

FREE- FALLING

*True Stories of One Man's
Leap into the Miraculous*

by Chuck Parry

Free-Falling

True Stories of One Man's Leap into the Miraculous

Copyright ©2010 by Chuck Parry
All rights reserved

This book is protected by the copyright law of the United States of America.
This book may not be copied or reprinted for commercial gain or profit.
The use of short quotations or occasional page copying for personal or group study
is permitted and encouraged. Permission will be granted upon request.

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible,
New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.
Used by permission. All rights reserved.

ISBN-10: 1453748784

ISBN-13: 978-1453748787

cparrybusiness@gmail.com

Additional copies may be ordered directly from this address:

<https://wwwcreatespace.com/3475080>

Printed in the United States of America

DEDICATION

I dedicate this, my first real adventure in book writing, to my family who shared the journey and lived through many of these escapades with me: my wife Linda and our three children, Faith, Grace, and Jesse. This is the real heritage I leave to you, and to my grandchildren, Christopher and Chiara. May you be blessed with many years of life-transforming adventures and miraculous encounters of your own, always finding love and abounding with fun!

ENDORSEMENTS

Chuck is like one of those storytellers of old, but his stories are not fables or fairy tales; they are Holy Spirit adventures. I am honored and challenged when I hear his stories, and also grateful to participate in new adventures with him!

— *Geir Christian Johannssen, Krakstaad, Norway*

Chuck is a Legend. After hearing the stories of his life and journey, I am constantly finding myself responding with the phrase: “You’ve gotta be kidding me, Chuck!” Just when you think you have heard it all, he busts out another one of his everyday stories from the massive archive, and your mind is blown away again. The thing I love about hearing these stories is that they’re not just a few moments in his life, but for Chuck they have proven to be characteristic of his lifestyle — to expect the impossible, to believe for the miraculous in a childlike way, and to step out in faith and be a part of what God is currently doing today. What an adventure to walk with our God the way He intended us to. People who think following God is boring must hear a bit of Chuck’s life and they’ll reconsider.

— *Gabriel Adam Pepperd, Wasilla, Alaska*

This book is not just a personal recollection of historical events; it is an invitation to experience the same supernatural adventures as Chuck and to come to know the source behind his supernatural friendship. Chuck Parry

retells his story in a way that almost enables the reader to see, taste, smell, and touch what Chuck has experienced. What impresses me the most is that Chuck continues to live this adventure in the supernatural day by day. This is real!

— *Andy Mason, Hastings, New Zealand*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sally Valin ~ this book would not look or read like it does today without your tireless efforts at editing and your attention to detail. Your standard of excellence makes me look great. I'm grateful to have you for a sister and friend.

Brad Webster ~ your creative abilities have gone further than cover design. Thanks for your coaching in every area.

Aaron McMahon ~ your affirmation, encouragement, and empowerment inspired me to believe the seemingly impossible: I can write this book!

Andy Mason ~ thanks for being my first writing partner and an awesome coach and friend.

My International Transformation Writers Group ~ you all kept me going and made me feel like "the World's Greatest Writer"! I miss gathering and listening to one another read our latest works. You are all amazing!

My supportive wife Linda ~ thank you for giving me the time to write and for believing in me. You are beloved, brave, and beautiful!

All of my friends all over the planet ~ thanks for continually affirming and encouraging me to write. Your continual expectation of the finished work makes me feel clothed in greatness. I love you all; you're part of the adventure.

FOREWORD

In 1983 I met Chuck and Linda Parry. We had just started going to a little Assembly of God church in a small town in Western Colorado. Chuck and I both had an interest in youth and started taking groups of teenage boys on three-day backpacking trips. I do not remember one trip without some kind of miracle taking place. Prior to one of the earlier trips into the San Juan Mountains we'd seen clouds and rain engulfing the high country every day for over two weeks. We'd planned the trip already, so off we went. Sure enough, by one o'clock in the afternoon it was raining, I mean really pouring; everything was soaking wet. We kept hiking and praying, and Chuck was believing for something special. Just as evening approached we came upon a cabin all dried in, with dry firewood to boot. This was a blessing, as it continued to rain all through the night.

