

# BOOK FUN MAGAZINE

*January 2014  
Happy New Year!!!*

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## Sharon Jaynes Interview with Kathi Macias

When I hear the name “Sharon Jaynes,” I think “girlfriend”—and who doesn’t? Because Sharon is one of the co-founders of Girlfriends in God, Inc., that’s a natural association. But let’s get to know Sharon *before* and *in addition to* her Girlfriends in God days, shall we?

**Kathi:** Sharon, let’s begin at the beginning. Tell us about your life even before meeting and taking your husband’s last name of Jaynes. What was your life as a little girl like?



*Sharon: Like many children living through the depression in rural North Carolina, my parents graduated from high school and said “I do” at the altar a few weeks later. Ten months passed, and then they heard their first baby’s cry. Five years after my brother was born, I made my grand debut on a snowy night just a few days before Christmas.*

*From the very beginning, my parents had a rocky marriage. I don’t remember much about my first five years of life, but I do remember many heated arguments and violent outbursts, followed by periods of cold, passive aggression.*

*My father ran a building supply company and*

spent most of his time away from home, working or carousing with friends. And even though his place of business was only a few miles from our home, I felt that his heart was in a place I could never find. A battle raged in my little-girl heart between a part of me that longed to be a daddy's girl and a part that feared even getting near him.



My family lived in a beautiful brick ranch-style home, with columns supporting the elongated front porch and sixty-foot pine tress forming a shady canopy over our roof. With two kids and a collie dog named Lassie, we looked like the typical All-American family. But behind the peaceful exterior loomed a deep, dark secret.

My father had a drinking problem, and many nights he came home only to erupt in violent fits of rage. My parents fought both verbally and physically in my presence, and I saw many things a little child should never see and heard words that a little child

should never hear. I remember going to bed, pulling the covers up tightly under my chin, and praying that I could hurry up and go to sleep to shut out the noise of my parents' yelling and fighting.

During those early years, I had a pink musical jewelry box. Many nights I slipped out of bed, turned the key in the back of the box, and opened the lid to hear the beautiful music in hopes it would drown out the fighting in the next room. I pretended I was the ballerina who popped up when the lid was opened and tried to let the music take me to a peaceful, magical place.

On several occasions, I awoke to broken furniture, my mother's black eye, and a weeping father making promises that it would never happen again. Sadly, it did.

I felt like something was wrong with me. I longed to be cherished or valued, but felt I was always in the way and a poor excuse for a daughter. I surmised that I was not pretty enough, smart enough, talented enough, or good enough to be the apple of anyone's eye.

Inferiority, insecurity, and inadequacy became the grid system or the filter formed over my mind. Every thought I had, every interpretation of my little world, had to go through that sieve of deficiency before it entered my mind. By the time I was a teenager, that filter was cemented firmly in place.

But God didn't leave me that way. Don't you just love the words "but God?" They are my two favorite words in





the Bible. But God didn't leave me that way.

When I was twelve-years-old, I became friends with a girl in my neighborhood, Wanda Henderson. We had known each other since first grade, but truly bonded by the sixth. I loved being in the Hendersons' home. Mr. and Mrs. Henderson hugged and kissed in front of us, had pet names for each other, and seemed to truly love one another. I had never seen married people act that way before. And while I didn't understand why that family was so different from mine, I knew it had something to do with Jesus.

Mrs. Henderson walked around their home doing housework and singing praise songs to the Lord. She even talked to and about Jesus like she knew Him personally. I thought that was strange.

Amazingly, my family, as broken as we were, went to church on Sundays. With all the alcohol, fighting, and a host of other vices that went on behind the pristine doors of my home, we went to a very politically correct, socially prestigious church...fighting all the way.

But we looked good in our crisply pressed Sunday best. We'd walk through the doors of that church and people would ask, "How are you today?" To which we would respond, "Fine, just fine. And how are you?" But we were anything but "fine," and I suspect they weren't either. We heard ear-tickling, non-offensive sermons that were moral enough to make us feel we'd done our American duty, but not spiritual enough to convict or transform us in any way.

Eventually the Hendersons invited me to go to church with them, and I realized that most of the people in their church talked about Jesus Christ like they knew Him personally. They talked about having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, something I had never heard before. In my teenage heart, I began to sense that there was a big difference between having a religion in my life and having a personal relationship with Christ.

I wanted what they had. I went to this church and drank in every word the pastor and teachers had to say about a Savior who loved me so much He gave His life for me on Calvary's cross so that I could have eternal life—a Savior who paid the penalty for my sin. I learned that He loved me, not because I was pretty or because I could do things well, but just because I was His.

