

Warrior Bride: Building Women of Strength deals with issues women face today from a biblical perspective exhorting women to come up higher in the things of God. Exploring inspiring, motivational stories of women from the past in the Word and incorporating testimonies, anecdotes, illustrations and prophecies from NOW women.

Warrior Bride: Building Women of Strength

by Rusty A. Lang

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WARRIOR BRIDE



**Building
Women
of Strength**

Rusty A. Lang

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Chapter 10 Chrysoprase – Connecting

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

‘Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labour. For if either of them falls, the other will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.’



Chrysoprase is the tenth stone in the foundation of the New Jerusalem. It is a translucent, bright apple or grassy green colour. During the middle ages, it was believed that if one who was condemned of a crime held the stone in their mouth they would escape the just punishment of his crime. Though there is no merit in this belief, it is none the less a picture of the work of Jesus (our rock) for it is with our mouths we can confess and are saved. Escaping our just punishment for our sins (Romans 10:9).

In this it is an choice stone to represent connecting. For there is no life outside of belief in Jesus Christ. There is no eternity without a close relationship with the Father

and there is no guidance without the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Women need a built in default setting set by the Holy Spirit. In computer technology a default is a predesigned value or setting that is a fixed entity. This is important for social media users, internet researchers and a safe guard against connecting with toxic or dangerous people.

As in a computer when it receives a request from someone, it looks at the information sent to it. If a particular item of information is not specified, the Holy Spirit uses the default value that was defined to us when we believed.

In this chapter we will look at the effects of isolation, widowhood, singleness and ageing, focusing on the importance of connecting and networking, especially with other believers.

Women of strength avoid the pitfalls of wrong relationships

Faith Makowa¹¹¹ has some good comments about connecting through love.

‘Christian life is not all about me and my needs. It is a call to deny myself and share the love of God with everyone around me. Our love for God is manifested when loving others and we cannot do this without connecting to others.

It is easy to connect and love others if we have personally experienced the love of God in our own life.

Loving God is to worship and praise him, putting him first and desiring him. Yearning for his righteousness and his Word. We no longer live for ourselves but we surrender ourselves to him. Doing all acts of kindness for others is not to earn his approval or earn our way to heaven. We simply love him with everything we have.

We need to be women who love and serve, having the desire to put faith into action. Generosity is not about money. It is about loving one another, focusing with a sacrificial spirit, living with kindness, encouraging one another and offering our good works to one another, living a life of truth through authentic connections.'

Women of strength promote authentic connections

Genuine networking has a twofold benefit. One inner where it keeps us from isolation and two, outer, so we are able to influence others for the kingdom of God. Thus fulfilling the second greatest commandment to love others as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-40).

Motive is important in networking. If there is a specific purpose in connecting with someone, we need to be honest and open. For instance if a woman wants to connect with another women of influence and is being intentional about it. Otherwise you may be seen as an opportunist and finally become a saboteur when the networking does not go your way.

Anna was able to change her own life and those she influenced by developing an ear, to not only hear, but listen to God's heart.

We find her story in Luke 2:36-38. She was a prophetess who married early in life. Her marriage was short lived, only seven years. Then she found herself to be a widow. Suddenly finding oneself a widow is a big blow at any time or age but this was especially hard for Jewish women of her day. We hear nothing of her until she is eighty four but scripture tells us she served the Lord in prayer continually day and night in the temple.

Mary Elizabeth Baxter¹¹² says, 'Sorrow hardens those who live a selfish life. They give themselves up to self-pity, bemoaning their lot, looking upon their God as hard, and jealously envying what seems the happier lot of others. But a widow who has accepted the Lord her God as her stay is perhaps one of the happiest, one of the most useful, one of the most gracious of God's creatures.'

Anna's vocation became one of prayer. She connected with God day and night. She would have had no special place during the temple services but she would have taken note of every situation regarding the Jewish people and Jerusalem and inquired of the Lord concerning them.

When Jesus parents took him into the temple, Simeon, a righteous and devout man recognised the child as the Lord's Christ, the messiah. Anna was there beside him giving thanks to God *'and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.'*

Networking of any kind does not require a lot of words, just a heart to connect. But when Anna spoke, her one thought was Jesus and she knew who would understand her.

For those interested *The Anna Anointing: Become a Woman of boldness, Power and Strength* by Michelle McClain-Walters¹¹³ is a good read.

God's planned alignments are recognised by women of strength

I first met Barbara Bluett when we served as bible couriers into China together. That was over twenty four years ago. Since that time God has moved Barb into many other parts of the world to serve him.

