

You are what you have been becoming....  
and God doesn't waste experience!

*"...all things work together for good to those who love God, to  
those who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28)*

# You Are Special!

and God doesn't waste  
experience...especially yours!





# Have you ever thought of yourself as a snowflake?

Twenty thousand feet above the earth moisture begins to concentrate. Molecules of hydrogen and oxygen condense. Small droplets of water materialize and begin falling to earth.

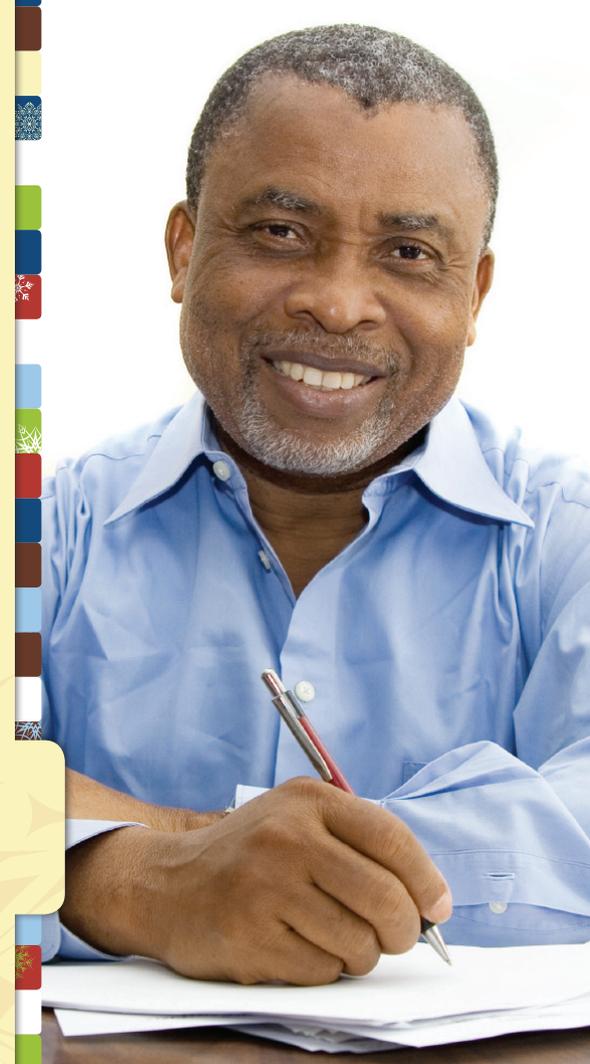
# Snowflakes all start out the same...

At the beginning of their journey the little raindrops are spheres of water 2 mm in diameter with a similar composition and density. But as they encounter frigid air currents blowing up and down, back and forth, the droplets condense around microscopic dust particles in the atmosphere.



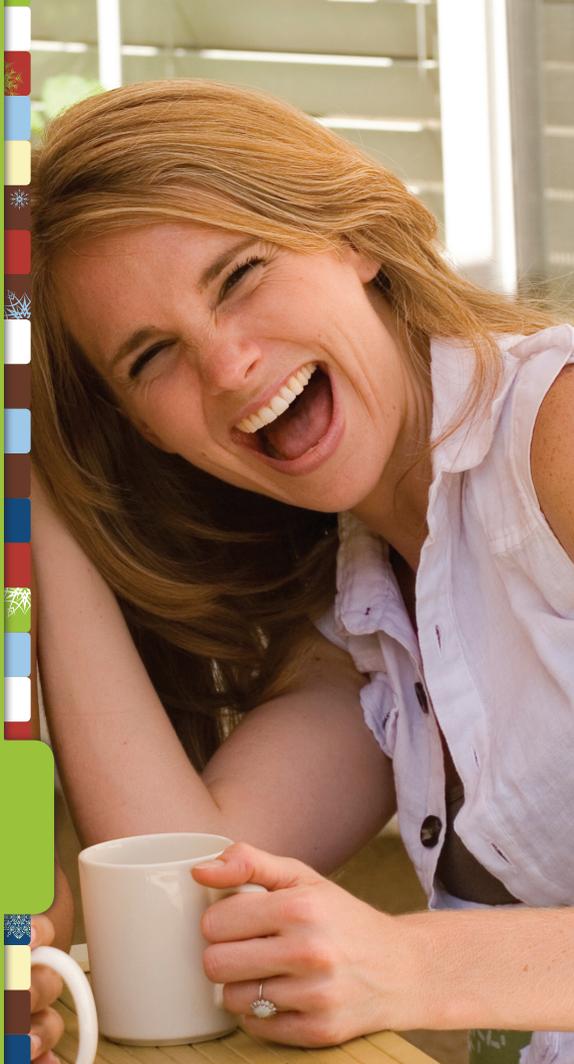
# Then an amazing thing happens...

