to people.

Clare: Yeah, absolutely!

Ezekiel: I couldn't worry about that.

Clare: Right.

Ezekiel: I had to have my heart, mind and eyes on the Lord. In fact, I'm convinced the reason He brought us together is that she had her heart and mind and eyes on Him, and had for years, and so did I. And our paths just naturally kind of converged because we weren't looking for a spouse - we were looking for Him, and He brought us together in Him.

Clare: Yeah, and that's another point that I want to make in our quest for the mission that God has for us. Again, we don't want to try to second guess the Lord and jump ahead of Him, looking for a spouse or whatever. The little obedience's, the little things: where to live, what area you're supposed to live in. What church are you supposed to go to. If the Lord asks you to move and He puts a yearning in your heart... I was in Phoenix at the time, and He put a yearning in my heart to go to Arkansas, that was near a Christian community that had been an inspiration to me. I made that change, I left behind everything in Phoenix and I moved on. There was little step - well, it was a big step - but it was a little step if you look at the whole journey, it's really long.

Then there came a point in time, and it seems that the Lord gave you a word about bringing the factions of the church together?

Ezekiel: Yeah.

Clare: Unity.

Ezekiel: He really - through a series of visions and dreams, and just deep inner speaking of the Lord - I really felt like He was asking to bring the broken parts of His body together. In fact, it was interesting, because looking back, we had a cross that had the image of Jesus on it - like a crucifix. And it kept falling and breaking. One time it was a hand, another time it was an arm, another time it was the legs. Once the... it was almost like the head. It was like the body, the image of Jesus on the Cross, kept falling somehow and breaking. Parts were breaking - it just wouldn't stay together. It was weird. We thought it was demonic at first, until we started to get the message. Wow, the Body is pulling apart from itself.

Clare: Yeah, yeah. It's fractured and divided. The calling was on both of our lives. At that point, I was supporting him in his ministry and we were singing together and traveling together. Then there came a time when the Lord called you to put up the music, for a reason. You want to explain?

Ezekiel: Yeah, well, uh . . .

Clare: Oh, and this was a direction, that one of those crooked lines that seemed totally out of whack with what we thought we were supposed to be doing, right? But there came a time when the Lord really switched gears on us and He asked you to put your music away for a season.

Ezekiel: Yeah, that was a big one. And I remember - I began to just lose any inspiration for singing, writing, playing music. I just lost my heart for it. I thought, "Man, what's wrong with me? What's going on?" But at the same time, I was feeling yet again, a deeper pull to prayer, and to time. It's almost like, when He talks in the Scripture, I can't tell you exactly where it is, but through the prophet, He says "Come away - I'll draw her away to the desert and there I'll speak to her heart."

Clare: Yeah, yeah.

Ezekiel: It's the same type of thing as "Be still and know that I am God." This was more than spend an hour instead of twenty minutes with your coffee. We were traveling in an RV bus across country and had finally settled into an area here in New Mexico, and I began to see "Wow, that was a real part of my identity." And this troubadour for the Lord and all a sudden, I didn't have any identity at all except in Him. But that was OK, because I didn't want anything but Him at that point, you know.

Clare: Yeah. Well, and you know sometimes people can look at you and see you as a thing. A clever musician. An interesting couple. And they get their eyes off the Lord. And that's not what we wanted.

Ezekiel: I remember He spoke to me one night in particular before putting away the music, and He said, "*You're stealing My Bride.*" And I thought, "What? Stealing Your Bride? That's all I want is to bring Your Bride to You." And at that time we'd show up at churches and we'd always face the people and play. And from that moment, I thought "Oh, my gosh - I don't want them looking at me, or us." Oooh, that guitar, oh this, that. So, we began to turn our side to people and face the pulpit or the sanctuary, whatever.

And people would be like - "What are they looking at when they're singing?" We're looking at the Lord - we're not looking at the congregation anymore. And it wasn't too, too long after that that He had me put it away altogether for a season.

