




03

CHAPTER THREE

God often hides himself from us so we can experience the thrill of finding him—discovering him through revelation. He hides himself in the folds and bends of the path of our life, taking different roles in our stories—suddenly appearing as the Rescuer, disappearing again only to reveal himself as the Beloved who knows us better than we know ourselves.

Our stories and the revelations of him prove that the God who created us is the God who *wants to be found.*

Discovering God endures as one of our great missions in life. Having found him, we are called to remain in him, abiding in his presence. This transforms us, equipping and commissioning us to bring glory to God.



God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.—Acts 17:27

I (Cathy) loved to play hide and seek with my toddlers because I loved their squeals of joy when they found me. I hid just enough to make the adventure of searching worthwhile. They'd find me hiding behind the drapes but with my toes showing, or in the laundry basket with a hat on my head. The laughter and shouts of "I found you! I found you!" accompanies their attempt to climb in the basket for their turn for me to "find" them in the same spot.

Just as I hide from my toddlers, God often hides himself from us so we can experience the thrill of finding him—discovering him through revelation. He hides himself in the folds and bends of the path of our life, taking different roles in our stories—suddenly appearing as the Rescuer, disappearing again only to reveal himself as the Beloved who knows us better than we know ourselves. *Our stories and the revelations of him prove to us that the God who created us is the God who wants to be found.*

It is one of those moments when all the attention in the world seems fixed on the words to be spoken next. Does this rabbi know when the Messiah will appear? Is the time of deliverance from the Roman oppressors at hand? Is this the year of the Lord's favor? Why didn't this rabbi read the portion about the "day of vengeance"?

Oh, the joy in the finding!

Discovering God endures as one of our great missions in life. Having found him, we are called to remain in him, abiding in his presence. This transforms us, equipping and commissioning us to bring glory to God. We thus fulfill our purpose: to reveal God's glory through our own story.

A vertical photograph of a person standing on a rock, silhouetted against a vast, starry night sky. The Milky Way galaxy is clearly visible, stretching diagonally across the frame. The stars are in various colors, including purple, blue, and white. The person is looking up at the stars.


WE THUS FULFILL OUR PURPOSE:

**TO REVEAL GOD'S
GLORY THROUGH OUR
OWN STORY.**

Since each person's story is unique, there are almost limitless ways to display God's glory. Every time God reveals himself, our story gleams with a new and brilliant facet of his glory—a facet never displayed before and never displayed the same again.

Many times, this glory is displayed when God meets our needs. A perfect example of this is when Jesus performed his first miracle in Cana of Galilee, turning water to wine and rescuing the wedding party, thus revealing his glory (John 2:11).






Once, when our family was much younger and we had little income, my mother (Randy's mother) came to visit. While there, she noticed that we had very few groceries in our kitchen cupboards. She decided it was time to change that, so she gathered us to pray. (Now, you need to understand: My mother was a prayer warrior, and she didn't pray a short, "if you can" kind of prayer. This is your "In the name of Jesus, we command the provision of God" kind of prayer. The kind that sends chills down your spine.) Ten minutes later the mail arrived and in it was an unexpected check for several hundred dollars. (Yes, we had a great trip to the grocery store.) To us, the glory of God visited our home that day.

George Mueller's story is a perfect example of this as well. He founded and directed several orphan houses in the mid-1800s in Bristol, England, and received a revelation from God through a singular verse of Scripture: "Fear the Lord, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing" (Ps. 34:9). Based on this, Mueller determined to ask God alone to meet the needs of the orphans. "To the glory of the Lord, whose I am, and whom I serve, I would state again that every shilling of this money, and all the articles of clothing and furniture, which have been mentioned in the foregoing pages, have been given to me, without one single individual having been asked by me for anything."

Mueller's autobiography tells of years of faithful provision the Lord sent to support the orphans—miracle provision after miracle provision—by his prayers alone. Practical provision came, such as a milk truck that broke down on their doorstep when they had nothing with which to feed the children. God revealed himself as the God Who Provides, and Mueller (and all the orphans) were never the same.



Story after story in the Bible demonstrates a God who, though hidden, can be found—who, though mysterious, can suddenly be luminous. Just as the Beloved in the Song of Solomon hides momentarily among the clefts of the rock, so our hearts burst for him when we see his penetrating gaze through the lattice—drawing us after him with his satisfying presence.

In Genesis alone, we find the God who, for Adam and Eve, is the God who calls out of the darkness of sin and separation. For Cain, we find the God who shows mercy even in our sin. For Noah, we find the God who grieves for us and contends for us, even in our sin. (Noah's story reveals the God who provides hope and makes a way of salvation for sinners.) For Abraham, we find the God who comes down to earth to see the sin of humankind, yet credits faith as righteousness. For Lot and Hagar, we find the God who sees injustice and rescues us. And on and on.

Once you start on the quest...

Once you start on the quest for the God who hides himself, it will change you because you will find Him (Jeremiah 29:13 and Isaiah 55:6). He leaves just enough of himself in view that you can discover more of him. At each discovery, you may be "surprised by joy" as C. S. Lewis was, or "undone" like Isaiah, or blissfully set free like Martin Luther, but you are guaranteed to find revelation.

*...it will change you, because you
will find him.*

For Review

Describe an experience in your life where God has been hidden, but then found...and the joy of the finding.

Has God revealed himself to you in unexpected ways? Where have you found God that was least expected?

What is your God-given mission?

Journal

Read Isaiah 6. What does Isaiah's account reveal about God?

What was the issue before the Divine Court? How did this involve Isaiah?

A Prayer to the Father
by Dr. Randy Colver

What is this that you have done,
That you would give your only Son?
Who can count the price you paid,
When on his back those stripes were laid?
Did your heart most surely break
For him whose cross you did forsake?
But was there joy when three days on,
He rose to meet that glorious dawn?

Oh, that I might learn to give,
To suffer well that I might live,
And learn to trust when all is lost,
Recounting all his life did cost.
So to the hills I lift my eyes,
To the Helper of my desires,
To him who gave his only Son,
Who shares the joy that has begun.

When I consider...

Since each person's story is unique, there are almost limitless ways to display God's glory. Every time God reveals himself, our story gleams with a new and brilliant facet of his glory—a facet never displayed before and never displayed the same again.

1. Ask God to reveal his story for your life.

1.

2. How does your story bring glory to God?

2.

3. Where might he be leading you to share your story?

3.