The next day we'd planned to hike Uncompahgre Peak, a fourteener, and for the first time in weeks we awoke to clear, blue skies! It was beautiful; not a cloud appeared all day! The boys recognized it as unusual, and we all kept declaring, "God has given us this day." When we reached the top of the peak we started to pray and express thanks to God for His blessing, and as we said "Amen" we looked up and an eagle swooped right by us, and he was so close it seemed we could have touched him. We followed him as he disappeared over the north rim, and as we raced to the edge we found ourselves looking down the face of a sheer cliff. Partway down was an eagle's nest where he was feeding three eaglets!

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings as eagles...”*

That began a 28-year relationship that continues to this day. Since then we have worked, played, laughed, cried, and ministered together in all kinds of places. Chuck has an incredible and simple gift of faith. He reads God’s word and simply believes it. Because of this I’ve seen so many things come so easily for him, which is sometimes aggravating. I have seen myself and others struggle with truths of the bible, yet he has this simple way of reading it, believing it, and then he starts to live it out. Working with him at the Rainbow Gatherings has been the most rewarding experience of my life. Starting off in the early years with just seven or eight people doing all the work, we’ve watched it grow into hundreds coming to help. Through the years it has been the one event that has most significantly changed and encouraged my walk with God. We have seen many people changed, introduced to God, healed, delivered, food multiplied, and all sorts of signs and wonders. We have all heard the old saying, “You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink.” Chuck has this way, I guess it’s like leaking salt, that makes you want to drink more and more. What he leaks is contagious. Being around him always makes me thirsty for more. I love his love for the Holy Spirit; he’s always wanting to hear and obey. I love his love for people, always wanting them to be built up in their gifts and become all they can become in God. I love his love for joy. That may seem weird, but I’ve noticed that when we see someone crying in a moving meeting, we say: “Oh, God is moving on him;” yet when someone starts to laugh in a meeting we often get offended. Chuck

has the ability to release joy. Real joy that comes from the fact that we are loved outrageously by an Almighty God. Joy that looks difficulties in the face and laughs.

*“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing,
in everything give thanks.”*

Chuck demonstrates this as a military stance and always comes out victorious. I hope this book will challenge all who read it to believe for more; to go out to the edge and jump, for God is faithful in all that He has promised.

— Jody Segura, Cedaredge, Colorado

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
<i>Chapter 1 ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE</i>	3
A Tent in the Storm; Introduction to God; A Cabin in the Mountains; God Gives Me the Farm	
<i>Chapter 2 RAISED FROM THE DEAD</i>	17
Bike Ride to Heaven; Reading the Book; The Baptism in the Holy Spirit; Miracle in a Blizzard; Shifting the Atmosphere; 320 Miles to the Gallon; Grace is Healed; Another Blizzard Miracle; Let's Get High and Read the Bible	
<i>Chapter 3 100% COMMITMENT</i>	43
That Boy is Dead; Full Moon on Hart's Basin; Breakdown ~ Shift Happens; Hordes of Grass- hoppers; Arthritis Healed; Cancer Healed; Knocking on Doors; The Amazing Deliverance of a Navajo Man; I Can't Hear You, God; Brain Tumor Healed; Backpacking Through the Grand Canyon; The Shirt Shrinks; Building a Camp by Faith; The Village Idiot	
<i>Chapter 4 RAISING THE DEAD</i>	75
Grandma Comes Back from Death; Spying Out the Land; County Jail; Crack-House Drunk; Rebuking Death in Uganda; Baby Comes Back to Life Over Skype	
<i>Chapter 5 REVIVAL IN RUSSIA</i>	99
Always Triumphant; Divine Connections; Moscow University; Supernatural Evangelism; Great Favor; He is Jealous for Me; Victor and Victor	

