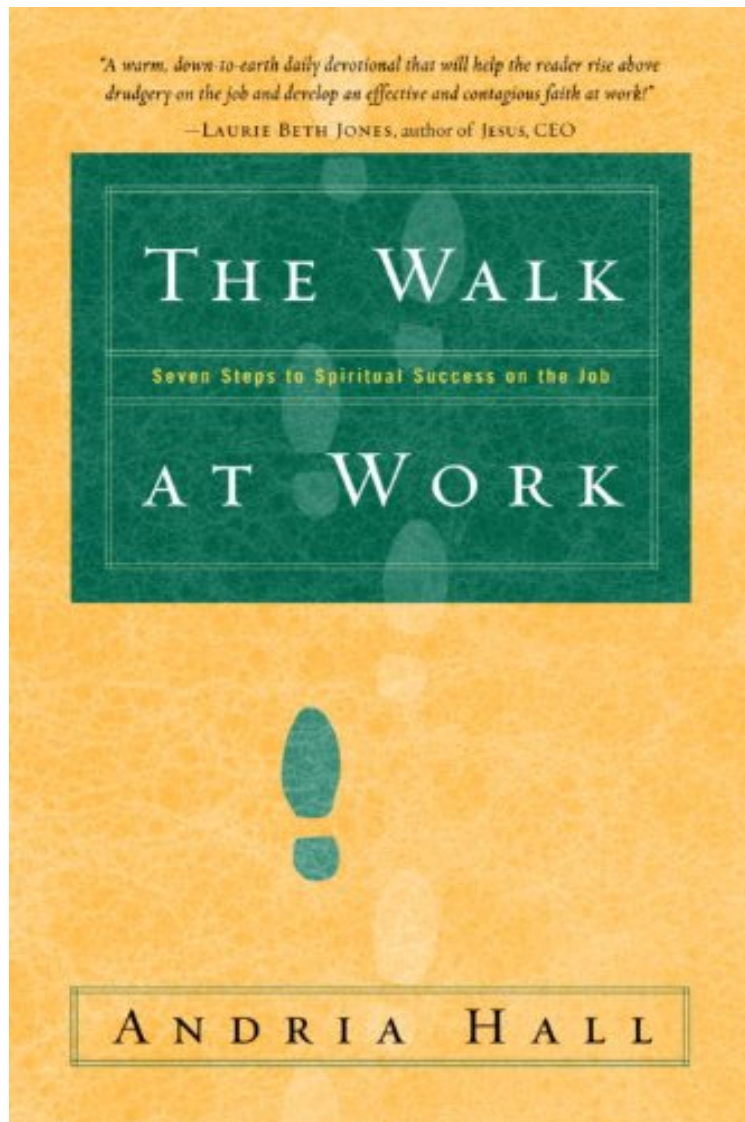


## The Walk at Work: Seven Steps to Spiritual Success on the Job

Andria Hall

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enjoyable read that made me understand that our faith has to be taken to the Workplace sometimes even more than in Church. The walk needs to happen everywhere.

**God Is at Work** Whether you work with your hands or your head, God wants your heart to be at work for Him. However, with all the confrontation, conflict, and frustration in the workplace, too often we leave God out of the equation. Amid the all-out pursuit of our hopes and dreams, we find ourselves wondering, How can my faith sustain me through challenges of work? How can I daily honor God on the job? **The Walk at Work** is a guidebook that combines daily inspirational readings with a seven-step plan for personal spiritual growth to answer those questions about faith at work. Whether you face difficult relationships, job anxiety, or office politics, Andria Hall will show you how to experience success by aligning your priorities with God's. Through the down-to-earth, practical wisdom in these pages you will: receive daily wisdom from God; discover the benefits of praying for others; learn how to carry out your God-given tasks in the workplace with integrity; unearth a new commitment to honor God in all that you do, say, and think; settle your mind and nurture your spirit through timely daily readings. Excellent as a daily devotional or group study, **The Walk at Work** also includes a topical index of common work-related challenges, questions for further reflection, and recommendations for additional reading. From the Trade Paperback edition.

