



# After You Have Suffered

—by Jan Silvius

**M**any people have asked, “How did you get into the kind of ministry you are in?” For those of you who don’t know what I do, perhaps I should explain that I am a conference speaker, an author and a radio broadcaster. The truth is that this is the last thing on earth I ever thought I would be doing!

## DEEP WATERS

In college, I was studying for a career as an English teacher, until God intervened and took me on a different path. I never looked for a ministry, or sought a place to minister. I simply followed the progressive revelation of God’s Will in my life.

*“The God of all Grace, who called you to His Eternal Glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong...and steadfast” 1 Pet 5:10*

But I have found that every time God gets ready to move me to a broader scope of ministry, He usually takes me through some deep waters where I would declare that I would surely drown if He had not been there!

## GROWING DEEPER

I love the story that G. Campbell Morgan tells: “A young fellow entered the ministry, and had remarkable success, and great blessing has attended his life and work. At the time he was a young man fresh from college, a brilliant preacher even then.

He preached in my church in Birmingham, and I went home after the sermon and said to Mrs. Morgan, ‘Was that not wonderful?’ She quietly remarked, ‘Yes, but it will be more wonderful when he has suf-

fered.’” I have discovered that through the years and with the experiences of suffering God has allowed, my own ministry has deepened and grown ‘more wonderful’.

## STEADFAST

Peter must have had something like this in mind when he wrote: *“The God of all Grace, who called you to His Eternal Glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast” 1 Pet 5:10.*

Over a year ago I received a note in the mail from a person I don’t even know. On a crudely trimmed piece of paper were these words by Chuck Swindoll: “You who

have endured the stinging experiences make the choicest counsellors God can use.” I framed that quote and it is in my office where every day I can be reminded that the ‘stinging experiences’ only make me more valuable to the One I long to serve.

## BETTER NOT BITTER

Corrie ten Boom said, “When we deepen our message, then God will expand our ministry.” It’s as simple as that. A heart for God must be broken before it really beats for Him.

If you long to be used and wonder why others seem to be God’s chosen instruments, maybe you need to stop and consider how you have responded to the ‘stinging experiences’. Do you fight them?

Have you allowed them to make you bitter? Do you feel life is unfair? If so, you are undoubtedly sitting on the sidelines of ministry.

But if you have embraced your struggles as friends and your trials as trainers, then you know the joy of a deepening ministry. You can take comfort in the fact that the suffering lasts only ‘a little while’, before the God of all Grace Himself will restore you, and make you strong and steadfast!

## RESOURCES

Jan Silvius will be speaking at the 15th annual Beauty for Ashes women’s conferences in Cape Town (7-8 May 2010) and Johannesburg (14-15 May 2010). Jan ran a radio show for many years with Kay Arthur of Precepts Ministry, and is a sought-after conference speaker.

She is the author of nine books, including Please Don’t Say You Need Me – Biblical Answers for Co-dependency, Fool-Proofing Your Life – Wisdom for Untangling Your most Difficult Relationships, Big Girls Don’t Whine – Growing Up and Going On, and Smart Girls Think Twice. ■

JAN SILVIUS is a speaker and teacher. This is an extract from her from *The 5-minute Devotional – Meditations for the busy Woman*. For more info see: [www.jansilvius.com](http://www.jansilvius.com). or [www.beautyforashes.co.za](http://www.beautyforashes.co.za)



Struik Christian Media are giving away 5 copies of the Beauty for Ashes Health Journal. To win, send your details to P.O. Box 2990, Somerset West, 7129 or [julia@joymag.co.za](mailto:julia@joymag.co.za)