CONTENTS

Chapter 6 THE BREAD OF LIFE KITCHEN	129
The Rainbow Gathering; Becoming a Kitchen in Colorado; Transformations in Wyoming; Bumming a Cigarette; All-Night Drums in Our Kitchen; Gutter Punks; Authority Over Flies and Mosquitoes; Water From Heaven; Food-Line Healing; Drum-Circle Deliverance; Pure Love	
Chapter 7 MULTIPLICATION OF FOOD	161
Elk-Steak Fajitas for 400 ~ Again; Multiplication of Money; Abundance Always; Morning Meetings; Fourth of July Rainbow Style; Raising the Dead in Wyoming; Main Meadow Healing Revival	
Chapter 8 AUTHORITY OVER THE WEATHER	191
Arizona National Rainbow Gathering; Commanding the Storm in California; Climbing Mount Sneffels; Outdoor Weddings; Glory ~ Many Nations, One Voice	
Chapter 9 SOME ADVENTURES INTO THE UNSEEN REALMS	215
Thin Places; The Throne Room; The King on a Horse; Transported?; "... Unusual Miracles ..."	
Chapter 10 BROKERING HEAVEN	225
The Prophecies; The Encounter; The Hot Tub	
AFTERWORD	233

INTRODUCTION

Adventures are experiences we love to remember, to talk about and retell to stir the hearts, or to illustrate a point, or simply to top the other guy's tale. Sometimes we like to plan them, dreaming of where we'd go or what we'd do. But the true adventures we never plan. They have a way of reaching out and taking us, of capturing us. And when you find yourself feeling like you're standing in the open door of a plane at 10,000 feet, and the pit of your stomach is somewhere in your throat, and you're looking out into open space with nothing more tangible before you than *air*, and it's time to *leap* out into it, and you *think* you have a parachute in the pack on your back and you're *almost* certain it will open, then you can be sure *the adventure is about to begin*.

That's how I always feel when I leap into the miraculous. The unseen realm is just too *invisible* and we can't grab hold of it very securely. But I'm certain it's what we're created for. That's why we've got to get to know the One who *made* it. Because *He* holds *us* very securely. And regardless of the conundrum or the impossibility, He's never dropped me once. That's what these stories are about.

And that's what led me to write this book. It all started with the stories. When our children were young, we'd take them camping and we'd lie in our sleeping bags under the open sky filled with a billion stars, and I'd tell them stories of miracles that had happened in their lives. Then when I taught high school Shop class in the early

'80s, those bad boys would ask me to tell them some stories, and they loved listening to them. They said they'd never heard such stories. Later, when my wife Linda and I started a community of spiritual adventurers in a small mountain village, the stories were retold. And when the amazing people who were being drawn to that little community from five surrounding counties began to become radically alive, then new stories were birthed. Each one seemed to contain and impart the inspiration to be duplicated and surpassed. Later, when I was asked to speak at gatherings of remarkable and fun and diversely unique individuals in places like Georgia and Idaho, those people began to ask me to write the stories down. I still remember the situations, the faces, the sincerity, and the stirring in my heart each time someone would tell me that I needed to write a book of the stories. I've been thinking about it for years.

Chapter One

ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE

A TENT IN THE STORM

We were driving up the coast of Northern California in the spring of 1980. Mount Saint Helens had just erupted and we were heading north toward Oregon and right into it. Pretty exciting. As night fell, the little VW station wagon was low on gas so we pulled into a small coastal town. This was before credit-card pumps, and way before credit cards for us. The only gas station we'd seen for miles was closed, and so was every other building in sight. As we continued on toward the next town, I realized we would not make it on the gas we had. We'd have to camp for the night and return in the morning to fill up.

I pulled over onto a treeless grassy meadow at the top of a rocky cliff high above the ocean. The surf was pounding below and a strong sea breeze blew over us. Linda and I made a bed on the grass with blankets and sleeping bags for our two daughters and ourselves — Faith was three and Grace was about six months old. The

stars overhead were just beginning to disappear behind huge black clouds rolling in from the ocean. Wind, lightning, and thunder started to increase, and it was obvious that a big storm was brewing. All eyes were turned on me. I stood on that grassy embankment and I looked into the unseen realm and I saw it.

