

# Christian Faithbooking

## What is Faithbooking?



**Rhonda Anderson**

### **Rhonda's Passion for Faithbooking**

Throughout my life, my faith has been a consistent element. My husband Mac and I truly believe that the Lord brought us together and has provided for us, guided us and inspired us throughout our marriage. We also believe the Bible is very clear on the importance and power of remembering AND telling the Lord's praiseworthy deeds in our lives.

When I started making albums at the age of 15, I always tried to include some references about how

the Lord was working in my life, but it was sadly incomplete. In February 2000, my life, and my album-making style was changed forever. That month I was doing a Bible study with my prayer partner Naomi Shedd. When we began discussing how many Old Testament verses compel us to remember God's divine intervention in our lives, Naomi looked concerned. She showed me several journals that she had written about the amazing stories of answered prayer and the Lord's guidance in her life. However, she was sad that perhaps these stories would never be read by her children or the next generation. The journals would probably not sound "interesting enough" for others to read.

My response to her was our revelation about Faithbooking. I said, "Naomi, if we could weave stories like you have in your journal in our photo albums, combining the spiritual stories WITH our photos, the result would be powerful. Our children would look at these albums and benefit from the God stories." Both Naomi and I felt like the Lord had spoken to us and we began calling this "new style" of album-making, "Faithbooking."

### **What is Faithbooking**

One of the most basic commands in the Bible is to remember - several references point to the importance and power of memory. The Lord didn't want it to be difficult for us to remember His activity and blessings. For example, in the Old Testament days, He used festivals that the people were required to celebrate, or He instructed them to make piles of rocks. I believe that a tool we have today to help us remember His miraculous work in our lives is to capture our photo and stories in Faithbook photo albums.

Faithbooking provides us a tangible and simple method to review our God stories. And our Faithbooks will not only benefit us today, but they will be there for future generation to

benefit from as well. You may be wondering why it's necessary to create Faithbooks in order to remember God's work in our lives. Well, the Bible gives us some insight and a warning about those memories of ours that confirm WHY we need a written record.

In Deuteronomy 4:9, Moses tells the people, "Be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen, or let them slip from your heart as long as you live."

Alan Wright author of The God Moment Principle makes this statement, "Even mature, well-meaning Christians have an incredible ability to forget the extraordinary moments of God. The memory dulls. The moment loses its luster. And soon, the life changing power is gone - spiritual amnesia has set in."

Again, by creating Faithbooks, it is one method to ensure that we will NOT forget the amazing feats God has performed in our lives. Once these stories are recorded in photo-safe albums, they are there for generations to see and remember. And when we have these miraculous stories accessible to us, the benefits are many.

### **Benefits of Faithbooking**

**First, Faithbooks will increase our faith so we can withstand tomorrow's tests; that is one reason they are called Faithbooks.**

When we look back and remember times when the Lord healed us, rescued us, sustained us through a difficulty, provided for our needs, gave us abundant gifts, our faith in Him grows. When we remember how He paid our bills last year and got us through the winter months, we will have the faith to trust Him for this year's needs.

**A second benefit of Faithbooking is that it trains our children about the Lord's faithfulness and helps them know they are loved.**

If we go back to Moses, he goes on to say, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are upon your hearts, impress them on your children." Deut. 6: 5-6

It's not simply for us to remember, it's for our children.

In fact Psalm 78:4 says: "We will tell the next generation the praise worthy deeds of the Lord, His power and the wonders He has done."

These two additional scriptures also talk about the importance of passing on the Lord's faithfulness to our children:

Isaiah 38: 19b LB "Each generation can make known your faithfulness to the next."

Joel 1:3 NIV "Tell it to your children, and let your children tell it to their children, and their children to the next generation."

We are admonished to "TELL the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord." (Psalm 78:4).

The Word does not say if we have time, if we have money, if we don't work outside the home, if we have a housecleaner and a supportive spouse. As Christians, we are to remember all the things God is doing in our lives and we are to tell the next generation. By creating Faithbooks for and WITH our children, we are obeying God's word and obeying the Word of the Lord produces JOY. Our children too will benefit greatly from that obedience. Their lives will also be changed by the power of your Faithbooking stories.