A transformation begins. The little raindrops start turning into... snowflakes. They change at different times, speeds, and altitudes. But by the time each gently settles to earth, not one snowflake is the same as another. Their journey has transformed them.



# Our lives are like snowflakes...

At the outset of our journey we all look about the same: tiny embryos only a few centimeters in diameter with the same composition and density. But then, at birth, we begin our unique journey. We encounter certain events...meet certain people...develop certain attitudes. We experience love...pain...apathy...joy.



# Your journey is transforming you...

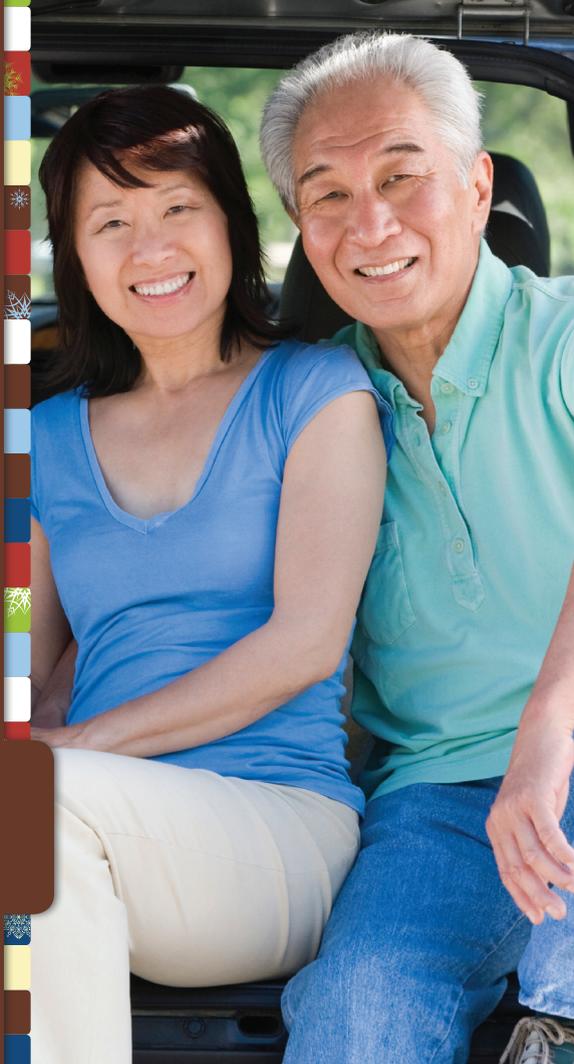
Your previous experiences have shaped you. Some more than others. Perhaps you lost a parent in early childhood, or a child in early parenthood. Possibly you survived cancer, or are fighting to. Maybe it was abuse or divorce that highly influenced the snowflake you are today.



## You are unique...

But, so what? What difference does it make that your life, your pain, your joys, and your passions are different than anyone else?

The answer to that question is both simple, yet profound...



