



### **Face to Face**

I met God in Wal-Mart! Yep, you heard me correctly; I was just as stunned as you are. I was reminded through this encounter that God knows me and when we seek him he really does show up!

A few weeks ago I found myself in the middle of a spiritual battle. I was flooded with feelings of shame, rejection, and abandonment. I had just found out that someone I use to care about had gotten married. I wish I could say this was a pure relationship but there were definitely some boundaries crossed. I began to put myself down and kick myself for falling into old patterns where men were concerned. Worse, I had also begun to believe that God had abandoned me because of my actions.

I knew I wasn't going to get out of this darkness without some prayer and a little help from some friends. I sent out prayer request through email and called a couple of prayer warriors I know. It just so happened that I was getting together with one of those prayer warriors that week to catch up on our lives. Boy did she get an ear full! During our conversation she suggested I get the audio tape for an evangelist that I honestly had grown tired of hearing. I said to her "how can anyone be that happy all the time?" Yes I am embarrassed to say it, but that is the truth. She asked that I just think about picking up the audio because his words and his attitude would be encouraging. Toward the end of our time together she began to pray for me. Her first words were "Lord, please let DeAnda remember she is created in your image". She then began to pray parts of Psalm 139. "Lord you have searched DeAnda and you know her, you know when she sits and when she rises. You perceive her thoughts from afar." I could feel my emotions building because this was a Psalm that I have based my testimony on, but she did not know this. I knew God was leading her through this prayer.

After leaving my friend I went to our local Wal-Mart to look at their swim suits. I must like torture because what women would go looking for swimsuits in the mist of an emotional crisis? Well I managed to find one, but then talked myself out of buying it. On

my way out of the store I passed the magazine and book section and recalled the conversation with my friend about the book. I humbled myself and went to see if they carried this author's book. While trying to decide what book to buy a woman walked passed, pointed to one of the books and said "this book is really good". I told her thank you and explained I was looking for encouragement from God. Without hesitating she said "you are a created in His image. He has known you since you were born." I looked at her and said "Psalms 139" and my eyes filled with tears. I didn't know who this woman was but just as an angel had appeared to Hagar, I knew that God was speaking to me.

I was stuck so deep in shame from my past and so busy beating myself up that I couldn't see God. You see the year before I had stopped seeking solitude time with the Lord, only read the word if I had homework to do, and although I didn't want to admit it I was angry at God for how my life had turned out. I had convinced myself that God had given up on me. I had confessed my sins and repented but I didn't believe God had forgiven me. Instead of giving up on me, God put a stranger in front of me and said "You are mine-I created you so I know you- I have been with you since the day you were born". In Deuteronomy Moses warns Israel about there disobedience and also tells them how to find God. Deuteronomy 4:29-30 says, "But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you look for Him with all your heart and with all your soul."

I was the one who had exiled me from God by letting all of those negative thoughts take root and grow in my mind. It wasn't until I began to seek God through prayer and his words that the healing began. I originally went into Wal-Mart for a swimsuit but I walked out with something much better. God met me face to face.