



The Girl Within The Picture

By Lucy Wall

One day I was doing the house cleaning (of all things!) when I picked up a picture frame in order to dust the frame and the shelf that it lived on. For some reason I decided to spend a few seconds looking at the picture within the frame and found myself smiling as I looked at an image of myself along with a friend of mine.

The picture was taken when two friends and I were on a holiday in 2006 and it was during this time that I was still trying to ignore God and deny my need and desire for Him in my life.

I know I had a relationship with Jesus as a young girl, but as I grew into my teenage years I wandered away from Him and stopped actively following Him. I thought I could live however I wanted and that I knew what would give me a happy, fulfilling life.

I became dedicated in my training at Musical Theatre College and the biggest thing in my life was my goal to be a performer in the West End of London. This in itself of course was not a bad thing to do, but it became my idol and what I sought after the most. It was more important to me than Jesus and that was my big mistake.

In His unbelievable grace, Jesus gave me a long rope to go out into the world with and allowed me to discover for myself how empty the things of the world really are if that's what you're living for.

When I was twenty-three years old, I found myself in my first West End show since leaving college and was ecstatic to have finally "arrived!" It was during this time that I suffered from depression and pretty much cried myself to sleep most nights due to the emptiness and loneliness inside.

I couldn't understand why I felt like this when I had the very things that I had worked so hard to attain. I had many friends (and great ones at that) a gorgeous flat in a beautiful part of London, a great social life and most of all- a job in a West End show! Yet I was utterly miserable.

I knew deep down that my anguish and brokenness was a result of me turning my back on God. I had known the joy of His companionship and sovereignty in my life, but had decided years ago to replace Him with other things, with worldly things. I learned the futility of this the hard way.

I find it interesting when I hear other people's testimonies or read about people in the Bible who have everything in their lives stripped away from them so that all they're left with is their acute realization and awareness of their need for God. I feel that with me it was the other way around. I feel that Jesus looked into my heart and saw what I was striving for and placing before Him in importance. In His gentle, gracious way, He gave me the very things I was idolising and let me discover for myself the emptiness of what this world has to offer, if it isn't combined with the knowledge and peace of being in the centre of His will.

In hindsight I can see how the Lord used this time to call out to my spirit and get me to the place that I needed to be where I called out to Him in repentance.

So to go back to the moment of me looking at a picture of myself smiling, I realized that the picture was taken when I was still battling with God and resisting Him. It became apparent to me that the smile on my face was nothing more than a mask. It was a lie to cover up the true pain and sorrow going on inside and it was caused by my own rebellion. All of a sudden I could see right through it.

As I stood there looking at the picture I began to feel a whole host of negative feelings towards myself at that time. But right in that very instant, I felt the gentleness of the Holy Spirit draw alongside me and encourage me not to feel hatred towards myself because God didn't and He was the One I was really grieving.

Again I was blown away by my awesome God and even in the process of writing this poem, I feel that Jesus revealed more of His caring, loving nature to me. He welcomed me home with open arms and covered me with His grace. I'm eternally grateful to my wonderful God for His patience, mercy, forgiveness and His undying love for me because even though I let go of Him, He never let go of me.



With absent thoughts and gentle song, I dusted on the shelf.
I noticed then in front of me, a picture of myself.
Without much care I picked it up and looked deep in my eyes.
Remembering the girl I was, I came to realize
Although the smile upon my face implied no hint of grief,
I still re-called the broken heart that lay just underneath.

For in that time I knew You not and lived in shadows dark.
Reflections of a weary soul where life had left it's mark.
An empty shell so meaningless: no purpose, point or truth.
My life adrift so aimlessly; a waste of precious youth.
I tried to find the answers but knew none of them were true.
I wouldn't find the peace I sought until I looked for You.

Though outwardly I had success, my heart could feel no pride.
I knew my life was meaningless: my soul was dead inside.
The worldly joys so temporal would leave me wanting more.
They left me with an empty void much bigger than before.
The hollow offers of the world could never satiate.
I knew the very things I'd sought I'd soon begin to hate.

They couldn't fill the longing that I felt now, deep within.
I knew I needed You Lord and to let go of my sin.
You used this time to 'waken me and see my need for You.
You reached into my circumstance and let Your light shine through.
Forever grateful I will be. Your love you did bestow.
You never took Your eyes from me. You wouldn't let me go.

So as I stood, I thought of all the shame I put You through.
The pain You must have suffered in my years apart from You.
You watched as I ignored Your Word and went off on my way.
I added to the pain You felt on Crucifixion day.
This thought aroused such wrenching guilt, dark feelings drawing near.
But just before they took control, You whispered in my ear:

"Don't punish and chastise yourself for what you were before.
Remember, it's just you before you chose the narrow door.
The girl who fights so hard for Me and stands up for My Name,
Well she's the one you stare at now and look upon with shame.
You look at her with deep contempt, resentment and disgust.
But listen child, that girl is you. The one in whom I trust."



"I saw beyond your sinful ways and reached into your heart.
I gave you life and hope anew. I gave you a fresh start.
Your guilt and shame can haunt you, but whenever this begins,
Remember that I died for you when still dead in your sins.
Don't dwell on your iniquities or see mistakes you made,
For love and justice kiss the cross and now your debt is paid."

"Although you were a slave to sin and spiritually blind,
My precious daughter, worry not and leave your past behind.
I choose to not remember your transgressions or your shame.
I only feel My love for you, now you should do the same.
You're now a new creation and in Christ your sin can hide.
The time you spent enslaved to sin has washed away and died."

"Desires of your carnal mind will now have passed away.
Contentment I can promise as you walk with Me each day.
Rejoice in your new nature and embrace divine exchange,
For now our friendship is secure and this will never change.
You face no condemnation for My promises are true;
You've purity in Christ and now My Spirit dwells in you."

"I came to give you life, that you may live abundantly.
Your life is counter cultural but in harmony with Me.
Although you'll battle with the flesh, when tempted, don't give in.
For now you're filled with power and can overcome your sin.
Stand firm and set your sights on Me, I'll see you through it all.
Adorn My armour, use your gifts and heed my every call."

"Do not be swayed by disbelief or thrown by foolish talk,
For Satan envies what we have so stay true in your walk.
He'll try hard to convince you that you're governed by My "rules,"
But know you're walking in the truth so heed no word from fools.
The boundaries I set will keep you safe from the corrupt.
A life without parameters will only self-destruct."

"You know the anguish you endured without My loving touch.
I could not leave you in your sin. I love you far too much.
For you are My creation child, in you I am displayed.
And in My sight you're fearfully and wonderfully made.
My love for you runs faster than the rivers and the lakes.
Remember that I chose you and I do not make mistakes."



With new found peace I placed the picture back upon the shelf,
So grateful that this face did not reflect my current self.
I'd contemplate the lengths and darkest depths to which You'd go
To blot out my iniquities and make me white as snow.
I realized without You Lord, within me there's no good.
I then resolved anew to live in humble servitude.

The girl within the picture, she's so far and yet so near.
I view her with compassion now I know You loved her dear.
I worship You, O Sovereign Lord. Your Love has set me free.
You took my life and gave me hope and saw the worth in me.
Your heart is filled with mercy Lord, despite my every flaw,
You saved me from my sin and now I bow to You in awe.

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

"...think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things-and the things that are not-to nullify the things that are, so that no-one may boast before Him. It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God- that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."