

**Divine Appointments**  
***"When God's Practical Side Takes Over"***

Attendance pitched to and approved by the powers that be. Check.

Conference registration and hotel booking sent in. Check.

Airline ticket to Atlanta purchased. Check!

Now it was a matter of waiting out the four months until I and two coworkers flew out from Washington state to the April 2009 Christian Leadership Alliance's annual conference. This was the first time in my then 5 1/2 years of employment that my non-profit employer had approved such a trip as part of my staff development.

What I did not know was that my divine Employer was also approving further development at a level that would meet some of the deepest desires and longings of my heart.

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It was a pleasure leaving behind Spokane's cool and rainy April and arriving in Georgia's much warmer temps. Settling in to the rhythm of a fully packed conference schedule, the three of us determined which specific tracks and breakout sessions captured our individual attention and off we went!

One afternoon I found myself, along with another hundred women or so, in a workshop offered by Elisa Morgan, who was transitioning out as head of MOPS and launching into new dreams of her own. At one point during the interactive presentation, Elisa asked one of her ministry friends in the audience to say a few words. She stood to speak; a petite and beautifully groomed woman with a PhD behind her name, Dr. Anita Schamber.

Sitting on the opposite side of the somewhat sizable meeting room, I listened to what she had to say. To this day I cannot begin to tell you what she shared. I only know that my attention was held captive. In retrospect, I was just a few moments away from a power conversation, albeit one-sided, with the Holy Spirit. At the time, though, I did not know what was coming...

A mini-break was announced and I retired to the nearest restroom. As soon as I stepped into the stall I clearly heard in my mind what would become five life-transforming words: "She has what you need." It was not an audible voice, but I immediately recognized Who was speaking. This was a close encounter of the God kind. Never mind that it was in the restroom! Women know that is often the one place we can go to be alone and hear ourselves think. Apparently, so does God. My closing the stall door was His cue.

What followed was a strong impression that not only did this mystery woman have what I needed, but also what my husband needed. But what did she have?! *That* was the million dollar question.

By the time I made my way back to the remainder of the session, I was an internal mess. In those few minutes I knew that I had been delivered a message from the Lord. I also understood that implicit in those five words was a choice to be made. If I did not gather the courage to go introduce myself and attempt to find out what this person had that I needed, I had no doubt that not acting upon this word would cost me dearly in terms of loss. Loss of what, I would never know. It called for a brave first step.

Boldness was not my forte and part of why I never embraced my employer's attempts to turn me into a fundraiser. Now the Lord was compelling me to make a 'cold call,' armed with the only thing I had to say to this woman - "The Lord told me in the bathroom you have what I need."

To say it caught her off-guard is putting it mildly, but her response was gracious - in a mildly stuttering kind of way. She told me later just how much it caught her off-guard, followed quickly by a check in her spirit to not lightly discount this rather odd overture. In His faithfulness, the Holy Spirit was seeing to it that we both paid attention to this intimate insistence that something more was going on here.

As I continued my stilted introduction, the old insecurity of not having gone on in higher education washed over me. I had been involved in it all my career - as an executive assistant to the ones with all those letters behind their names. Now here I was, pitching the Lord's case on my behalf to this woman who held a doctorate and was fifteen years my senior. Thoughts raced through my head before landing on the one bright thing I could say. "What do you do?"

A few moments of conversation later, I understood why I had been accosted in the restroom. The first inkling revealed itself in her answer, "I'm a life coach." Indeed she did have what I needed. I was at a point in my life and career where I was hungering for the transition I knew was in God's heart and was burning in mine. But I was stuck at how to get from 'here' to 'there' and what 'it' really looked like.

The Lord then ratcheted it up a notch. Glancing down at the nametag hanging from her lanyard, my eyes got big! It was evident He was all over the details of this meeting as I read beneath her name the words Kent, Washington. This woman I was meeting for the first time clear across the country practically lived in my backyard! Given the divine nature of this connection, the fact that we resided in the same state - within driving distance - should not have surprised either one of us. But then, I believe God loves surprises! I could almost hear Him laughing in delight over this great one He had pulled out from being tucked up His big, billowy sleeve.

We exchanged information and agreed to have a sane phone conversation after returning home from the conference. Once the element of surprise cemented its place in our heart and mind as the divine appointment that it was, our awkward start became the beginning of an incredible journey of transition and the making of a new soul friend - for both of us.

But that's *another* story!