We never lost touch with each other as we were taken in different directions. And now with email and social media it is easier to connect more often.

Barbara is a single lady who has learned the meaning of the Lord's words to Israel in Isaiah 54:5, '*For your husband is your Maker, whose name is the Lord of hosts; and your redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.*'

Here is an example of how she walks in this truth. At the time Barb was involved with earthquake relief in Nepal.

I was sharing a small eight by eight foot tent with another lady. Just outside the tent there was a little hill. One day when stepping out of the tent I tripped and was falling headfirst down the hill. Then suddenly I turned around and found myself standing upright. I had no way

of doing this myself. The next morning I read from Psalm 91 that God promises no disaster will come near your tent.'

Is it easier for Barb having never had a husband than for those who have and are now single? In some ways, yes. In other no. Nevertheless, God promises to all his people, *'I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice, in lovingkindness and in compassion, and I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, then you will know the Lord'* (Hosea 2:19-20).

Women of strength look to God for love

Looking for love in all the wrong places is a trap for singles. Writing as one who has fallen for this lustful need I can honestly and experientially say, it brings hurt and disaster. This is recorded in my autobiography.

There is no such person as the knight in shining armour. Let alone that he is waiting to come to you on a white horse, other than Jesus Christ himself (Revelation 19:11-16).

Beware of confusing lust with love. Lust is a longing desire for something forbidden (2 Corinthians 10:5-6; 1 Corinthians 6:18; Hebrews 13:4). Love gives, lust takes.

'Destructive lust has a strong craving to possess the life and soul of another in order to both fill an emptiness in oneself and destroy the fullness in another.'¹¹⁴

Mama G Nollywood¹¹⁵ posted this on social media and added at the end, kindly share, so here it is. Her

Christian influence from her Nigerian roots is spreading in real relevant ways others are unable.

‘Dear Ladies: Bitter truth you must swallow.

Sex doesn’t keep a man. If you like, turn three hundred sixty on the bed, he will still dump you. Being sexy without character will not get you a husband. You will only get a boyfriend. Sex can bring pleasure but it can never bring love. Sex is a product of love. Love is not a product of sex. Sex can make a man stay with you overnight but love will make him stay a lifetime.

Bleach until you become white, if he doesn’t notice the qualities of a wife in you, he will leave you.

A man who wins your love with cash may not stay forever. Real men don’t settle down with fake women who love money.

The beauty of a woman can take her into the palace but her character will determine how long she stays there. Beauty attracts men but character keeps them. How you dress will definitely determine how men will address you as well.

Material things have their merits but cannot alone provide the riches of a truly meaningful life. There are some things money just cannot buy like manners, morals and integrity.’

Following on from her comments, *‘Let not your adornment be external only – braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewellery, and putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God’* (1 Peter 3:3-4).

Single women of strength see their state is an advantage in ministry

Serah (Genesis 46:17; Numbers 26:46 and 1 Chronicles 7:30) was another Old Testament woman with clout. Here is a summary of her story which reveals how creative God is when he wants to connect people.

Serah was the daughter of Asher, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. Apparently she lived a long life. Due to this fact, she knew her grandfather Jacob (born around 2000BC) and five hundred years later, Moses (born around 1500BC). Historical research claims she was very beautiful as well as wise. Perhaps she was the one to tell Jacob that his son Joseph was alive and living in Egypt.

Conjecture in historical commentaries suggest Serah told Jacob through a song while playing on a harp and she was the one who made sure that Joseph's bones were brought from Egypt to Canaan, the Promised Land.

The fact her name is mentioned three times in the Word tells us, though we are only given her name, her personal connection throughout the centuries may have given her importance in these generations.

Experiencing loneliness will not draw women of strength into wrong company

The danger for lonely single women is to go online with internet dating sites and accept friend requests on social media without any thought to the possible consequences. Networking and connecting for all the

wrong reasons can be dangerous as predators and evil lurks behind many motives.

I smile and cringe when I get a friend request from an unknown male saying, you look attractive and someone I want to get to know. Even if their profile has the word Jesus somewhere in the information it does not mean they are sincere believers. I simply delete the request. If I sense a request from a male or female may be genuine, I ask through messenger for them to give me one reason why they want to be friends. If they answer, their words reveal all I need to know. This has saved me from some imposters and trollers to be sure.

Ladies, seek the Lord when opening up to strangers. Both male and females are out there looking for the vulnerable with a weakness.

Delilah was such a person. A bad connection spurred on by lust.