Clare: Mmmhmmm

Ezekiel: A long season, actually.

Clare: Yeah, yeah. So, that was another one of those crooked lines that we were talking about. It was important in our formation to be able to serve Him, to lay that down.

Ezekiel: And to be honest, I didn't know it, but the Lord was preparing me through that to raise Clare up into a ministry in her own right, through her own gifts and talents, and at the age of what, 57?

Clare: 58, He gave me music.

Ezekiel: She picked up music - I gave her a little mandolin and an open tuning. And she'd sit there by the hour and plunk and plink. And that led to a cello, which led to a harp, which led to a beautiful keyboard. She started writing this beautiful music. Recording it and all this stuff was coming out of her.

In the meantime, I'm just like blah. No inspiration. No nothing. And I finally got it again: 'Duh! Oh, I'm supposed to support her, I guess, and be her covering and her underpinning.' And I was feeling called deeply into prayer anyway. And I was really happy at that point. I mean, I might do a few background vocals for you, or a little guitar here and there, but it was pretty rare. I just wanted to put a little trim here and there if I was needed. But most of the time, I was out of the picture. And that was OK!

Clare: Yeah, the crazy part is, our styles are different.

Ezekiel: Very different!

Clare: It would be so nice if they weren't, but they are you know.

Ezekiel: Yeah, it's all right!

Clare: And we could fill in for each other sometimes, but basically it's not really easy to do that because our styles are so different.

Ezekiel: Yeah.

Clare: There was something I was wanting to say . . . oh, well, you know, so in the beginning for the first few years, I supported you in your ministry.

Ezekiel: Right, right.

Clare: And nothing was really important to me except raising my children and supporting you in your ministry.

Ezekiel: Well, you had a Christian bookstore, remember, which we talked about, you remember. And she had to shut that thing down, pack up whatever books, and get on the road with me almost overnight. I mean, that was laying a lot on the altar. To follow this man across the country who the Lord was bringing this relationship closer and closer. We were married soon after - probably within several weeks after that.

Clare: Yeah, that's right.

Ezekiel: But she had to lay a lot down to support me, and get behind me. I never knew what it was like to have someone put a cup of coffee in front of me or have my clothes pressed and ready, and my guitar ready and everything just so - so all I had to do was just be with the Lord, be prepared and just show up and let Him do hopefully what He was going to do.

Clare: Yeah.

Ezekiel: That was a real blessing.

Clare: And it was really wonderful for me, because I could feel that I was backing him up. And some couples would look at that and say "Well, what about you?" About me was, I was finding my joy in serving him and supporting him in what he was called to do. And that's another point of obedience. This was the obvious thing for me to do - was to be there for you. And that's what I'd been praying for - I was praying that you could come into your ministry with your music.

Ezekiel: Plus, the bottom line was, our hearts were still for the Lord and to bring people closer to the Lord and helping Him. And I tell you, we weren't just - lalala - playing music in church and traveling. Sometimes we were washing dishes in a homeless shelters. I think there were a couple of times we stayed overnight in some places like that. But, you know, whatever we could do to help. Whatever the Lord wanted to do in that moment.

Clare: And we also went on the odyssey of cross-pollenating churches, and being pollenated in the Orthodox church. We learned a lot about the Eastern Christian church.

Ezekiel: Eastern as in . . .

Clare: Eastern Orthodox

Ezekiel: Normally Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox. But also many, many Christians in Eastern Europe, from the Middle East. Man, I had no idea we had so many brothers and sisters and uncles and aunts and cousins.

Clare: And some swingin' black churches.

Ezekiel: Oh my gosh! (They both laugh)

Clare: That was fun!!

Ezekiel: The red velvet chairs and the organ playing and the bass, (pretends to play bass guitar).

Clare: Evangelist Ezekiel!

Ezekiel: Evangelist Ezekiel is gonna talk to us today! The church mother would be up there testifying. Oooooee, don't be making no change in that plate!

Clare: And the beautiful part is, any legalism that was in our hearts or in our spirits, the Lord just erased it.

