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Total Surrender to the Will of God

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TOTAL SURRENDER TO THE WILL OF GOD

Samia Mary Zumout

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Paperback ISBN 978-1-63490-100-0

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Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., Bradenton, Florida.

Some of the names of the people mentioned in this book have been changed to protect their privacy.

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper.

BookLocker.com, Inc. 2014

First Edition

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Book Cover Design: Ana Keyworth, Graphic Designer

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Foreword

Samia Zumout must be one of the first people on the planet to write a book with one thumb, on a cell phone.

She did it that way because she had no choice. Her body has been so debilitated by multiple sclerosis (a disease that showed up quite unexpectedly when she was in her early forties) that she cannot perform the most simple tasks anymore. And with each passing day her condition gets worse.

At the time of writing this Foreword, she could not walk or drive. She could not wash or dress herself. Even something as simple as buttoning her shirt was too much because her fingers would not obey her brain anymore. So writing a book the normal way was out of the question.

But she did have one thumb that still functioned enough to form words on a cell phone, and she was determined to make use of it before even that remaining part of one hand ceased to function. The end result has been very worthwhile.

This is a book about the purpose of suffering. It is about how one soul was devastated by a doctor's diagnosis in 2011 but threw herself on her face before God and asked him for strength. It is about how she discovered that suffering has a purpose – our own spiritual growth and the salvation of others. It is about her discovery that prayer joined to sacrifice constitute the most powerful force in human history.

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Incredibly, Samia is one of the most lighthearted people I know. She is totally at peace with God's will, despite her daily pain and complete loss of independence, and she actually treasures the lessons she had learned from her condition. She told me recently that if she were offered the choice of getting back her original health, while losing the lessons she has learned from that sickness, she would choose to keep the illness.

"Each day is a living miracle to me," she writes in Chapter 9, "and I have never felt such inner peace, joy and unconditional love for others. Today nothing separates me from the love of Christ."

Those are powerful words, coming from someone who suffers as much as she does. I can't think of a more important lesson for all of us—those of us who are sick and those of who are healthy. We all have some cross to bear in life but many of us miss the point. We don't see it as an opportunity to grow. And we don't think of it as something to be offered up for others. The result is a lot of suffering in this world goes to waste. That is the point of this book.

Monsignor James Murphy Diocese of Sacramento Feast of Christ the King 2014

Chapter 1

Suffering

"And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us." — Romans 5:3—5

"If you knew that today was your last day on earth, what lessons from your life's experiences would you like to share with the world before you leave?"

These words echoed loudly within my soul in the middle of the night, shaking me out of my slumber. It was as if God was nudging me to make every effort to write this book that He had put on my heart a while back. God asks us but does not force us.

The truth is, I have been dreading writing the book due to my physical condition. In 2011, I was diagnosed with horrific medical diseases that have aggressively attacked my central nervous system, particularly my spinal cord: primary progressive multiple sclerosis (M.S.), cervical stenosis (neck), and myelopathy (spinal cord). Each disease alone is sufficient to leave any healthy person severely disabled in a very short span of time. Indeed, as I write this book in the fall of 2014, I have become fully disabled due to the extensive permanent damage to my central nervous system. I went from an extremely independent busy person, traveling constantly, to a very dependent person unable do the simplest tasks on my own. I can't

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walk; I can't dress myself; I can't write or type except with my right thumb on my iPhone—which is how I am writing this book; I can barely feed myself and I certainly can't drive. I have become dependent on others to help me with all my basic needs. Every part of my body from my neck down to my feet is in severe debilitating pain, weakness, spasms, extreme fatigue, tremors, electric shocks and many other symptoms. The only words to describe my daily condition are: extreme physical suffering.

Ironically, emotionally and spiritually, I am the happiest and most peaceful I have ever been in my whole life.

Most people have a hard time understanding the last sentence. Even the people who see me can't understand how I can be joyful and peace-filled in the midst of so much suffering. Don't misunderstand me, I am not a masochist. I do not enjoy suffering. Nobody in their right mind does. Suffering however, is an inevitable part of our human experience while on earth. It is impossible to go through life without enduring one's share of suffering. We all suffer in different ways, whether it be physical, mental, emotional or spiritual.

All of us will face suffering, heartache and pain during our journey through life. What makes the difference in our journey is how we respond to the suffering. We can give up and become bitter and hateful, or we can hold onto our faith and deny ourselves. This requires that we die to our ego and the selfish pride that hinders us from discerning the will of God. We must pick up our cross with love and forgiveness like our Lord Jesus and continue on the very narrow path to heaven.

As a Christian who lives my faith and has fully surrendered my life to Christ, the following words of Jesus have become the foundation and spiritual guidance for my life: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it." (Luke 9:23–24)

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These powerful words are very challenging, especially since the world we live in is selfish and egocentric world. It's easier to avoid Jesus' cross and choose to focus only on His resurrection and ignore what it takes to be a follower of Christ.

Suffering was never part of God's plan for our lives. God is pure love and mercy. He does not rejoice in our suffering. It is the result of sin, whether it be original sin, our sin or the sin of others. Although we live in a fallen world that is still suffering from the consequences of sin, this world is governed by spiritual laws and not just physical ones. There is a spiritual aspect and consequence to everything we do in this physical world. In fact, the only way you will be able to understand my book is if you read it with your spiritual eyes.

Many people caught up in the material world go through life unaware of their spiritual being due to ignorance or forgetfulness. Consequently, they remain disconnected from God. The only thing that is true to them is the material world. If they can touch it, see it, taste it or smell it, then it is real. Since the spiritual cannot be seen, then it must not exist

We will never understand Jesus' profound words above or the value of our suffering in this world if we only look at them through physical eyes. No wonder suffering is avoided at all cost whether it is through self-medication, various addictions or even in extreme cases, suicide.

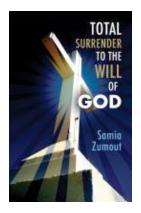
The purpose of my book is to share with you what I have learned so far from my life's journey, not only the lessons from my physical suffering but also the lessons from my missionary work. In 2006, the Lord Jesus called me to surrender to Him my attorney position and other aspects of my life. This ultimately led to my International Inner-Healing Ministry prior to the onset of my disease. For clarification, I have not recently found God to ease my physical pain. I have been fully dedicated to Him for many years.

Several people I have spoken with since my illness ask me the question: "Why would God let you suffer? You have been faithfully

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serving Him for many years." You might be wondering the same. People usually pray to God in a moment of need. Although there is nothing wrong with that, those whose prayers are not answered the way they hoped, or those who are afflicted and feel punished, turn away angrily from God thinking "a merciful God would not allow this to happen!" The majority of people share the view that it's not "fair" that those who cheat and renounce God are rewarded with riches and a good life, while the faithful are often afflicted with suffering.

That is how things may appear to us when only viewed with the physical eyes. The spiritual reality is quite different. I pray that my story will inspire you to look at the sufferings and challenges of your own life through spiritual eyes, shedding light on what's important, giving purpose and value to things that otherwise seem meaningless in our physical world.



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