She (Judges 16:4-30) was a woman who ruined a spiritual man, Samson a judge of Israel, for money. She twisted Samson's words to entice him to tell the source of his strength. Did she want to control him? Or was she coveting silver? Her name in Hebrew means 'bend low', a fitting definition.

Delilah was a philistine woman. Samson an Israelite. They were enemies. Samson had previously slain a thousand philistines with nothing but a jawbone and caused other deaths and disturbances by his strength and temper.

When the philistines approached Delilah to betray Samson, she was responding to a request from her own

people. She is an example of a woman whose cultural background can sway decisions over what is right.

Samson had a moral problem and Delilah was a weakness for him. Her persistence finally wore him down and he relented and told her what she wanted. The Word tells us the joy of the Lord is our strength (Nehemiah 8:10). When Samson told her, and his hair was cut off, the Lord departed from him.

Delilah is not heard of again. However when we read Proverbs 5:1-11, is Solomon telling his son to avoid such a woman. Is he describing Delilah, two thousand years later? *‘For the lips of adulteress drip honey and smoother than oil is her speech, but in the end she is bitter as wormwood. Keep your way far from her, and do not near the door of her house, lest you give your vigour to others and your years to the cruel one; let strangers be filled with your strength.’*

A woman of strength does not allow
cultural background to take precedence
over the Word of the Lord

But God is a master at connecting people for his purposes as he did with the widow of Zarephath – a woman who accepted the challenge of faith (1 Kings 17:8-24).

This woman’s story is enmeshed with Elijah’s testing by the Lord. She lived in Zarephath, which means fiery testing. Elijah was being hunted by Jezebel and God chose the poor home of a starving widow to protect and

sustain Elijah. God had already spoken to this woman concerning Elijah (v9) so when Elijah approached her on this occasion, she was prepared to provide for his needs but only to a certain level. She did not know him to be a prophet at that time nor the purpose for his visit. She was willing to give him water but when he asked for more, bread to eat, she balked. Her maternal instinct was strong as she only had enough flour and oil to make one meal for herself and her son. However Elijah told her to make a cake for him.

Elijah was relying on a multiplying miracle from God and the woman obeyed against tremendous odds. Was it her faith also that God responded to?

Then when her son becomes ill and dies, she is so distraught that she blames Elijah. Again Elijah is tested as he brings the child back to life. In verse 24, the woman says, *'Now I know that you are a, man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth.'* Here we see it is the widow who acknowledges Elijah as a prophet.

'This woman of true hospitality who, in her willingness to share her only mouthful of food with a stranger whose face indicated a weariness born of fatigue and thirst, and exhaustion due to long travel, knew not that she was to entertain an angel unawares. Yet she took the stranger in and proved herself to have a noble type of Christian hospitality in that it was exercised out of the depth of her poverty. She is an example that little is enough if God is involved.'¹¹⁶

Women of strength walk in the plan God has given them

We have looked briefly at widowhood and singleness. Now a word about ageing and the importance of staying connected.

As the years gather on our birthday cake candles until there is no more room, we are confronted with ageing. Our world begins to close in as it takes more time to plan and do anything, some are tempted to isolate themselves from others. Statistics show this only quickens the ageing process.

As technology takes over younger relatives and friends, grandmothers are finding it essential they press on to learn basic computer and internet skills. If they want to stay connected and network with family especially.

No amount of networking can take the place of the Lord's presence though. Women, we will never come into the best things of God until we learn to walk alone with him. Sometimes we need to allow God to isolate us. God knows how to change our circumstances in order to isolate us. Then we realise he is doing a good work in us.

We may find out we are to let go of some connections to make room for new ones for future assignments.

A close friend in her eighties lived in a beautiful big two storey home with a large garden. It was built for her and her family and she had lived in it for many decades. Now the upkeep was getting beyond her physical

capabilities. The wrench out of the home into a two bedroom apartment in a care facility was a huge transition. She was also concerned with losing the ministry to others by moving away from the familiar.

To the contrary, she has refired. She has a new missionary field and many new connections where she is living.

Women of strength learn to walk alone with the Lord

Facing the trials and struggles from being married to divorce or widowhood, single or ageing may leave us weary. Yet in the time of transition towards the next season in our lives, Jesus is there to bind up our wounds, massage our spiritual muscles and refresh our spirit with healthy food and drink from his Word.

We need to play melodies in our life with what we are and who we remain involved with. Even making new friends and learning to network again would not be so difficult if we did not expect it to be so easy.

The danger is to glamorise the past by looking back on the sunset of our lives. Some women even wander into the sunset of their past instead of looking into the dawning of a new day.