“I’m going to make a huge bubble over us and it will keep us dry all night just like a tent.”

That seemed to satisfy everyone, so I stretched out my arms overhead and declared it, and then we all hopped into bed to the sound of rain falling. In the morning we awoke to find the grass all around us was soaking wet, but the circle that contained our bed was completely dry.

Things like that have been happening ever since I first met this amazing God.

INTRODUCTION TO GOD

It all started with the bridge experience when I was a college student in 1972. It was springtime, and all the winter ugliness of the big city was being replaced with exhilarating new life. Ten of us, high on LSD, were heading across Philadelphia on foot after an outdoor rock concert just as the sun was beginning to set. Suddenly we approached a six-lane major thoroughfare teeming with rush-hour traffic — a definite obstacle to reaching our destination. Stumbling into each other, some of us headed north for Walnut Street, while others tried to go south. I looked ahead and spotted it: *a bridge!* Well, sort of. It was a set of four steel I-beam bridge trusses silhouetted against the sunset — a bridge under construction. Long black, curving arches spanned the traffic, each about eight inches

wide along the top edge.

“Come on, a short cut!”

I headed out first, like a tight-rope walker, out and up onto the middle of the arch above the rushing traffic.

“It’s easy, see?”

Ve-erry tentatively one crept out, then another. I led them by the hand, one by one, over to the other side — three, four, five of them. The drama was intense.

And then came that moment, frozen in time, as I stood in the middle of the “bridge” and looked down. Instant death and destruction sped by in six lanes, 30 feet below. I looked ahead: some of the group were safely on the other side and a few were nearly there, creeping cautiously along. Looking back, I saw one on his hands and knees, crawling. One girl was on her belly with her arms and legs wrapped around the steel girder, looking down, eyes wide, wailing. There I was, leading them to the other side. I stood in the Philadelphia sunset, and the noise of the traffic faded out and everything became completely still. And then it came — not from outside, yet clearly not my own thoughts. A voice clear and calm and sure:

“You could be doing this for Me.”

And there it all was: the narrow bridge over death and destruction, the safety of the other side, the sudden gravity and responsibility of the situation — life and death. And I looked up into the sky, tilted my head to one side, and in total wonderment said:

“HUH?”

With a shake of my head I went back to the job of getting everyone across. And then off we went ... our own way.

But things were never quite the same after that. All my answers to life and my psychedelic view of the spiritual realm didn't satisfy me. For a while I seemed to get it more together; I even went to classes and did some homework. Somewhere there was a purpose for me. I didn't know it then, but I felt a pull that made me want to respond; a stirring that caused me to start searching.

A CABIN IN THE MOUNTAINS

I graduated from the university that year, a miracle in itself, and went back to New England, to a farm in New Hampshire, looking for answers and a purpose in a simpler life. That summer I became involved in the largest drug deal of my life. It entailed driving a BMW sports car from New Hampshire to San Francisco and trading it to purchase a huge quantity of LSD, which I brought back on a commercial airliner in a backpack.

I'd stopped in Colorado en route and climbed around in the mountains, exploring the vastness of the Rockies. There I encountered monumental strength and rugged beauty in an outrageous display of creativity and variety. I was inspired and immensely stimulated. It took my breath away. It left me speechless, yet at the same time I felt the blood pumping in my veins. I stood on a mountaintop and looked at my *hands*, and it was as if I were seeing them for the first time. I was incredibly *alive*. Right there the thrill of the drug adventure left me, and I went on to complete the trip with an overwhelming desire to return to

the mountains and seek ... what? Peace of mind? Cosmic consciousness? The Creator of it all? Is it God; is God real? Could I encounter God? Could I have a real experience with God? Is God more than a concept, more than a consciousness, more than a “Force”? Could I find God in the midst of this vast cosmos? Is God personal, relational? If so, could I meet Him, experience Him, know Him? I was really curious.