**From the Inside Flap** **God Is at Work** Whether you work with your hands or your head, God wants your heart to be at work for Him. However, with all the confrontation, conflict, and frustration in the workplace, too often we leave God out of the equation. Amid the all-out pursuit of our hopes and dreams, we find ourselves wondering, "How can my faith sustain me through challenges of work? How can I daily honor God on the job?" **The Walk at Work** is a guidebook that combines daily inspirational readings with a seven-step plan for personal spiritual growth to answer those questions about faith at work. Whether you face difficult relationships, job anxiety, or office politics, Andria Hall will show you how to experience success by aligning your priorities with God's. Through the down-to-earth, practical wisdom in these pages you will: - receive daily wisdom from God- discover the benefits of praying for others- learn how to carry out your God-given tasks in the workplace with integrity- unearth a new commitment to honor God in all that you do, say, and think- settle your mind and nurture your spirit through timely daily readings. Excellent as a daily devotional or group study, "The Walk at Work also includes a topical index of common work-related challenges, questions for further reflection, and recommendations for additional reading. About the Author Andria Hall is a Christian professional with more than twenty years experience as a veteran broadcast television journalist. She is currently host of Faith and Values Media's Sunday morning program America at Worship, airing on the Hallmark Channel, which is available to nearly 49 million homes. The author of *This Far by Faith: How to Put God First in Everyday Living*, she holds an honorary doctorate from Virginia University of Lynchburg. Andria, who resides in New Jersey, is a married mother of three. Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. How to Use This Book This book is designed primarily to be your guide through a seven-month process of attaining spiritual growth and maturity in your workplace. This is not a book to speed-read through. Think of it instead as a seven-course meal to be savored—one that will feed your soul daily. Each chapter provides one month's worth of inspirational and motivational readings: The chapters define and explore in detail the seven S.U.C.C.E.S.S. steps. Each discussion is followed by a series of action points, journal exercises, and a prayer that you can apply in day-to-day situations over the course of the month. The twenty devotional entries that follow each S.U.C.C.E.S.S. step provide readings for four five-day workweeks. These devotionals are written in the first person to help you more easily personalize the principles they offer. Some can be read as prayers. Action points at the end of each will give you an opportunity to begin the process of applying an idea presented in the devotional. The devotionals are topical, and each keyword is indexed at the back of the book. In addition to using this guide as an organized study, you can also refer to it as needed for wisdom and encouragement when you face specific on-the-job trials, circumstances, and events that affect your Christian walk. It is my belief that when biblical principles permeate the workplace, true success can be achieved. S. S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Step One SEEK SEEK God, Your Real CEO But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Matthew 6:33 After more than twenty years of working for other people, I am finally able to say that "those people" have no power over me. You can say that too. You can have the peace of God that truly "surpasses all understanding" (Philippians 4:7), a peace that no tyrannical boss, conniving coworker, job merger, layoff threat, or stock-market crash can suppress. This peace adds to the quality of your life and the quantity of your faith. When you finally get it—I mean really get it, deep down in your soul—no setback will have any long-lasting effect on you ever again. That's when you'll begin to experience more joy and a greater ability to bounce back. Here's the truth of the matter: You don't really work for your boss! You work for Jesus Christ. Your supervisor is the Holy Spirit, and you take your marching orders from the Lord. God is your CEO! Embracing that revelation will allow you to experience a new level of peace-filled freedom in your Christian walk at work. It's what the Bible terms "free indeed" (John 8:36). The key to this freedom requires each of us to strive daily, discern wisely, accept submissively, and work wholeheartedly on