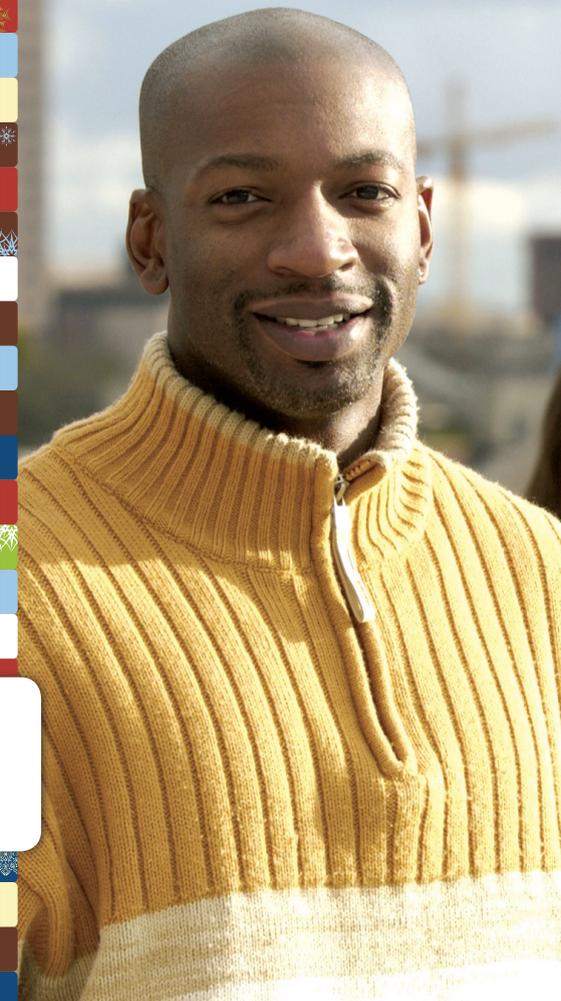
## God doesn't waste experience!

Whoever you are, whatever you have been becoming, that unique person can be used by God—in a unique way—that only you and God can imagine.



# Maybe, at this point, even you can't imagine...

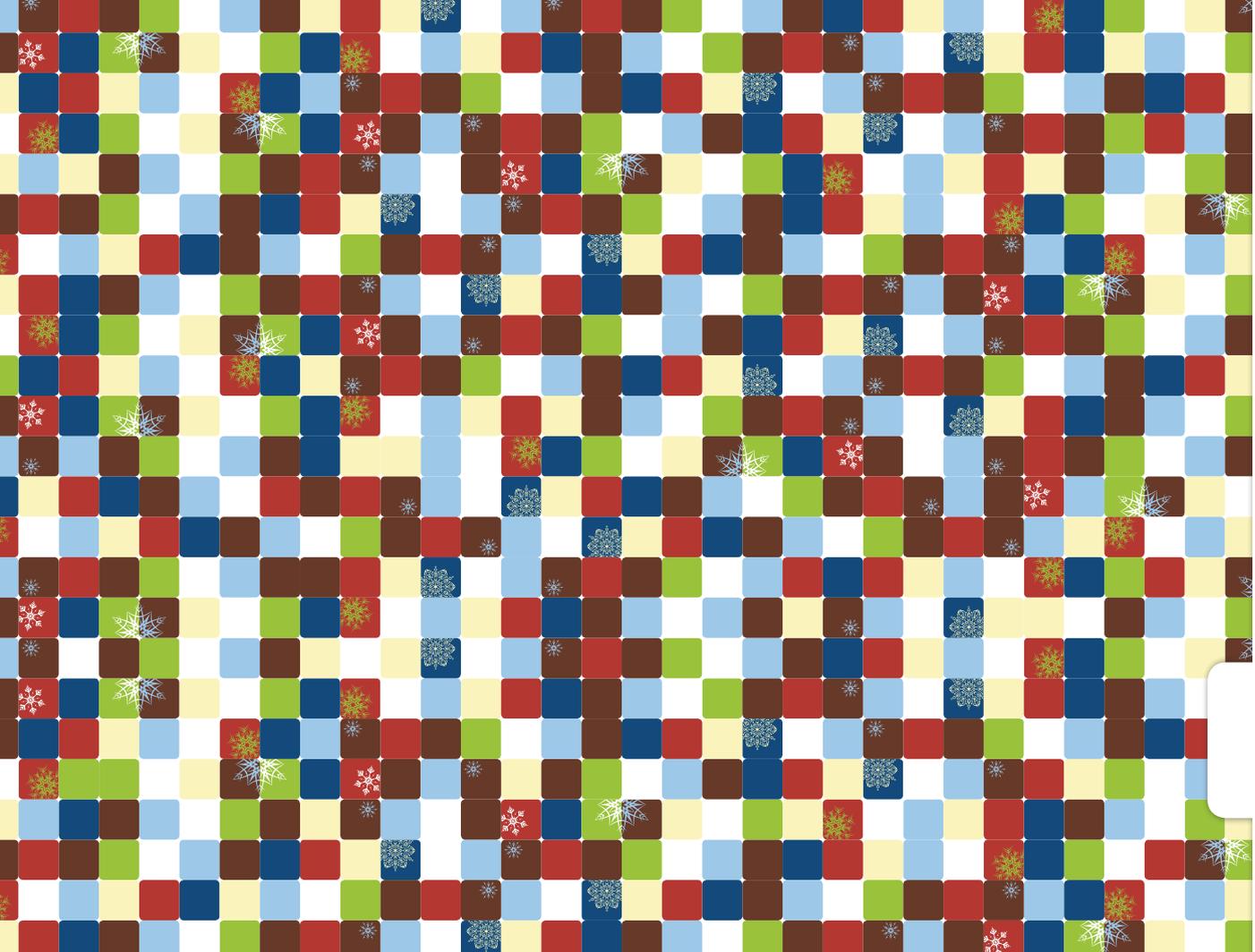
But Scripture tells us, "...all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." In this verse, God is not just talking about you,