The following year, Mrs. Henderson started a Bible study for teenagers in the neighborhood, and I began a love affair with God's Word. One night, when I was fourteen, Mrs. Henderson sat me down on the couch.

"Sharon," she asked, "are you ready to accept Jesus as your personal Savior and Lord?"





*With tears streaming down my cheeks, I answered, “Yes.”*

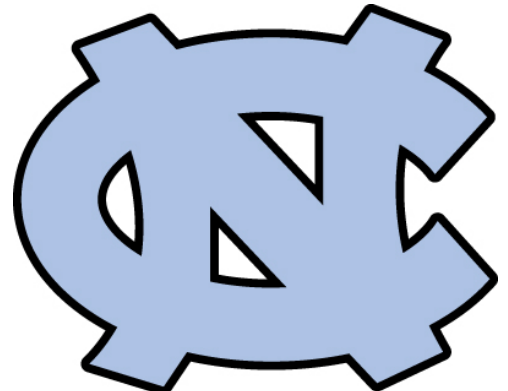
*At the very moment I accepted Christ, my dead spirit sprang to life, and I was a brand new creation (see 2 Corinthians 5:17).*

*Yes, there were many wounds that needed healing, emotions that needed mending, and thought patterns that needed reprogramming with the Truth, but God flung open the jail-cell doors of inferiority, insecurity, and inadequacy and beckoned me to live fully and free.*

*The journey did not end the moment I said “yes” to Christ. It was only the beginning. From that time forward, God has continued to meld me and mold me to be the woman He intended me to be. Through trials, tragedies, and turmoil, through victories, successes, and joys, God continues to teach me how to embrace who I am, what I have, and where I am as His child—dearly loved, uniquely fashioned, and precisely purposed for His glory.*

**Kathi: How long was it after you became a believer that you met your husband, Steve? Care to tell us about some romantic memories of that courtship/wedding time?**

*Sharon: After I graduated from high school, I attended a community college in Goldsboro, NC, and earned a two-year degree in Dental Hygiene. I worked for two years as a hygienist and then felt a nudge from God to go back to school. So at 22, I entered the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Go, Heels!). Six weeks later I attended a Bible study and spotted this handsome, rugged guy sitting on the floor wearing scruffy jeans and a red flannel shirt, with a well-worn Bible in his lap. I was smitten from day one. Three months later we were engaged, and six months after that, I became his wife. That was thirty-three years ago, and he still makes me weak in the knees.*



**Kathi: All right, I have to ask. Is it true that your only child, a handsome and creative young man named Steven, lives EXACTLY 767.5 miles away from you?**

**In the context of what must be a very special mother-son relationship, can you tell us how and why you happen to know about that mileage?**

*Sharon: Can you believe he did that to me (God, not Steven)? Steven decided to get his Masters in marketing, copywriting, and branding at DePaul University in Chicago. Unfortunately for Momma, he really liked Chicago. The miles? How do I know? MapQuest! I keep trying to squish those miles together to make them shorter, but alas, God draws the boundary lines and won't let me change them.*

**Kathi: At what point in your life did you realize you were called to be a communicator, both writing and speaking, and how did that unfold?**

*Sharon: As I mentioned, my college degree is in Dental Hygiene. Not a lot of writing required there, unless writing in medical charts counts. Even then, the doctors frown on creative writing about the patients. In the early '80s I began writing and teaching Bible studies for the church I attended. Then in the '90s I began writing stories with biblical applications—mostly about what God was showing me and teaching me on what I call “spiritual field trips.” I stuffed those stories in a file drawer, never in my wildest dreams thinking anything would ever become of it.*

*Then, in 1996, I met Lysa TerKeurst and joined her in the beginning stages of Proverbs 31 Ministries. We attended CLASS (Christians Leaders Authors and Speakers Seminar), and God began to give me a small glimpse of what the next phase of my life was going to look like. Two years later I was sitting in a meeting room of Moody Publishing with four book proposals, all of which were accepted*



**Kathi: Please tell us about your 10-year involvement with Proverbs 31 Ministries.**

*Sharon: From 1996 to 2006 I worked with Lysa and a team of wonderful women at Proverbs 31 Ministries. During my time there, I watched God take a small group of volunteers who met in homes and folded newsletters each month, and grow it into an international ministry. One of my “loves,” or “babies,” as I called it, was radio. When I first joined Lysa, P31 was on a handful of stations. When I stepped down from Proverbs 31 in 2006, it was on 1900 radio outlets. I am not smart enough to make that happen. It was a God thing all around. I'm just glad He let me join Him.*

**Kathi: And now on to Girlfriends in God, Inc. You are one of three amazing women used by God to bless so many others in this ministry. Can you tell us more about the organization and your specific involvement?**

