

## Growing Into a Calling—Part 1

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I had been our church's women's ministry director for several years when Barry changed careers, and it looked like we'd be moving. I have to confess that I prayer-journal sporadically, but I was journaling during that time. In my listening time, I believed that God was speaking to me about speaking ministry. I wrote down everything I believed I was hearing, but I still had thoughts like, "What if this is just my own desire?" and "How would this ever come about anyway?"

After our move, I was just sure I must have been mistaken. Not only were there no opportunities to speak, no one even knew me in my new area. I started to despair of ever being used by God again. I slipped into a "funk" that was very close to full-blown depression, and I felt alone and unseen.

One day I was at a true low-point. I had never asked God for a sign before, but that morning I prayed, "God I don't even know what to ask for, but today I need a sign. ANYTHING that shows me that You see me...that you haven't forgotten me." I was hoping for any little thing like someone inviting me to lunch!

That night I cried myself to sleep, because I hadn't received any kind of sign. Two days later, though, I came home, and my answering machine was blinking. I rushed over, happy just to have a human voice on my phone.

The message left me stunned. A woman who I had never met from a church that I had never heard of was asking me to lead their women's retreat. It was a good thing that I had not answered the phone in person, because I sobbed and sobbed. Not only had God not forgotten me, He was beginning to show me that He really was calling me into ministry.

The next year was full of surprises. God made it clear that my control-freak self would not be orchestrating this ministry. He would open door after door. None were related to another. None were by word-of-mouth. Because each opportunity to speak was clearly ordained by God, it was amazing and affirming.

But at the end of the year, I realized that I needed help. I had gone as far as I could without someone teaching me. My heart's desire is to communicate God's character and His gospel with as much clarity and passion as possible, so I began to search.

She Speaks was where I landed. God divinely provided the finances to attend, and I joyfully registered. Little did I know the battle that was ahead.... (How's that for a cliff-hanger? Make sure to download Part 2!)

