

FOREWORD BY VICTORIA OSTEEN

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& BETHANY JETT

PLATINUM FAITH

LIVE BRILLIANT,
BE RESILIENT,
&
KNOW YOUR
WORTH

MICHELLE MEDLOCK ADAMS
& BETHANY JETT

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Abingdon Press
Nashville

PLATINUM FAITH
LIVE BRILLIANT, BE RESILIENT, KNOW YOUR WORTH

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Dedication

MICHELLE

This book is dedicated to my late parents, Walter and Marion Medlock, the finest people I've ever known. Not only did they raise me in a Christian home and teach me about Jesus but they also lived out their faith every single day. The joy of the Lord bubbled out of them, and their steadfast faith continues to inspire me even now. This one's for you, Mom and Dad. Your legacy of faith lives on in our family.

BETHANY

This book is dedicated to my parents, Jeffery Donley and Johnnie Alexander, for teaching me the truth of Scripture and how to live daily for Jesus. I love you both so much and will always be grateful for your example.

This book is also dedicated to Steve Frazee, for the love of Bazooka-Zooka bubblegum, Stuart, and PN's. But most of all, for being the person who made me fall in love with youth ministry and for teaching me to own my faith. #1.



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Preface

When Bethany and I decided to start our literary business in the spring of 2017, we prayed over every aspect of our partnership—especially the choosing of the name. It had to be just right. It had to stand out in the crowded publishing world, but also it had to reflect the two of us. After researching several names we’d been batting around, we didn’t feel settled on any particular one until Bethany looked up over the top of her laptop and said, “What about Platinum Literary?”

I immediately liked it.

As we studied the various properties associated with platinum, we liked our choice even more. It’s rare; it’s remarkably resistant to corrosion; it’s very useful; it’s quite precious; and it’s able to withstand the heat, to name just a few.

Fast-forward to February 2018. Bethany and I were both teaching at the Florida Christian Writers Conference at Lake Yale, and our wonderful agent, Cyle Young, set up a breakfast appointment for us to meet with an editor from a publishing house we’d been hoping to break into, but there was just one problem.

We didn’t have a book to pitch.

We’d been so busy with our own individual deadlines that we hadn’t had the opportunity to come up with a new book idea to pitch, yet we had this meeting scheduled. So, at 2:18 a.m. the

morning of the meeting, Bethany and I were texting back and forth, trying to come up with an idea worthy of this publishing house.

I texted, “What if we do a book called ‘Platinum Faith’ and discuss each platinum property and how it applies to our faith?”

“Yesssss!!!!” she texted back.

So, for the next forty-five minutes, we basically outlined the book you hold in your hands today. And, let me tell you, this has been a journey of faith!

You know how people always say, “Don’t pray for patience because you’ll be tested in that area”? Well, we discovered that as we wrote each chapter, dealing with a different aspect of platinum faith, we were tested in that area, or sometimes, we were flat out under attack! That’s how we knew this book was extra special—because the enemy has been fighting us so hard during the development and writing of every section of every chapter. From unexpected deployments to crazy teeth issues to moving houses in the final stretch to finding out a loved one has a brain tumor—it’s been a season of major challenges, a few meltdowns, and intense growing pains.

We discovered these difficult days were the perfect setup to develop our platinum faith.

God knew we would have to walk this out in order to put it all on paper. We both feel like it’s the most authentic, raw, and vulnerable writing we’ve ever done, and so we share our hearts with you—the good, the bad, and the sometimes ugly.

We are storytellers. We are writers. We are teachers and inspirational speakers. We are wives. We are moms. We are sisters and friends. We are lovers of the Word. But we are not ordained ministers. We don’t have degrees in Bible, though we are students of the Word. So, we don’t claim to have all the answers, but we know the One who does.

We invite you to dig into the Word of God with us. We hope you’ll dog-ear pages and highlight passages and share powerful

Preface

quotes with your friends and family. But more than anything, we pray that our book calls you into a deeper relationship with Jesus and prods you down the path to platinum faith.

Know that you've been prayed over as we wrote this book, and that we truly believe you picked up *Platinum Faith* by divine appointment.

If there was ever a time in history that we needed to be filled up and ready to walk in our callings, it's now. So, what do you say, sister? Are you ready to take this journey of faith with us?

Let the platinum process begin.



INTRODUCTION

The Platinum Process

Scripture says that to each of us is given a measure of faith (see Romans 12:3). How we apply that faith is up to each one of us. That's why this book is so important. We want to become more Christlike and grow in our faith so that we can live brilliant in our calling, be resilient when the enemy's attacks come, and truly know our worth.

The Bible says to keep our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). It's our belief that understanding how the properties of this precious metal compare with who God created us to be can lead to a strong, unshakeable, platinum faith.

In chapters 2 through 13 there are four sections of which to take note:

PLATINUM PROPERTY

Here's where we dip our toes into science class. The Platinum Property sections include an explanation of a specific characteristic of platinum and compare that property to how we can grow in our faith.

PLATINUM PROMISE

God's Word is the source of all truth. In the Platinum Promise section, we'll explore biblical examples of ordinary people living out their faith in extraordinary ways and identify how we can learn from them.

LIVE BRILLIANT

We took turns writing each chapter so the Live Brilliant section brings in the other author's voice, thoughts, and perspective on how to merge the properties and the promises of having a platinum faith.

PLATINUM PROJECT

Rounding out each chapter is the Platinum Project where we offer a takeaway, application, or encouragement so that you can own this aspect of platinum faith and make it your own.

OUR PLATINUM PRAYER FOR YOU

You are a woman of faith.