*Sharon: About one year after I stepped down from Proverbs 31 Ministries, I*





*teamed up with Mary Southerland and Gwen Smith to form Girlfriends in God. Our two-fold purpose was to provide daily devotions and turnkey conferences. Today, our GiG devotions go out to about 500,000 subscribers. Women receive them through various websites, two of the largest being BibleGateway.com and Crosswalk.com.*

*We have also co-written two books: **Trusting God** and **Knowing God by Name**.*

*The best part of GiG is getting to lock arms and do ministry with Mary and Gwen. Simply put—we love each other. I hope you’ll check us out at [www.girlfriendsinGod.com](http://www.girlfriendsinGod.com) and sign up for our devotions while you’re there!*

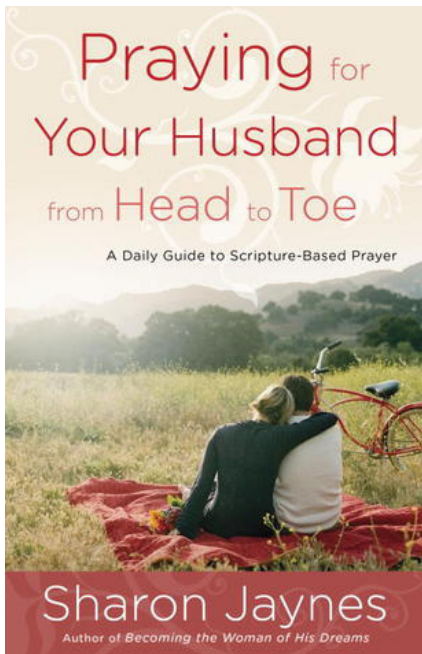
**Kathi:** In addition to speaking around the world, you’ve written quite a few books, as well as magazine articles and stories. Please give us a brief rundown of your prolific writing career.

*Sharon: Oh my. Time for the cliff note version. Here’s a smattering. Being a Great Mom-Raising Great Kids, Experience the Ultimate Makeover (later retitled Becoming Spiritually Beautiful), A Woman’s Secret to a Balanced Life, Celebrating a Christ Centered Christmas, Becoming a Woman Who Listens to God, Listening to God Day-by-Day, Your Scars are Beautiful to God, I’m Not Good Enough...and Other Lies Women Tell Themselves, Building an Effective Women’s Ministry, Becoming the Woman of His Dreams, The 14-Day Romance Challenge, A Sudden Glory, 5 Dreams of Every Woman...and How God Longs to Fulfill Them—and my latest book, Praying for Your Husband from Head to Toe. I’ve also contributed to several compilation books such as Chicken Soup for the Sport Fan’s Soul (crazy, huh?), Stories for the Man’s Heart, and a passel of others. You watch videos and download sample chapters at [www.sharonjaynes.com](http://www.sharonjaynes.com)*

**Kathi:** I know everyone wants to hear about your newest book, so please share with us about it, including how and where we can obtain a copy.

*Sharon: My newest book was released December 17, 2013. It was fun to watch Amazon sell out on the first day!*

*Praying for Your Husband from Head to Toe shows how a wife can cover her husband in scriptural-based prayer every day. The first part of the book goes into 16 key areas of a man’s life, which are represented by parts of his body: his mind—what he thinks about; his eyes—what he looks at; his ears—what he listens to; his mouth—the words he speaks; his neck—the decisions that turn his head; his back—his protection in the spiritual and physical realms; his shoulders—his burdens and worries; his arms—his strength; his hands—his work; his ring finger—his marriage; his heart—what*



and who he loves; his side—his relationships, including his sexual being; his legs—what he stands for; his knees—his relationship with God; and his feet—the path he takes. I talk about how God created man in each of these areas and the unique challenges he faces in today's culture.

The second part of the book is a 30-day prayer guide. I provide a Scripture and a prayer for each of the 16 landmarks for 30 days. This will not be a one-time read, but a resource a wife will use time and time again.

In mid-January, I will be having a 30-Day Prayer Dare where women can join together and pray together. We're going to have a symphony of prayer for our men for 30 days. Readers can sign up at

<http://sharonjaynes.com/praying-for-your-husband/30-day-prayer-dare>.

To learn more about the book, visit [www.prayingforyourhusband.com](http://www.prayingforyourhusband.com) to read/download a free chapter or to watch a video book trailer.

**Kathi: How can readers best connect with you, Sharon?**

Sharon: I love, love, love connecting with my readers! They can sign up to receive my blog posts at [www.sharonjaynes.com](http://www.sharonjaynes.com), follow me on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/sharonjaynes](http://www.facebook.com/sharonjaynes), Twitter at [www.twitter.com/sharonjaynes](http://www.twitter.com/sharonjaynes), and Pinterest at [www.pinterest.com/sharonjaynes](http://www.pinterest.com/sharonjaynes).