Dr. James Dobson, of Focus on the Family, made a statement years ago that I believe validates the need for Faithbooks. *"If there is anything I feel we have lost as a people in the western world it's that understanding of who we are, where we've been, who our ancestors were, and what our identity is. And that is done through the family structure. Continuity from generation to generation depends on taking the best from the past and passing it along to our children."* (22 June, 2000 broadcast).

Our children are faced with pressures to conform to the standards of this world every day. Disrespect and rebellion against God and all authority is played-out at school, on television, in music and with friends. Reinforcing your family values and God's word in and through our photo albums/ Faithbooks, will give our children the help they need to stand firm in this very pressure-filled world.

Dr. Dobson made another comment in his column in the February, 2007 Focus on the Family magazine. On page 5, "Thoughts from Dr. Dobson," he shares a quote from his book, The New Hide or Seek. He says, *"As early as age 3 or 4, we begin to ask basic self-worth questions: Who am I? Who needs me? Who cares about me? Will I be accepted? Will people laugh at me? Will I be able to compete with others?....And every child BEGINS GATHERING EVIDENCE to answer these questions."*

When a child has a Faithbook album of love and affirmation, he or she can open the book and find evidence of their value and worth.

### **The third benefit of Faithbooking is that the stories can help us make better decisions in the future**

Dan Allender, PhD, in his book To Be Told says, "All of us would like to make wiser decisions in the future. We'd all like to know "the perfect plan for our life". The answers can be found in our own life story.

Most of us have spent more time studying a map to avoid getting lost on a trip than we have studying our life so we'll know how to proceed into the future. When we're preparing to make significant decisions, why will we study a stock report but fail to look at our own story? Why will we read various op-ed pieces to help clarify our views on a controversial topic but ignore our own past, which helped form our most important views? If we're taking a course we're willing to study books that bore us to pieces, but we won't take time to review our own life, which holds answers about God and ourselves that will thrill us, amaze us and sober us.

Seldom do we approach our own life with the mindset of a student, eager to learn, gain insight, and find direction for the future. We habitually push aside the one thing that can clarify not only how we got to where we are today but also where God is leading us tomorrow and beyond.

Whatever your situation, the mistake is to make a move without first writing and then reading your past. Writing and reading your life is like reading any story; it takes patience and hope to keep turning one page after another. But you will learn so very much from your own story.

When we abandoned the tribal fires and stopped telling our stories, we became blank slates waiting to be scribbled on by whomever happened to come along. In contrast, when we learn our stories and tell them, we write from the inside.

### **A fourth benefit of Faithbooking is that it glorifies God.**

A Faithbook can take our everyday events and find the Lord's fingerprints (His influence) in those activities. A Faithbook captures God IN me and God at work AROUND me. Literally, His power affecting our lives. A Faithbook causes us to take pictures of events that we normally wouldn't think of documenting. When our two-year-old lathers his face with jelly we run to take a picture of him for our PHOTO album. "Isn't he cute and what a charming personality..."

With a mindset of Faithbooking you are now ready to take a photo for your Faithbook of your four-year-old kneeling by her bed to invite Jesus into her heart. That photo and story is about her AND the Lord. "I don't have my camera ready at times like that" you might say. With Faithbooking, it's permissible to "recreate" scenes.

Max Lucado in his Devotional Bible on page 1563 says this: "The Bible comes even more alive when we realise that it's God's scrapbook....It overflows with collages of photos, stories, poems, and letters....What makes the Bible a unique scrapbook is that it doesn't just commemorate the past - it provides guidance for today and hope for tomorrow. You can find your name and face in its pages. Next to each Bible promise is a photo of you.... This scrapbook isn't a nostalgic keepsake. It's a living, dynamic, hopeful expectation of God's plans for the future...." (end) Our faithbooking photo albums can be an extension of God's personal work in each of our lives.

Verses like this continue to compel us that we need to do something: In Exodus 10:2, the Lord said to Moses... *"You will be able to tell wonderful stories to your children and grandchildren about the marvelous things I am doing among the Egyptians to prove that I am the Lord."*

Make "Faithbooks" a focus in your life, to document your God Moments through photos and stories to share with your loved ones today and in the future.

### **Rhonda Anderson**

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