

# Transformed



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A newsletter of TMS Global



“By faith, we believe that God has birthed life in this woman. And we believe that God either has, or is, bringing her to Himself.”

## Life is found in unexpected places

**Sometimes TMS Global cross-cultural witnesses find life where it's least expected.**

Sharon Hill\* is a storyteller. She recites passages of Scripture in an interactive way, inviting listeners to see themselves in the story and to experience the Jesus they are hearing about. She does this primarily among Muslims and among people who used to be Muslims and who are now believers in Christ. She also trains people to share the gospel through “storying.” In Central Asia, she taught a team that visits women who are trafficked and prostituted. The group members invited Hill to go

with them into a brothel so that they could watch Hill’s example of storying in such a setting. Here, Hill tells what happened.

.....  
I’m in Central Asia in the middle of the night in a brothel. The team I was with had been there before. We walked in and my friend said, “This is my friend. Her name is Sharon, and she’s a storyteller.”

*Read more of this story continued inside, pg. 2*

**INSIDE:** Life is found in unexpected places • Sharing the story

We sat down at a little table with a few of the women. There were some men buying women behind me at the desk, passing money along, disappearing into the corridor.

In this culture, older people have nothing to do with the women in the brothel. The women wanted to know how old I was, and then they started to give me beauty advice. We were having the best time laughing and talking. God was building a rapport.

Finally, my friend said, "Well, would you like to hear one of her stories?"

The women said, "Yes, yes, yes."

One of the ladies at our table yelled at the madam who runs the brothel and said, "Turn off the television. We want to hear her story."

I never know what story to tell until the moment arrives. I felt God saying that I should tell the Bartimaeus story. And I thought, "Lord, these are all women. This is about a male beggar. Are You sure?"

I said to the women, "Now put yourself into this story, as if you were there."

*And so as Jesus and His disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving Jericho, there was a blind man named Bartimaeus sitting by the roadside begging.*

I said, "So tell me what you think it's like for him. Blind, begging, sitting by the roadside."

One lady started to tear up and wouldn't make eye contact. She said, "Oh, I know how he felt. I was pushed down the stairs by a boy when I was younger, and I lost my sight. I was blind and went through many surgeries before I regained my sight. I know what it's like to feel blind and not be able to see."

I went on with the story.

*When Bartimaeus heard it was Jesus of Nazareth, he cried out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me."*

*And the crowd rebuked him, and said, "Be quiet."*

I asked the ladies, "So what does that tell you about the crowd? They're telling him to be quiet. How did that make Bartimaeus feel?"

And the same woman said, "Don't ask me that question because you will make me cry. And I don't want to ruin my makeup. Because I know."

Because these are all prostitutes. They know what it's like to be rejected.

I went on...

*Jesus says bring him and the crowd brings him. And when he comes to Jesus, Jesus says to him, what is it that you want me to do for you?*

And I thought, "Oh, dear God. I'm going to have to ask that question."

I said, "You know that Jesus is here right now with us, and He knows you. He is asking you this question. What is it that you want Him to do for you?"

And this same woman said, "Can we ask anything?"

I thought she'd say, a new house, a car, \$1,000,000. I said, "Yes."

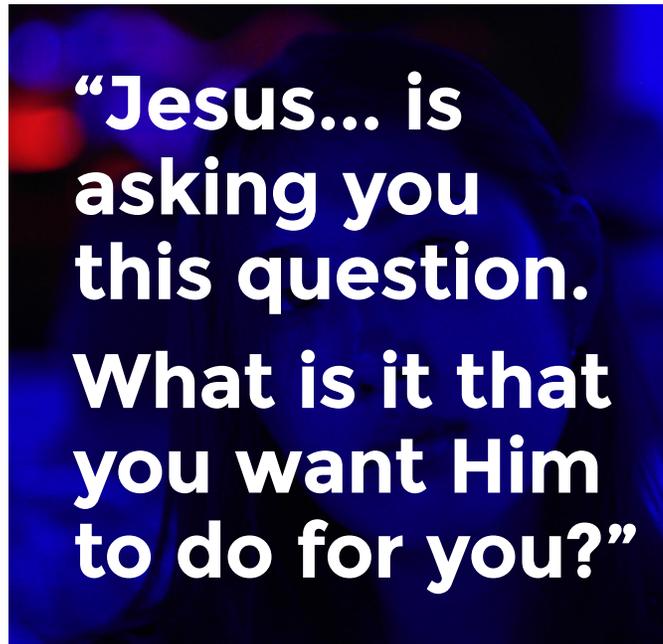
She said, "I want a child."

My heart just sank. I thought "Lord God." In a brothel, this woman is sleeping with who knows how many men. And she was not well preserved. The woman had seen some life. I just thought, "Lord, You hear this." I said, "We will pray." And in my doubt, in the wee hours of the morning, we left.

The team and I went to an all-night coffee shop. I asked my friend, "How in the world can we pray for a child to be born to this prostitute?"

She said, "Sharon, this could be her escape. Having a baby could be her only way out."

"All right, Lord," I thought. "Then we leave this in Your hands. I'm scared to ask. You said anything."





**Sharon Hill tells stories orally, making it an ideal method for reaching out to those in locations where it might be dangerous to have a Bible.**

A few months later I asked the team if anyone had heard from the woman.

They replied, “Oh, yes. She’s pregnant. And she has left the business, and we don’t know where she went. But she’s left.”

We began to pray that wherever she was, that she would know that it was Jesus who had given her this child, and that God would give her a safe place.

By faith, we believe that God has birthed life in this woman--not just with the baby, but in Him. God’s grace rescued this woman through a physical child. And we believe that God either has, or is, bringing her to Himself.

Hill says she usually doesn’t get to know how people’s stories end. But that night in the brothel, a woman heard the end of the Bartimaeus story:

*And Jesus said, your faith has healed you. Receive your sight. And immediately he received his sight. And He followed Jesus along the way.*

“Jesus gave Bartimaeus freedom to go his own way,” Hill says. “But he chose to follow Jesus. We believe that the woman is also doing the same thing.”

*By Jenifer Jones*

*\*Pseudonyms are used for security reasons.*

## Sharing the story

How can the gospel be shared among people who have little or no knowledge of Jesus? TMS Global cross-cultural witnesses are using “storying” in many places, including Thailand, South Asia, the Middle East, and even in communities in the States. Lives are being transformed.

This issue gives you an inside look into storying and of one sex-trafficked woman whose life was changed through a conversation about blind Bartimaeus! It is a remarkable story--one that is illustrative of many other such conversations that are part of the daily lives of your cross-cultural witnesses.

This is an important issue of *Transformed*. It is a reminder that the gospel is being spread as we, like Sharon Hill, follow the Holy Spirit’s leading. Ultimately, it is the Lord Himself who is doing the work. Our part is to stay responsive to Him. Because this is true, one of TMS Global’s values is “Spirit-led adaptability.”

Thank you for *your* responsiveness to the Holy Spirit. You give of yourself so that others can know the story of Jesus. What a joy to serve with you in His mission!



**Max Wilkins  
President & CEO**

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