

Should I Just
CURL UP
AND
DYE?

*An insightful
journey through
the trials and
triumphs of a
hairstylist*

Glenna Ritenour

Foreword

The first time I read one of Glenna's stories, there was an unmistakable awareness that God was doing something very special. "This needs to be shared with others." I wasn't the first to tell her this. Soon thereafter, God orchestrated the publishing of this book in His power, timing, and to encourage and strengthen fellow travelers.

Glenna has a gift of being able to see the scenes of a life—good, bad or ordinary, as a window to how God relates to us. His Word really does become "alive and living and sharper than a two-edged sword" that cuts to the depth of our soul and spirit.

I couldn't help being drawn in to travel along the journey with her in each of the 38 short stories. But this book is not a sentimental "chicken soup" for the soul. It's more like beef stew in terms of her ability to also bring in some meat from God's Word that is truly satisfying, and has the ring of being truly good for you.

Glenna's easy, conversational style probably comes out of her years of holding conversations with countless customers in the shop. But her honesty and depth of spiritual maturity comes from one who has suffered as few do, and yet continues on pursuing God with a humble heart and a sincere faith.

This is a book for anyone trying to walk with God and would like to read a fellow travelers' notes.

Thank you Glenna for being humble, obedient and faithful to share your journey with others, including us.

Banks and Lois Corl
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Shut Up!

*H*AVE YOU EVER had to tell your thoughts and emotions to *Shut Up*?

I should have said, *Shut Up!* a long time ago, rather than be quiet when the enemy continually tormented me through my thoughts.

This is part of growing through the trials. So many times, my emotions take over and control my thinking, bringing on fear and anxiety. I wonder, *Why?* when God says, "Fear not and be anxious for nothing." I do just the opposite.

We fear everything and we are anxious about all our circumstances. It seems so simple when people tell us to stop thinking on the things that we can't control. I have had the hardest time turning my thoughts off. It takes a lot of prayer to be able to accomplish this.

One of the biggest things we need to do is give ourselves a break. It is a process, a long-suffering race that takes time to run and win. God knew we would need help in this area, which is why we need to surround ourselves with good Christian warriors to encourage us and lift us up in prayer. We will know who they are; they are the ones who will listen and reach out. They will stand by us and run the race with us.

They have been where you are in some fashion. Don't be afraid to reach out for help. Don't try to go it alone. When you cry out, believe that God hears you and that He wants you to be able to enjoy His love and peace.

The enemy will try to stir up wrong thinking. *It's never going to change. It's your fault. You have always been, and will always be, a failure. Where's your God now? He won't help you. You're not His child.* Over and over he will tell you these things to try to keep you from doing what God has called you to do, or even to keep you from going to church.

This happened to me the other night when I decided to go to a class with my friend. Then on the way there I felt myself getting anxious. Maybe I shouldn't go. Maybe I need to just go home, go for a walk, or lie in bed and be anxious.

Well, with The Lord's help I was able to take control of my thoughts, and I was able to say, "Shut Up!" I went to the meeting and after sharing a little of what I was going through, the ladies all gathered around, laid their hands on me and prayed. Then they decided to make it a night of sharing and supporting where I was able to read some of the things God had inspired me to write.

These writings have been part of my healing process. But the amazing thing was that after I read my stories, I was thanked at the end of our class because it blessed and spoke to one lady in particular. She was dealing with getting herself back on track with The Lord.

I was always waiting for the storm to be over so I would have a great testimony of my healing and God's provision. But God used me in the midst of the storm, during some of my weakest points, to show others that even when we feel hopeless, we can keep reaching to God.

Seek Him out. Cry out and trust that He has your life under control. Even during your struggles you can be a blessing to others. You are ultimately showing people where your faith is, where your hope is, and in Whom!

So when you're on your way to be spiritually fed and the enemy tries to stop you or remind you of how tired you are or that no one wants to hear what you have to say, tell that liar to *Shut Up! Shut Up! Shut Up!* Then say, *the Lord rebuke you Satan* and watch how God blesses you. Maybe even through you, He will bless someone else.

This is what the love walk is all about. This is what obedience looks like. This is God talking to us when we think we're not hearing from Him. This is when He speaks even more clearly. We can thank Him that He never gives

up on us. We should also thank Him that through Him we are overcomers and through His grace and mercy, even our pains and heartaches can minister to others.

So even when it seems impossible to shut up your thoughts, remember not to base it on what you're feeling. Just continue moving toward God and He will meet you where you are. He will use you through your struggles. Before you know it you won't be dwelling on a thought because the Holy Spirit has filled your heart and mind with new thoughts that will glorify God and bring you even closer to your fulfillment in Him.

Remember He has a plan for you! Jeremiah 29:11 says, *"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."*

Father,

Thank You for giving me Your strength when I feel so weak. My spirit was beaten down and I wanted to run and hide, but You encouraged me to keep on going. You continue to give me Your peace through each trial and I'm so grateful. Thank You for shutting down those lies the enemy accuses me with. Thank You for showing me how You can use me and my struggles to give someone else hope. May my life always show others how faithful You are at all times.

In Jesus' name,

Amen