In California I was in two automobile accidents on two consecutive days. Each time someone plowed into my rear end while I was stopped at an intersection; each time I was driving a different vehicle. The first time it was the BMW. The second time I was driving a friend’s rusted-out old junker of a Chevy convertible that was full of dirty clothes and, literally, held together by coat hangers. As I was trying to find the fork that had fallen off the dashboard on impact (and which I needed to pry open the glove box to get to the registration), the guy who had hit me was pulling out cash to pay me off so I wouldn’t report the accident. He was an insurance salesman and this was his fifth accident that summer. I was left with the overwhelming feeling of having been kicked in the butt by someone to get me to leave that life and move on to something else ... but what? Truly I was tired of the drug life: false identities and paranoia, people carrying guns, a friend paralyzed by a bullet in the spine, young men setting themselves up as drug lords and gods.

There was a great desire growing in me to change everything about my life, without having the slightest idea how to pull it off. A new location sounded good, and the mountains sounded great. It’s amazing how much resistance we can experience when we try to change the

course of our journey while we're racing along at full speed. It seemed like I was cranking the wheel for a directional change without much help or encouragement from other people, from "the Force" or any other spiritual entity, or even from God, if God was there.

Back in New Hampshire, I settled my affairs and told my friends I was heading out to Colorado. And suddenly the obstacles and the hurdles appeared. First some friends thought it was a great idea — "Chuck's off on an adventure; let's go along." The same relationships and lifestyle I was trying to flee wanted to come along, to follow me. And then I began to encounter a lot of religious fanatics with their talk about consciousness and gurus. I ended up in a large cabin in the mountains with sometimes 20 people dropping in from Denver as well as from the east and west coasts.

I turned sour and growled and withdrew. I remember one day sitting on the roof of the house, just after Christmas, watching people as they drove in from skiing and out to other places. They had to come up on the roof to talk to me. Gradually all the people dispersed. I can still see the face of the girl I'd been living with as she turned to look out of the rear window of the Volkswagen; she gave me a cautious smile and a wave as the car disappeared down the road.

And I felt free that day. And the snow came and my car broke down and I ran out of food and it kept snowing and I went inside to wait it out ... and I crossed a threshold of anticipation and expectancy.

And at last I was *ALONE*.

Except, there was this guy who was into some Indian

guru he'd discovered when he was in prison on a drug bust. He was helping me put my car back together in a garage down the mountain and he kept feeding me a mixture of Hindu-American thought and cosmic consciousness. Everything I was experiencing seemed to be a peripheral distraction from the strange pull I was feeling in my heart. But I needed more than a Force. I needed a real and relational God! I knew, somehow really knew deep inside, that if God were real I should be able to experience Him; He would want me. He was somehow reaching out to me.

There was nothing left — the money, friends, pride, social standing, education, thrills ... they were all gone. It was just me and the oatmeal in this cabin in the snow. For a week I lived on oatmeal, every meal. No butter, milk, brown sugar. Just oatmeal. And I loved it. Everything was getting simpler, like oatmeal. Then one night a week later, after working on my car down the mountain, I stopped in at my mechanic friend's kitchen door and, while talking, spied a cube of butter on his counter.

“Butter!”

“Yeah. Hey, you want it?”

“Really? Could I?”

“Hey, take it, man, it's yours.”

Off I went into the night, boots squeaking on the snow. The crystal black sky was pulsing with stars, and there was the old toenail moon and my frozen breath as I huffed up the mountain with my treasure in the pouch of my overalls, close to my heart. Home to a bowl of oatmeal, with *butter*.

I didn't know how to pray in those days; but I would talk to God. "*I want to know You. How can I know You, God?*"

I had one book, the "Tao Te Ching" by Lao Tsu. It spoke of the virtuous man and what he would do, the choices he would make. I was definitely *not* the virtuous man. How do I become the virtuous man? Do I want to? Wisdom and excellence were alluring, but I wasn't sure I knew *how* to make excellent or virtuous choices.