Ezekiel: Cut it, flushed it.

Clare: Because we could see the people loved the Lord. We could feel the presence of the Lord in all these different environments.

Ezekiel: And all the judgments went out the window with things that we thought that we knew.

Clare: No room for judgments.

Ezekiel: Things that we thought that we had heard.

Clare: Right, right.

Ezekiel: Get up and swim around in the Body a little bit. Wow, it's amazing. And while you're learning and seeing this beautiful Body, some of you might rub off on them, too. The Lord will work both ways.

Clare: Yeah. And we had a lot of judgments, and a lot of opinions and a lot of ideas. And part of our formation was following this crooked line of going into different churches and traveling and visiting people and just sharing the Lord with them. It opened our eyes; it opened our hearts.

Ezekiel: Right. Not that it was all lollipop, lalala either, because it wasn't always easy. Sometimes there were some differences. We call it the three-day-old sock syndrome. Once you show up somewhere, at first, oh, it's all wonderful! Second day, it's OK. By the third day the people start to want to know, start digging. "What do you really believe? Where are you from? What kind of background?"

So, regardless some edges start to rub, some holy abrasion. And sometimes it's wonderful and you go and you mingle and you have the right hand of fellowship. Sometimes you get the left boot of fellowship, and that can be real painful. But you learn not to quit it. And I tell you, the beauty for me, is after years of this now coming into areas where people really hang in there over the long run, and don't just walk away. We were surprised and amazed that certain churches, and certain people in churches in certain areas, actually didn't just bounce you off the wall, or accept you like you were candy in cake. But really hung in there and told you the real truth when you needed to hear it, and would stick around for the uncomfortable things.

Clare: So, you know the point I want to make here is that if we had gotten our mind on a musical, Christian musician career, we would have totally missed what the Lord wanted to do.

Ezekiel: Yeah.

Clare: And this is part of those little bitty steps of obedience and following what He wants us to do, even though it doesn't make sense. But it's in our hearts - we can feel it in our hearts and Scripture readings confirm it. And in prayer, the Lord speaks to us and tells us different things. And He doesn't tell us exactly where we're going to end up, but He does tell us what our next step is. If we're not willing to lay down our agenda of the Christian musician, traveling Christian musician, getting recordings out and things like that, if we're not willing to lay all that down, then we're going to miss the wholeness the Lord is trying to create in us to give us the depth that He wants. I mean, He spent a good 23 years preparing us for the ministry that we are just coming into now.

Ezekiel: Oh yeah, easily!

Clare: And tucking us away a lot, you know. And exposing us to different cultures.

Ezekiel: And one point that I'd like to make is, so - you're listening to this Youtube session of Heaven Talk and you're thinking "Well, how does that apply to me, I'm not a Christian musician? I'm don't travel." But, have you had some kind of a change in your life? Do some doors seem to have been closing? Or have you had a restlessness? Could the Lord be asking you to take a step in faith? Maybe it doesn't all look guaranteed and it doesn't all look easy. Maybe it looks hard! But what's worth the peace that you're really looking for and the happiness, contentment and fulfillment that you really have always longed for. And you're probably going to have to spend some time with the Lord and tell Him "Well, Lord, show me my heart. Show me what my gifts and talents are, or what the desires of my heart really are!"

Clare: Yeah.

Ezekiel: And He will.

Clare: And the thing is, you cannot have your eyes on your agenda. What you think you want to do with your life. This is where it gets hard because, the Christian community that you're associated with... or the people that you know are looking at you and saying "What are you doing with your life? You're just wandering here and wandering there. It doesn't make any sense. Why don't you get a job, or settle down in a church."

Ezekiel: You might not always get the pats on the back, you know.

Clare: Well, yeah. I mean there's a lot of scrutiny when you're not putting out a gross national product. The GNP of a Christian is personal holiness. It's holiness and love for the Lord. It's not albums that have been produced and are out, and books that have been written and book signings and appearances here and there. That's not what it's about. There's no sense of worldly accomplishment when you're following the Lord. Rarely is there that sense of worldly accomplishment. If you get your eyes on that, you've missed it. And you'll start tweaking your life to wrap around what's going to please other people and entertain them.