each assignment God sets before us. On Assignment in the Service of the King Then Jehoiada placed the oversight of the temple of the LORD in the hands of the priests, who were Levites, to whom David had made assignments in the temple, to present the burnt offerings of the LORD as written in the Law of Moses, with rejoicing and singing, as David had ordered. (2 Chronicles 23:18, NIV) Jehoiada was a high priest. He made the other priests supervisors, to whom David doled out temple assignments. Well, Jesus Christ is our High Priest, and He continues to give us assignments today not just in the church, but in our daily work as well. Notice that David not only ordered the Levites to carry out their assigned tasks, but he also ordered them to complete their work with "rejoicing and singing." In other words, when God chooses us to carry out an assignment and then places us in a position where He can use us, we are to be joyful. (More on that in chapter 5.) I knew when I got the job offer at CNN that it was an assignment from the Lord. I kept saying, "Nobody gets a job like this, especially not people in my career." Let me give you a little background so you can see that, truly, the Divine is in the details. Back in 1996 I was working as an NBC affiliate news anchor in New York City. I had made it to the number one station in the number one market for news. The position I held didn't work out for so many reasons, one of which was the Lord closing a door to open a window that was bigger than the door through which I had most recently come. (If you want all the sticky details, read my first book, *This Far by Faith: How to Put God First in Everyday Living*.) After leaving the station, I penned *This Far by Faith* with my friend Linnie Frank. It's a book about how God, through all our ups and downs, college, careers, children, and friendship, never left us. Just writing the book became a faith-building exercise for me. I knew I had been called to complete it and then go on tour to promote it. I needed to be faithful to complete this task God had set before me, and I was. But not without financial consequence. Fourteen months after my last paycheck and six months into touring the country with the book, I was still seeking God and believing that He would come through. While supportive, all my loved ones—my husband, my mother, my father, my sister, my friends—were just a tad bit concerned. I had already borrowed from most of them and didn't know when I was going to pay them back. The mortgage was three months behind. The bill collectors knew me on a first-name basis and even pronounced my name correctly (ON-dree-ah). At regular intervals I'd hear the concerned tone in the voice of my most patient man gingerly asking, "Honey, I know you're really committed to this book and you think you're doing what God wants you to do, but when do you suppose you might go out and get a job?" It's not as if I couldn't see his point. After all, he was working every day, and the reality at the time was that our lifestyle required a double income. Some two and a half years after I had stopped working (and our financial well had nearly run bone-dry), the book tour finally wound down. I had just one more signing to go. One morning around one o'clock, I awoke from a deep sleep. My eyes opened gently, as did my spirit, and I responded to the call of the Holy Spirit. I said, "Okay, God. I hear You saying it's time. I know it's time to go back to work. Whatever You want me to do, wherever You want me to go, I'll go." One week later we're talking seven days here, God's perfect number—I got a call from the then-president of CNN, who asked me to come work for him as his weekend anchor. To this day my soul rejoices when I reflect on how faithful God was to answer the needs in my life. Living through that season increased my faith and put a new song in my heart, a song that goes something like this: "Lord, I can always depend on You. When I obey and do what You ask me to do, I know You will see me through. I can always rejoice at what You're about to do in my life. Your Spirit leads and Your Spirit guides. I want only and always to abide in You. His Way Is Worthy of Our Complete Trust. Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6) God is a God of completion. He always finishes what He starts. For as long as is necessary, God will bring you right back to where He first revealed Himself to you and say, "Will you trust Me?" It seems spiritually fitting that the very first chapter of this, my second book, would bring me back to the first testing of my faith. I had my "Seek First" experience way back in 1984. The "Seek First" principle is repeated in the gospels of Luke and Matthew, who remind us that, no matter what our circumstances look like, God will provide for all our needs if we simply seek Him first. Although I chronicled this experience in *This Far by Faith*, I believe the principle is important enough to repeat here. The thing I have come to know about God's way of blessing us is what the church ladies have said for generations: "He may not come when you want Him, but He's always on time." Understanding and accepting my Lord's perfect timing has given me peace of mind. Even when we had no idea of how a particular challenge would be resolved, we still had peace. Why? Because I remain confident in His promise that He will never leave me alone. A true turning point in my faith journey came when I was twenty-seven years old. I had just taken a job as news anchor and reporter in New Orleans. I went there knowing that I was taking a step back in order to take two steps forward. It was a risk I needed to take in hopes of advancing my career as a journalist. I had been there only two months when, through "celestial serendipity," I was given the opportunity to go to work on a great local news magazine program in Boston. The Boston job would double my salary and move me into a top-ten market. It offered greater exposure, travel, and the chance to be closer to my family. I went there one weekend, had an interview, and was offered the job. Who could hold me back from such a wonderful blessing? Unfortunately, there was a small glitch: I had just signed a two-year contract with the New Orleans station. I went and had a talk with my