And I had some Grateful Dead records. (*Vinyl records* – this was 1972.) Nothing was happening and God seemed unattainable, and I was discouraged and ready to quit. Right then this Jerry Garcia song came on:

*"Won't you try just a little bit harder,
Couldn't you try just a little bit more ..."*

And I'd concede and try again: "*God, I want to know You, experience You, encounter You. How can I know You?*"

And the answer came in the morning.

The sun rose brilliantly in the clear sky, a blinding light reflected on the snow outside the windows of the dark cabin. I prayed. Suddenly the room was full of light, brighter than outside, and I was overwhelmed by the presence of *Jesus*. I didn't see Him and He didn't talk, but I knew it was He. I hadn't been looking for *Him*. I hadn't made that connection and had not expected to encounter Jesus. Why *Him*? And suddenly something in me knew why, and I heard a saying in my head:

*"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.
No one comes to the Father except through Me."*

And then I did something that was an honest cry from my real place of need — I asked Him to be my Guru, my Teacher. I knew that I needed one, and I felt so emptied of my own self-importance that I was really, finally ready to learn. I actually knelt down in the Presence of something supernatural and awesome and surrendered myself to Him.

I left that cabin a changed man, or maybe even a man for the first time. There were values and habits that changed so fast I didn't know what was happening. No more drug dealing. I got a job. I cared about other people. I started listening, looking, searching ... but for what? And then Wisdom, Excellence, and Virtue began to ambush me.

I stayed in the mountains and lived out of a backpack, even in the snow, because there I felt safe with God. Even while I was working construction, I'd drive into the mountains at the end of the day, put my pack on, and hike up to a good camping spot, sometimes in the dark. I'd get out my stove and cook a meal and talk to God, and then watch the stars appear and wonder at the vastness of the universe. I'd ask questions, and then somehow I'd know the answer, and right when the answer would come to me a huge shooting star would zip across the sky like an exclamation point! God didn't speak much, but the conversations were powerful and stimulating. By the summer I was working in the fruit orchards of Western Colorado and saving money for a tipi. I loved the mountains, and a tipi was really glorified camping, with a fire inside and all ... but I dreamed of growing my own food. So I talked to God about it.

GOD GIVES ME THE FARM

It was in the early spring of 1974 that I began asking God about farming. Then I met Larry. He was a doctor from Chicago who had taken LSD and gotten into a purple school bus with his wife and three kids and taken to the road. They ended up in Western Colorado and bought a farm, and it became a hippie commune. So Larry invited me to move my tipi down to his place on Redlands Mesa and join them. I thought I'd check it out.

The spring weather was still cold and the trees were bare, but the earth smelled dank and rich. I was hitchhiking down valley when an old farmer and a young woman picked me up. They were heading to Delta, the county seat about 30 miles west, and asked where I wanted to go. Well, I knew the farm was up on Redlands Mesa, but I didn't know where, so I told them that if they could head me in that direction I knew the Lord would get me there. The old gentleman's eyes brightened and he got a little excited as long as we were bringing the Lord into it. The woman knew the neighbors of the farm I was seeking and felt sure that if we got close she'd recognize the place. So we took off on an adventure up country roads, past orchards and ranches, conferring at every crossroad until we came to a consensus, and amazingly we never took a wrong turn. Within about 45 minutes we stopped in front of a somewhat dilapidated farmhouse surrounded by still-leafless cottonwoods. We looked at each other and agreed that this was definitely the place. There was some hugging and the old man blessed me, and it felt like we were old friends as I stepped out of the truck in front of the driveway. It was the strangest thing: though I had never seen the place, I felt as if I were coming home

as I walked up the drive.

I moved my tipi there the next week, setting it up on a grassy bank by the creek, with acres of sagebrush behind me and a view of the fields to the east. I could see mountains in the distance for 360 degrees around me; there were very few trees, and the sky was vast and open overhead. I was on the far side of the 80 acres, while the rest of the folks lived in the farmhouse, barn, and school buses clustered up at the road. It didn't take me long to wonder what I was doing there, as the relationships were strange on the farm. Individually the people were interesting and unique, but their interactions were dramatic and confusing. One morning I decided to stay at my tipi, and spent the day just messing around and talking to God.