Ezekiel: Right. Your position in a church, or what you like, what you'd hoped to be. The prayer group leader. The such and such ministry. Or the deacon or this thing, or that thing. Who knows? But what does the Lord want? What's He say.

Clare: Right.

Ezekiel: Plus, not the voices (I can't tell you the freedom in being able to cut those leashes that pull this way and that way) the voices of the past: the mothers, the fathers, the uncles, the aunts, the cousins, the brothers, the sisters, the friends, the associates and the church.

Clare: Expectations! Everyone's got an expectation on what you should do.

Ezekiel: Some can be supportive and helpful, but . .

Clare: That's rare! (laughs)

Ezekiel: But be careful!

Clare: But your heart is tugging you in one direction for the Lord and it doesn't make sense to people on the outside. So, if you're trying to please man and to accumulate credits and look good to the world, you're never going to find the path that the Lord has for you. You have to be willing to be hidden sometimes, be willing to be passed over.

Ezekiel: Right.

Clare: Be willing to be of no account. Be willing to be called a failure. You have to be willing to be rejected. And that's one of those things I talk about in the Bridal relationship. The Bride has always got a crown of thorns. If you look at her life, you're going to find there's a crown of thorns in her life. And she has to resemble the Groom. The Lord is looking for a mate that resembles Him.

Ezekiel: There's always a cup to drink. There's always a chalice that you're offered. You know, "Shall I not drink the cup that's offered me?"

Clare: Yeah.

Ezekiel: So to speak. And again yeah, there're joys. There're all those things. He said, "No one who's given up all these things won't receive many houses and farms and fields and children and lands, and all these possessions. And persecution, besides. Life eternal.

Clare: Yes, yes.

Ezekiel: Persecution besides. You know, one thing I thought about when you said, "keeping our eyes on the Lord" - a little light went off. I think we need to keep our ears on the Lord, not just our eyes, but our ears. Because you've got all the voices telling you what to do and the voices in your own head - your dad or your teacher or your coaches - who knows who or what? And I think it's important to put blinders on the ear gate as much as on the eye gate. Wouldn't you say?

Clare: Oh yeah. The tyranny of memories. You know, memories of failures in the past. You can't be daunted or guided by anything other than the present moment, what the Lord is saying to you in your heart. The reason that we wanted to share this with you is that we both feel that we've come into exactly what the Lord wants us to do. And we can see all of the formation that He's taken the time to do in the

past 23 years. He's taken us in so many different directions. We weren't expecting to be landing in the place that we're in. But, we're fulfilled and we're deeper than we were when we began.

Ezekiel: And that doesn't mean we've arrived!

Clare: Oh NO! (laughs) That's not happening.

Ezekiel: Who knows... within another 5 months to 5 years, if He tarries, you know! Who knows what He's going to do? But I'll tell you this much, there's a deeper peace than there's ever been before and a contentment and a real happiness and a joy, a gentle joy, a deep joy. It's almost like if you took a bucket, and you put it... maybe 2/3 or 1/2 filled... and you put it in the ocean. And you watch, kind of just go. And it'll get tossed here or there. But if you filled that thing 3/4 of the way up, more substantially, it will take those waves a lot easier, because it's deep and it's full. It's not going to get tossed about as much. But it takes time to fill up.

Clare: Yeah.

Ezekiel: It takes time. And there may need to be - there probably will need to be some healing along the way with some past work: curses, failures or supposed failures, condemnations, who knows? Guilt, toxic, who knows? And the Lord can and will heal those things along the way. You don't always have to act and react to things and drag all that around. I'm certainly still in the process of healing and being healed from things and not reacting and that kind of thing.

Clare: Well, yeah, and I didn't want to imply that we'd arrived, because we haven't arrived. But we know that we're in that center of His will for our lives and there's great peace in that.