It may be time for you to remember the victories of the past but face the direction from where the sunrise comes. Open your heart and your spirit and receive the day of new opportunities. God is the God of new

opportunities. He is the creator of new things. You may be aiming too low.¹¹⁷

Women of strength build bridges to new healthy connections

Barb Bluett¹¹⁸ has this encouragement.

‘In Toowoomba, Queensland where I am based in Australia there is a ministry called ‘City Women’. The group is multigenerational. One aspect of their work is ministering to unchurched young girls.

As well as the leaders and helpers they have ‘grandmothers’ volunteering to love these precious vulnerable ones. Sometimes they are from dysfunctional homes and the grandmothers can love them and be role models for them. It’s wonderful that no matter what our age or life skills our heavenly Father can use us.’

Age is a matter of attitude for women of strength

A prophecy from Bill Yount¹¹⁹. It was released many years ago but re-activated in 2017. Used by permission.

‘I saw veils of ‘singleness’ that had been covering many single men and women for years in spite of their desire to marry. These veils were covering them to protect and hide them from wrong relationships.

Many thought, ‘What is wrong with me? No one seems to notice me or seems to even look at me.’ But I saw the wisdom of God hard at work to preserve these

chosen ones for the person whom the Lord was preparing and keeping separate for them also.

I sensed the Father saying to their guardian angels, 'Begin to lift the veils of 'singleness' off of their faces. It's time for them to see and be seen by the one whom I have ordained for them. I will continue to order their steps and 'stops' and cause their paths to cross as they faithfully continue serving me.

'As I sent an angel to direct the steps of Isaac's servant to find Rebekah for him, I am sending angels before them to guide them. In the everyday, ordinary walk of life they will begin to discover my surprise appointments with Divine contacts for the desires of their hearts.'

Veils were coming off of many 'widows and widowers' as the Lord was proclaiming, 'Your lonely days and nights are coming to an end.'

I saw some divorce papers being shredded to pieces as some who had divorced each other were now making plans to renew their wedding vows and start over.

All of Heaven seemed to be ecstatic over earthly weddings. To them, each wedding brings heaven and earth a little closer, with the intent to portray the ultimate marriage that all creation awaits...the marriage supper of the Lamb.

An angelic conductor was about to move his baton for angel choirs to come in on Heaven's grand finale of – 'Here come the Brides.' Many who have wept long, lonely nights will discover that their tears were seeds of flowers that are now blooming for their wedding day.

These end-time marriages were being brought into the Kingdom to witness to the earth the love of the Father between a husband and a wife. This demonstration of God's love would be contagious and influence many in the earth to become the Bride to be -- whom the Father is preparing for His Son.'

Women of strength make the
first move to connect

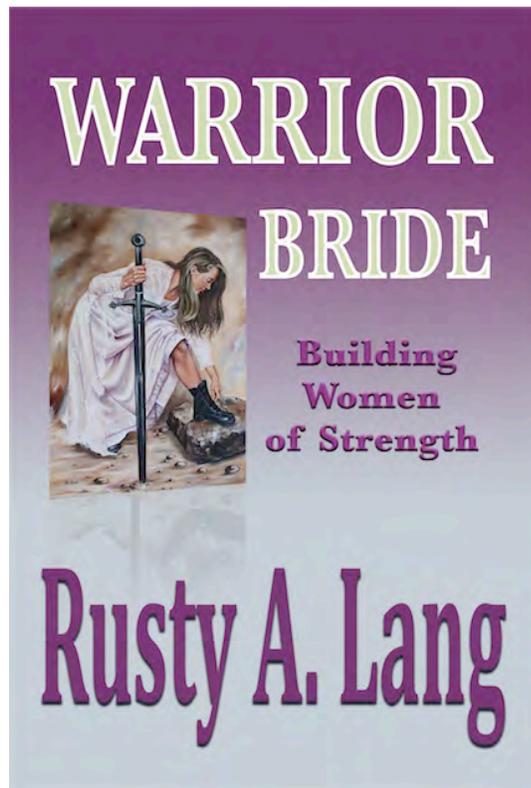
Homeless people have been heard to say, 'People offer food, water and even money but what I want most is their time.'

Connecting is not about holy huddles, cliques and associating with the same, safe relationships. Though there is a place and time for small group studies and gatherings, family celebrations and friends getting together.

Connecting is about making the first telephone call, taking that first step, making the first visit, being first to volunteer and the first to offer help. The first to reach out no matter what the response. The first to risk loving.

John 36, *'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.'*





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