



# Seasons In Time

ENCOUNTERING GOD FACE TO FACE...  
IN OUR BRIEF JOURNEY THROUGH LIFE

## *Life Season I: My Childhood Years (Continued)*

### *My Lost Childhood*

**O**nce upon a time in a faraway land there lived a little girl. She was a happy little girl with a handsome daddy, a beautiful mommy and a loving little sister. She would play for hours in her safe backyard with all her friends until her mommy called her for dinner. Together, her family would sit around the table, tell stories about their day and talk about how the children would grow up and live happily ever after. *But that little girl wasn't me!* She existed only in my dreams...figments of my imagination. I never knew my family and I never knew what it would be like to have a secure and happy childhood. My parents sold me for drugs when I was a baby. By the time I was ten, I was forced into the dark world of child sex trafficking...pretending to be sensual when all I wanted was to be loved by a real mom and dad. *My childhood was lost, forever gone, except in the "Once Upon a Time" world of my mind.*

**I** was five years old the first time I saw death. Bullets from an inner city gang riddled our house and left my brother dead in a pool of blood. I still remember staring at his lifeless body in horror. I was seven when my father was stabbed to death during a drug deal in our living room. I'll never forget my mother's scream when it happened. It haunts me every day of my life. When I turned twelve, I killed my first man when he broke into the house to attack my mother. *If you ask me about my lost childhood, my answer would be, "What childhood? How can you lose what you never had?"* If I were asked about my future, I would say, *"I have none. When you live in the mean streets without hope, you don't expect to see your twentieth birthday!"*



There is no greater sacred assignment than to protect the innocence of a child. The Lord intended a child's helpless years to be a safe haven from harm and evil. Jesus used the purity of a child's trust to describe those who follow Him. Great and severe judgment awaits those who abuse or offend a child (or a young believer). Beware, child abuser, both God and His angels are aware of what you do (*Matt. 18:1-10*)! *But for those who protect and rescue children, this is the pure and undefiled work of God (Ps. 68:5; James 1:27).*

**I** awoke in the middle of the night to sounds of shouting and gunfire. Police were everywhere and people were running. Out of nowhere, the strong arms of a gentle man picked me up, wrapped me in a blanket and whispered, *"You're safe now, little girl. They'll never hurt you again. I promise; you'll have a new life."* Twenty years have come and gone now, and he kept his promise. He and his wife are workers in Christian ministry dedicated to stopping human trafficking. No, they didn't adopt me, but they became like a godly aunt and uncle. Through them, I learned who Jesus is and how He came to set the captive free. For the first time ever, I was free and safe in Christ. Soon after that, I was adopted by a compassionate Christian family who loved me as if I were their own. I'm now married and we have two beautiful children. *In the night hours I often think about those horrible days. Forever I thank God for my life-changing encounter with Him. My "Once Upon a Time" world is now a reality. I'm giving my children the childhood that was stolen from me.*

**M**y life was forever changed the night I was caught in the crossfire of gangs and police. A bullet ripped through my body and I lay dying in a pool of blood like my brother and dad. When I opened my eyes, I was in a hospital with tubes in my body and nurses caring for me. Beside my bed stood a kind man and his son that I had never seen before. He wore a T-shirt with a big Christian cross and the words "Hope" written across it. That's where I first met Jesus. I guess God had a purpose for me greater than to die in the streets. The man who led me to salvation was a volunteer at an inner city church. I joined the church and gave my life to the work of God. *I now visit hospital rooms bringing the hope of Christ to kids...just like I once was.*

*Next: More Stories From My Childhood - Faith – As the Twig Is Bent...*