Ezekiel: Right. There is a peace, yes.

Clare: So no matter what storm comes, you know - I mean if we were to lose our house, we'd be equally as happy as having our house, because we'd know that the Lord had a reason for that. We've seen time and time again that nothing happens without Him directing, His approval and making good come of it. And we look forward to what else He does, because we're growing, you know?

Ezekiel: Yeah.

Clare: We're growing.

Ezekiel: And it doesn't mean it might not come with a "gasp" at first, but you know, you kind of get used to it. And we've been through this a lot. I think our first ten or twelve years of marriage, we probably lived in 14 different places. I can't tell you the cars that have been donated and then we would give away the cars, and another one would come. You can't out-give the Lord. The more you shed yourself of the clutter and the luggage and this... whatever you have - the more comes in. If He sees that you have open hands, He'll just keep sending you what you need because He knows you're going to pass it on.

Clare: Right.

Ezekiel: Corrie Ten Boom used to say - the Auschwitz survivor that many of you are familiar with, the

book and movie "The Hiding Place" came from her life - she'd say: "I've learned not to hold things too tightly, because it hurts when the Lord has to pry my hands open." She learned to be open-handed.

Clare: Yeah. So, we just wanted to share that with you and we're praying for you, Youtube family. A lot of you right now are asking some questions about wanting to get deeper with the Lord and the directions that He has for you. I think that the expectation of the Rapture has probably caused a lot of people to miss what God wanted them to do, because they didn't think they had the time. And I've struggled with that.

Ezekiel: Oh yeah.

Clare: But the bottom line is, if He's asking you to do something, He knows about the timing. If He's asking you to go to college or university or go to a Christian university, or if He's asking you to go on the mission field or get married and have children - He knows how all of that is going to work together and you don't have to be second guessing Him. If you're using logic and you're thinking and you're working it out on a human and worldly level, you're gonna miss Him, because He's in the heart. He's guiding you through your feelings - deep, deep, deep feelings. Not the ones on the surface but deep down inside. He's guiding you in your heart and He's drawing you into a greater depth and He's turning your head into different positions from where you may have gone or wanted to go in order to help you be well-rounded, so that you can come into the fullness that He has for you. So, it's a matter of trust.

Ezekiel: Yeah, Yeah.

Clare: Really just totally trusting Him.

Ezekiel: A lot of surrender and letting some things die away when they need to.

Clare: Not being overly concerned with what other people think. That's really huge. Yeah, that's probably the biggest obstacle that we've had. And you know, the devil jumps on that. He jumps in there with condemnation. I mean, how many times have you had to go through that scenario, where you said "I'm going to get a job." And no matter what you do...

Ezekiel: Or, I'm gonna do this, or I'm gonna do that . . .

Clare: But the job thing is huge - the devil is saying "What are you doing? You're not doing anything. You're not producing this, you're not producing that. You don't have a job."

Ezekiel: You need to be a responsible American male.

Clare: And then you try to get a job and the doors just close. It's not for you - it's not what He wants.

Ezekiel: He wants to be the hand that provides.

Clare: Yeah!

Ezekiel: If you've given up everything to serve the Lord, He really wants to be the hand that feeds you and He will literally do that. But the more you take back or try to take back, He can't get His hand in there. You're getting in His way!

Clare: You can either do it yourself in your own strength or power, or you can let Him do it, and follow what He wants you to do.

C: Where's Angel? Introduce Angel.

E: I'm been looking down. This is our little Angel - she's been our little sweetheart for the longest time. Her white footies, just the sweetest little thing. So she's our director and our technician. And just a little perk on the video this time. Say bye bye Angel.

C: Part of the family of 5 and their all different, just like our children.

E: You'll receive more cats, more dogs, more parrots, more . . . and Heaven besides.

C: OK

E: Well thanks again for joining us on this segment of Heaven Talk. The Lord be with you, and until we meet again here, there or in the air.

C: God bless you.

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