“Is this where I'm supposed to be? This is the most confusing place I've ever been. Are You sure, God?”

But He kept reassuring me that He had it under control.

“Trust Me.”

When I walked across the fields later that evening I found the whole place deserted, and Larry came by and told me there'd been a big fight, the sheriff had gotten involved, everybody was moving away, and he was leaving and going back to being a doctor. Did I want to stay and farm the place? It felt like God was laughing.

I lived on the farm for 15 years and built a house there. Friends joined me that first year and we combined the farm with their 40 acres across the road. We built a root cellar, barns, and a chicken house and cultivated a

two-acre truck garden in addition to farming 80 acres of field crops. Though people came and went over the years, we worked as a cooperative, each creating our own housing and each taking on some aspect of the work, and we all shared in the harvest. For the first few years we ate only what we raised; we raised our own beef, lambs, turkeys, chickens for meat as well as layers, goats for milk, bees for honey, wheat, blue corn, potatoes, beans, and a variety of other things. We canned and froze all our fruits and vegetables to get us through the winter. It was a healthy, satisfying, hard-working life, and later that summer a beautiful blonde-haired girl came from Oregon and pitched her tipi across the creek from mine. Three years later Linda and I were married right there on the farm.

We had both been searching to know God and had both dreamed for years of farming. Though we had tried out a wide variety of spiritual pursuits, He had been radical in His relentless and faithful pursuit of us. It was there on the farm that we really began to fall in love with Him.

One day in 2009 while I was writing this book, He opened up His Father-God-home-videos-of-the-kids collection from this era and gave me a glimpse that filled my heart to overflowing with how much He loved me. I saw this 25-year-old boy, barefoot and tanned brown by the summer sun, wearing just some old gym shorts, galloping through acres of sagebrush at full speed, hurdling the bushes as he zig-zags across the mesa top wearing a huge smile from ear to ear. He leaps the creek and slows to a fast walk in the soft tall grass of the creek bank, where he follows the trail his own bare feet have

made, skimming the seed tops of the myriad varieties of grasses with his fingertips as he takes a leap, spins around, and scares up a cluster of little yellow butterflies which spiral up around him as he looks up into the sky and shouts: “God, I love You!” For a moment he stands still, feet spread apart feeling the cool moist earth under the trampled grass, and his hands reach up in the air as he sees a night hawk circle above — it makes a dive right over him and makes that ripping sound in its swift descent, then pulls up at the last moment and sweeps away. “*Thank You,*” the boy whispers in his heart. And I’m watching the movie in my head and I’m inside the boy again, and I remember how sweet it is to first fall in love.

I used to love drawing and painting, but when I started farming God gave me a different canvas. He showed me the young man on the old Massey 65 tractor discing a field in the springtime that had been plowed in the fall. I remembered how I loved to crisscross the field with furrows and then make sweeping curves and circles until I had something like a Japanese raked-sand garden, but this one covered six acres and the only One who could see it all was God. I’d look up and ask Him how He liked it.

Another time I climbed to the top of a nearby mountain and looked out at the vastness of the Colorado Rockies — 14,000-foot peaks in waves spreading into the distance. I felt so insignificant that I asked:

“God, do You really know me? Am I only a speck in this great expanse?”

Just then I looked across at a mountain miles away and saw a dark speck in the air above it. The speck began

to move toward me and made huge circles as it soared in the sky. It spiraled closer and closer and grew larger and larger as it headed across the valley toward me. I watched as the bald eagle flew my way in giant sweeping curves until it came to a stop directly above me, huge and impressive, hovering on an updraft. It stayed there for what seemed forever, although it seemed impossible for it to remain in that one spot. Then it let out an eagle screech, over and over again above me. I was rocked to my core, shaking and weeping in awe as I felt God's love and closeness all over me. He's really that awesome.