# He is talking TO you...

"I want to use your life, and your experiences, in a powerful way...if you will let me." God has been preparing you for something special...and only you can do it! Interested? Take the next step. Look up in the sky! Can you see it?!





*It's starting to snow!!!*

*Some real examples of how God is using "snowflakes"...*

# The Least of These...

It shouldn't happen to any expectant mom. Let alone twice. But Jenny had lost two babies in mid-pregnancy within three years. She had grown up in the church, but hadn't really faced questions of why God allows such pain in his children. Why couldn't it have been someone else? What had she done to make God mad at her? And twice?! She felt so alone...abandoned by the God she thought loved her.

That was three years ago. Jenny never really lost her faith. Her spiritual roots

were too deep, and the love of her family and Christian friends eventually brought equilibrium back to her life. While she still didn't have all the answers...she did know that God's love for her was eternal and unconditional.

She had approached her pastor about helping other young moms who were enduring the loss of a child but didn't have the support, or spiritual foundation to cope with the tragedy. She and two friends began a support group and the

news spread quickly. The group began to grow...and blossomed into a wonderful ministry in her church that now includes three support groups, a counseling referral service, hot-line, first-anniversary gatherings, and burial plot donation.

Jenny's experience, and the empathy she has for moms in such heart-wrenching times, has created an incubator for new friends and loving relationships with families who might otherwise never experience God's love, or the love of God's people.

**God doesn't waste experience.**





## Say Cheese

Ken advanced the slide in his PowerPoint presentation. He was explaining how to frame a wide-angle photograph to include foreground images for depth of field. His 23 students watched closely and then reached for their cameras to practice.

As Ken walked around the room offering advice and answering questions, his mind went back to that Sunday when the pastor had talked about using our interests, gifts, and experiences to glorify God. Ken was a professional photographer and that church service had started him thinking about using his photography skills in a creative ministry.

"Mr. Williams. How do I adjust the manual focus?" It was one of Jeff's students—nine-year old Kevin. Jeff's class was a group of 8-12 year olds, plus parents sitting in back. With the encouragement of his church, Jeff had started a 6-week class called: "A Kid's Introduction to Digital Photography." The response was so good they had to cut off registration. And best of all, half of the families were unchurched.