boss. I told him of the Boston offer, how excited I was, and what a rare opportunity had been placed before me. I apologized and asked if he would release me from my contract. I expected him to say, "Oh, Andria, I understand. You know I only want the best for you. Go, my child, go north with my blessings." Why I expected him to respond in such a way, I'll never know. What he said instead was, "No!" The station had paid for my moving expenses down to Louisiana. They had put me up in a hotel for a month while I found an apartment. They had made a considerable investment in hiring me. Well, there I was: stuck. The news director was not going to let me out of my contract. Then it got worse. The program director in Boston rescinded his offer, citing a phone call from the New Orleans station threatening to sue them for tampering with my contract. What was I to do? I couldn't fathom working for the next two years at a station that wanted to stymie my professional growth. (Such was my perception at the time.) I had to make a decision. The Boston station told me that if I somehow found myself unemployed and the job were still available, it was mine, but they could no longer actively pursue the hire. The New Orleans station now knew I was no longer committed in the way I had been when I came on board. I sought the Lord and decided to leave. I was going to have to take a chance with no promises on the other side of that risk. When I'm in the dark, clueless about where I'm going or what I should do, I simply open the Bible and let the pages turn where they may. That night, I let the Spirit lead me to this scripture in Luke 12:27-28 (NIV): "Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you!" There it was in black and white. I knew then that God would provide. Just moments earlier, I had been worried sick about how I would make ends meet. But after reading the scripture, I chose to stop worrying, believe His Word, and step out on faith. The next day I let the television station in New Orleans know I would be leaving. For the first time in my career, I would be without a paycheck and without a professional platform. I stood firm on the promises of God and moved forward not knowing the specific outcome of all I had hoped. But Hebrews 11:1 reminds us that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." I hoped I could still land that job in Boston, yet I had no proof it would be available to me once I closed the door on my current job. Well, walking by faith and not by sight paid off. I got the job in Beantown and worked there for nearly ten years. Clearly, divine intervention had placed me on a road I was meant to travel. For someone else in her unique situation, God may have said not to break the contract and to stick it out, but in my situation, God's leading was clear. That job was the most professionally satisfying work experience I have had until now. The road led me to marriage and the blessing of children. My faith was rewarded because I believed what God said instead of what my circumstances dictated. I trusted in His Word. I will always stand on His promises. The Heart Is Like Clay in the Hands of the Lord "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, Like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes. (Proverbs 21:1) Consider how my heavenly CEO worked out all the details of my job situation to the benefit of everyone involved. All I did was stand there in awe of what God chose to do. The Lord moved the heart of the Boston program director to extend a buyout offer to my former New Orleans employer. That means the Boston station purchased my contract from the station in New Orleans, even though they weren't legally obligated to do so. Everyone was compensated, and no one lost out. Wow! I am so thankful that God met me right where I was according to my level of faith and spiritual maturity. He will meet you, too, right where you are. While my intentions at that time were admittedly a bit selfish, God's intention in that situation was to grow my faith. It worked! And in the meantime I learned several important lessons:

- God will creatively bless us when our trust gives Him room to do so.
- It is imperative that we examine our motives in light of God's Word, so that in our desire to be blessed we don't unintentionally set up someone else to be burdened. What I've learned since my New Orleans experience is to remember that it's not only about us. God wants our hearts to be big enough to consider how our actions will affect others.
- The counsel of God will guide us if we seek it. And if we don't, His desire for us will prevail anyway!

"Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise. Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails" (Proverbs 19:20-21, NIV). Practical Application Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. (Matthew 7:7-8)

- Ask God for His direction.
- Seek what He wants in your life by spending time in prayer, reading His Word, and soliciting the counsel of godly advisors.
- Knock on the doors of opportunity as God sets them in front of you.

Spiritual Truth And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:8) We will never lose when we go with God!

First Steps

- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you your particular assignment in the place where you work. Pray for direction and then find a scripture from the Holy Bible to motivate you to stay on course. You might, for instance, choose, "Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ" (Colossians 3:22-24).
- Look for patterns in what you are consistently called to do by either your employer or your colleagues. Begin to track these on your journal pages.
- Confess in prayer: "I am a vessel of God" (see

Romans 9:21-24). Invite the Lord to clean you up, making you a vessel of honor through whom He can shine His light into your workplace.

**Journal Exercises** Write down the scripture God pressed upon your heart in "First Steps." Once a week over the course of this month, write down what God is revealing to you in light of this scripture about the assignment He has given you. Print the scripture on colorful stationery in bold, beautiful letters. Frame your scripture and commit it to memory. Make it a periodic goal (for example, monthly or annually) to ask God for a new scripture whenever He begins to do a new work in you (see Isaiah 43:19).

**Your Plan Is My Prayer** Lord God, Your plan is my prayer. Sweet Jesus, Your will is my way. Holy Spirit, Your direction for my life is the only thing that matters to me now. I'm so tired of playing by "the rules." Knowing that the way of this world is not Yours. You said to be in the world, but not of it. How do I do that when all the trappings around me point me in a direction other than where You are? I do it first by seeking Your agenda, Lord God, searching and seeking to serve You in spirit and in truth. That means I must present myself in right standing. Just like Zacharias and Elizabeth of old, who walked in all the commandments and were blameless before You, Lord, I, too, want to do Your will in Your way and wait patiently for Your timing. You promise, when I seek You first and Your righteousness, I will never have to worry about my needs again. I will be free to serve You right where I am. I know, Lord, that You've got me covered! And that is a comfort to me today and every day. In the name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.

**Step 1: SEEK**

**Week 1 Day 1 AUTHORITY** Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." Matthew 28:18, NIV Jesus Christ is in charge of my life. And the Word says I must worship Him "in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). In acknowledging these truths, I realize that my first spiritual key to success requires me to trust in what I do not see—the spiritual realm—more than in what I do see—the physical realm. God is Spirit, and these are the facts according to the Holy Bible: Jesus Christ is Lord! My boss is not in charge. I am not in charge. God is in charge! After Jesus was crucified and resurrected, His disciples saw their risen Lord, and they worshiped at His feet. But even then some doubted. What did Jesus do? Did He raise His voice in anger or frustration and say, "What's going to take for you guys to get it?" No. He simply and calmly stated the facts: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." People who truly have authority don't have to scream it out. They don't have to pummel people over the head with what they want. If I have true authority, I just speak the truth without buying into the insecurities of others. Eventually, the truth has a way of setting the record straight. God is my ultimate Authority. I do not fear men or what they might do to me. If I make sure my walk is right with God, then I am assured daily that I am on the right path, no matter what things look like.

**Action Point:** Today I confess from my mouth that God is the Authority over my life (see Romans 10:9-10).

**Step 1: SEEK**

**Week 1 Day 2 ALMIGHTY FATHER** Yes, the Almighty will be your gold, and your precious silver; for then you will have your delight in the Almighty, and lift up your face to God. Job 22:25-26 Do I believe work is only about power and the almighty dollar? Simply put, it's about the Almighty Father, and I am to be about my Father's business (see Luke 2:49). When Jesus was just twelve years old, He lingered behind in the temple seeking knowledge, asking questions, and revealing to the scholars even then that He was worthy of their attention. What happened after that? "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52). When I focus on God's plan and not my own, amazing things happen. I gain wisdom, acquire stature, and find favor with both Almighty God and men. No one is saying it is easy, but it is simple. The first thing I must do is seek the wisdom of the Holy Spirit daily, enrolling myself in His school of spiritual training. I think of it as an investment in my career. By spending time in His Word, by committing to daily prayer and meditation, I can expect God to speak to me. I believe He wants to reveal to me His plan for my life at work. My responsibility is to discipline myself to be on the lookout for His purposes in everyday situations. Perhaps this day my coworker needs a word of encouragement. Perhaps my boss needs me to go the extra mile. Maybe the light that is bursting forth in me will be the light that leads someone to Jesus.