**Kathi: Any final parting words for our readers as we move forward into this New Year of limitless possibilities?**

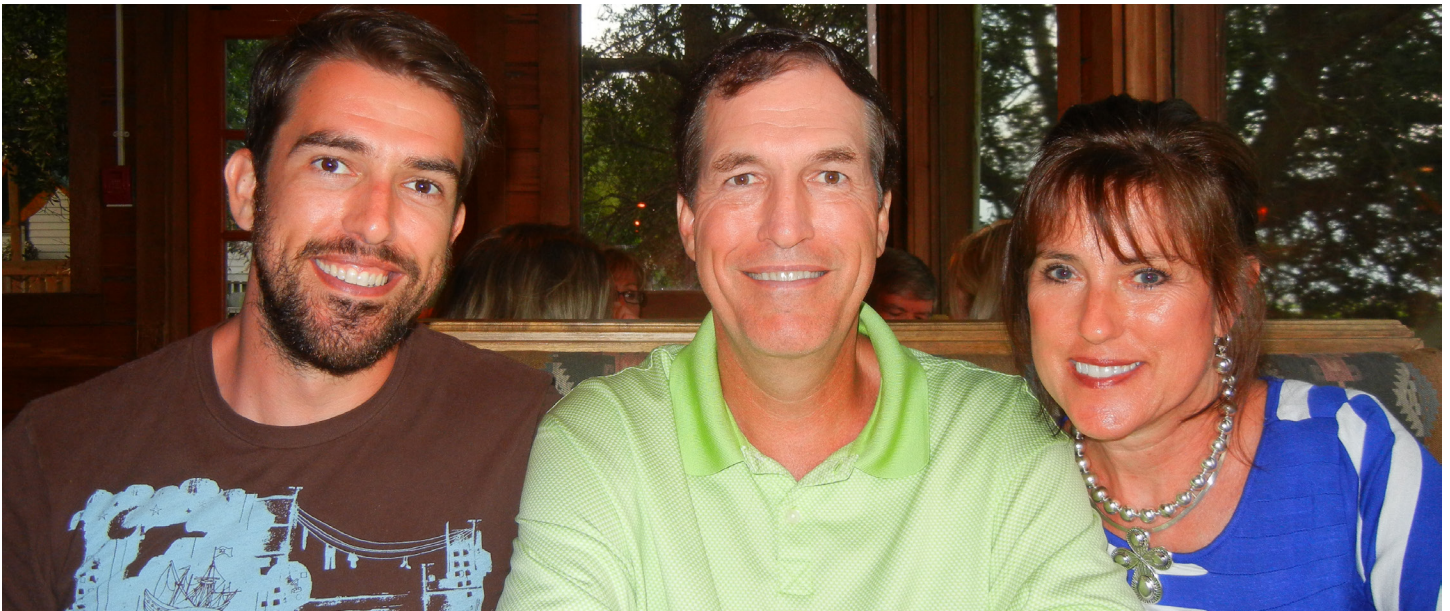
Sharon: I think one of my favorite books that I have written is *A Sudden Glory*. The message came to me on a chilly January morning when I sat down with God and chatted with Him about the New Year. I am reminded of our "conversation" about that as another New Year rolls around.

Simply put, I asked, "God, what do You want from me this year? What do You want me to do for You?"

His answer was surprising. Shocking. Unexpected.

Acts 17:28 popped into my mind. I believe He put it there. In fact, I'm sure of it. "In him we live and move and have our being," He seemed to say. "Learn what that means."





*Over the next 12 months, I listened, I looked, I learned. What did it mean? What did God mean? Yes, the answers are summed up in the book *A Sudden Glory: God's Lavish Response to Your Ache for Something More*, but here's the crux of it. Sometimes we ask the wrong question. As you move into a new year, it's not about what God wants FROM you, but what God wants FOR you. We even tend to look at obedience through the wrong end of the telescope. Obedience isn't something we have to do; it is something we get to do. It is the door behind which the grand prize is found!*

*As we learn to erase the line between our "spiritual" lives and our "secular" lives, we can experience God in all of life—right smack dab in the middle of our busy messy days. That's where my mind has gone once again, as I look forward in 2014.*

**Kathi: Thank you so much, Sharon, for sharing your heart with us so openly. I know you have been, and will continue to be, a great blessing to many.**



Kathi Macias ([www.kathimacias.com](http://www.kathimacias.com)) is a multi-award winning author of more than 40 books, including her upcoming release, *The Singing Quilt*. She lives in Southern California with her husband, Al.