The class was preparing for their hike on a nearby nature trail. Jeff had raised enough money for the church to buy an inexpensive

digital camera for each child. Before they left that Saturday morning, Jeff gave a short talk on God's creation in nature, showing some of his own photographs as illustrations. He asked students to look for something special in God's creation that morning, photograph it, and then share their best picture with the group when they returned. He asked Kara, a 10-year old from the church, to pray and thank God for His creation, and ask for a safe trip. The excited group then grabbed their lunch bags, cameras and headed for the bus.

**God doesn't waste experience.**

# 22ng/ml

The report was not good. Bob's PSA count was abnormally high, and his doctor wanted further tests done.

Bob's mind swirled. Was this it? He was only 63. He was entitled to at least 15-20 more years, wasn't he? Death had always seemed so far away.

"How do you feel about this?" his pastor asked, as the two sat in his office several days later.

"I'm walking around with a knot in my stomach...hoping I'll wake up from a bad dream," Bob replied. "I go from disbelief...to fear...to anger...to just plain despair."

"Your feelings are quite normal," the pastor replied.

Bob stared blankly out the window.

After a pause, the pastor continued. "It can help to talk about our feelings with others who understand."

"Who would understand how I feel?" Bob asked with an edge in his voice.

"People who also have prostate cancer."

Bob snapped out of his mental fog. He looked at his pastor. Yes. There probably were people who knew how he felt. And, actually, he would know how they felt.

"I heard about a church in Pasadena with a group called 'The PSA Club.' They are men who get together monthly around one common denominator they all share."

Bob couldn't help his wry smile upon hearing the name. They at least seemed to have retained a sense of humor.

"How about if I research it?" asked the pastor.

"OK. Maybe we could do something like that in our church," Bob replied, as he began thinking about possibilities. A PSA Club. Hmm.

**God doesn't waste experience.**





# Get a Life, Sister!

Sue was beginning to dread Friday nights. Another 5 hours in front of the TV. No one to talk with...laugh with...maybe cry with. The clock seemed to creep.

It hadn't always been that way. At least when she was married there was some life in the house...even if he was a bum. But since the divorce, the loneliness seemed even worse. Especially on Friday night.

What Sue didn't realize was that all over town there were women sitting in front of their TV sets that night. Alone.

The phone interrupted her pity party. It was Cindy, from work. "Hey, Sue, you interested in going to a movie?"

"Am I?! You just saved my weekend!" Sue replied, with a new perk in her voice.

"There's a group of girls I sometimes hang around with. We're all single, and decided that Friday nights are too good to waste. So we came up with a group name and just do fun things together. Sometimes we even go on overnight trips. It's great."

"Wow! What's the entrance fee? I'll sign up tonight!"

They both laughed. "We're meeting at the theatre in 45 minutes, then probably going for pizza."

"OK. See you there." All of a sudden the cold night had gotten warmer.

That evening Sue learned the group was called "Get a Life, Sister"—GALS, for short. Two single women at Cindy's church had decided it was no fun sitting home alone, so they started a group for younger single women. Sue felt a connection with them after just one evening, and her last words before they all parted were: "When are we going to do this again?"

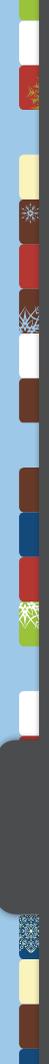
**God doesn't waste experience.**



# What About You?

Has God given you a special interest, concern, or experience that could be the spark for a new ministry in our church? If you're thinking, "Maybe..." then here's the next step. Call our church office and ask for a copy of the DVD called, *Do You Have a Heartbeat?* It's just 10-minutes. But it could be a very important 10-minutes for you...for our church...and for people in our community.

**Remember...God doesn't waste experience!**



By Charles Arn

For additional copies of this booklet, and the DVD ("Do You Have a Heartbeat?"), contact: Heartbeat Ministries, 800-844-9286, or write: P.O. Box 541, Monrovia, CA 91017