**Action Point:** Today I remember that the Almighty is calling me to be about His business.

**Step 1: SEEK**

**Week 1 Day 3 BELIEF** Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief. Matthew 13:58 My belief is the key to unlocking the many mighty works of Jesus. It has nothing to do with His ability and everything to do with my willingness to let Him be Lord of my life, especially at the office. I know that God is anxious to strut His stuff for me at work. He wants to brighten my light. He wants to build my faith by displaying His awesome works, for which I can take absolutely no credit; I can simply give Him the glory. Therefore, this day I cry out to the Lord, as did the man recorded in Mark 9, who stood in the midst of the crowd, longing for the Son of God to heal his child. I realize that each time I am confronted with the seemingly impossible Jesus asks me whether I can believe Him. "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes" (verse 23). My response to Him must be the same as that brokenhearted and convicted man who wanted the Master's miracles but knew his own issues were holding him back. "Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, 'Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!'" (verse 24). Notice that the man immediately cried out to God. He recognized his belief level was not where it should have been.

**Action Point:** Today, as my faith fails, I ask the Holy Spirit to convict me, so I cry out to You, dear Jesus, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

**Step 1: SEEK**

**Week 1 Day 4 BOREDOM** Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the

weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Isaiah 40:28-29 Why am I bored? Perhaps I have been at this job too long. Maybe I'm just weary from laboring all my life. Okay, so boredom is not a crime, but it is a condition, a condition that can be fixed only by the Lord. Listen: "Have you not known? Have you not heard?" In other words, "Where have you been? Have you buried your head in the sand?" I'm, yours a believer, right? You know God is the Alpha and the Omega. Everything starts with Him and everything ends with Him. So why not take even this to Him? Isaiah reminds me that though I may grow tired, God never does. In fact, He sustains me by His gifts of power and increased strength. So, when I feel completely bored, tired of laboring, weary from the nine-to-five routine day in and day out, I will remember to turn. Turn to God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. Yes, God can handle my boredom. Dear Lord, I know that Your understanding is unsearchable in every situation. So even though right now I feel as if I can't take another day of the same old thing, I focus instead on the fact that You will increase my ability to bear all things. Even when I'm feeling disinterested and disturbed, You will give me the power to endure. Action Point: Today I look for signs of God's presence in the mundane, knowing that often the divine is in the details. Step 1: SEEK Week 1 Day

5 AUTHENTICITY Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him." John 7:16-18, NIV When Jesus walked and talked and healed people, He in no way sought to draw attention to Himself. Amidst all the oohs and ahhs, He never once said, "Look at Me. If you thought that was something, watch this!" Lord God, let me follow Jesus' example of always seeking to do Your will for Your glory and always aiming to live according to Your truth. I've heard American journalists throw around the phrase truth in reporting. It's an ethical principle throughout the industry to report just the facts when covering a story. Such journalism jobs are easy compared to the one I'm setting my mind to do. Every day I am covering The Story, the one God is writing of my life. I am reporting on it to others through what I say, how I act, and most of all in what I do. I don't ever want to be a fake. I want to be the real deal, used by Him at anytime and in anyway. Lord, let me not be like the treacherous Judah of old, who did not turn to You with her whole heart, but instead did so in pretense (see Jeremiah 3:10). Search my heart, Father. Look closely at my intentions. Place them under Your heavenly microscope, and whatever You find that is not authentic, take it out and start the process of purifying me once again. Action Point: Today before I speak or act, I will think, For the honor of Him who sent me