A woman of grace.

A woman of God's strength.

It is our prayer that the words in this book are used to edify, encourage, empower, and most of all, help you stretch and shine for Him in ways you may never have thought of before. What we found as we wrote these chapters was that there were so many areas that we needed to grow ourselves. God used this book to show us how we can continue to learn and be used for Him.

It's our prayer that you have a similar experience and we'd love to connect with you and hear about it.

We're in this together, we women of platinum faith.

. . . and here we go!



CHAPTER I

All-in Faith

MICHELLE

Living a life of faith means never knowing where you are being led—but it does mean loving and knowing the One who is leading. It is literally a life of FAITH, not of understanding and reason—a life of knowing Him who calls us to go.

Oswald Chambers



It was a beautiful day on Lake Okeechobee. The bass were biting. The weather was near perfect. And, I was getting to spend some quality time with my husband, Jeff. We had traveled to Florida, hoping for a little rest and relaxation before his tax season began and my looming book deadlines descended, but all of that changed with one phone call.

“What’s wrong, Ab?” I asked, trying to understand our oldest daughter between her sobs. “Is it one of the kids?”

We knew Abby had taken our eighteen-month-old grandson, Bear, to the pediatrician earlier in the day for what she suspected was an ear infection, but we figured the doctor would prescribe some antibiotics and that would be that.

“I’m on my way to the hospital to meet with a pediatric neurologist. They think Bear may have a brain tumor.”

As I tried to comprehend what she was saying, I did my best to keep it together. I needed to be a strong mama for Abby so she could be a strong mama for Bear.

The next few hours seemed like days. I felt helpless. We were in the middle of the lake, waiting on news from Abby. I was already on my phone, trying to get a flight out of Fort Myers for that night, when I saw Abby’s number pop up.

“Mom,” Ab said, her voice cracking. “It’s not good.”

I took a deep breath.

“They found a tumor on Bear’s brainstem. That’s all we know right now. I’ll call you after we meet with the whole team of doctors. Are you coming?”

“Yes, I’m trying to get a flight out now,” I answered. “Ab, I just can’t believe this.”

As she continued explaining what the MRI had shown, I stood frozen, looking up into the beautiful blue sky, silently praying.

And just like that, a small rainbow appeared out of nowhere. It hadn’t been raining. It wasn’t cloudy. In fact, it was really sunny that afternoon. Yet, there it was—a beautiful rainbow—Bear’s size.

“Abby, you’ll never believe what I’m looking at right now! God just put a rainbow in the sky! As you were telling me about the MRI results, the rainbow appeared out of nowhere! I truly believe that’s a sign from God. He’s got this!”

I snapped a picture with my phone so I’d always remember that moment, and I sent it to Abby so she could have it, too.

As I write this chapter, we’re only weeks out from Bear’s original diagnosis, and we await the next MRI to see if the tumor is aggressive, to see if it’s cancerous, to see what treatment options are available. But as we wait, we pray. We pray all the time. And, thousands join us in prayer.

I don’t know how this story will end. I know how I’d like it to end. I’m believing that God will simply obliterate that tumor on Bear’s brainstem as only Jehovah Rapha, the Lord our Healer, can. I’m believing when they do another MRI, the neurologist won’t be able to find that tumor. It’ll simply be gone. That’s my hope. And, when that miracle transpires, I will shout the testimony all over the world.

But, if God chooses to handle this situation another way, I’m still going to trust Him. I’m still going to love Him. And, I’m still going to serve Him. I’m all in. That’s the only way I want to live.

How about you? Are you living that all-in kind of faith? If you have ever experienced any miracles in your life, then you can’t help but have that all-in kind of faith. We’ve experienced a few miracles in our own family. We know God is able. But I also know that God doesn’t always do things the way I think He should, and

there have been times in my life when I didn't understand why He didn't intervene. I bet you've had those times, too. During those seasons, you have to dig your heels in and stand strong in your faith. You don't have to understand God to have faith in Him. The Bible tells us that His ways are higher than our ways, right (Isaiah 55:8-9)?

On the days when my faith isn't exactly platinum, I think about that rainbow, and I praise God for His promises. I remind myself that God is bigger than my greatest fears, and I begin to feed my spirit with the Word of God.

PURSUING PLATINUM FAITH

That's how we pursue platinum faith. By building up our spirit with God's Word. And, by getting to know Him—not just knowing *about* Him but really getting to know Who He is.

Because if you know Him through His Word and meditate on His more than seven thousand promises, you'll begin to experience His goodness and faithfulness, and you'll trust Him—no matter what. You'll know that God, your Abba Father, has a plan for your life (Jeremiah 29:11) and that He has solutions for problems you haven't yet encountered. You'll know that when a crisis arises—like it has with my sweet grandson's health—that God wasn't surprised by it. You'll be able to rest in Him, knowing He is aware, on call, and working on your behalf.

But, the only way to know Him so intimately is to spend time with Him. In His Word. In His House. In prayer. Listening to praise and worship music and Christian podcasts. Watching Christian broadcasts. Immersing yourself in Him. That's how you pursue platinum faith on purpose.

We need to eat of God's Word every single day. Last year I researched dinosaurs for a children's book I was writing, and I was astounded to learn the T. rex only ate about once a week. I bet that was one massive meal, don't you? But we are not like T. rex.

We need daily nourishment in the Word. That's why it's called "our daily bread." Ever heard the expression, "You can't live on yesterday's manna"? It's true.

So, dig in every day! Eat up! Get to know God. Press into His promises. Proclaim His goodness no matter your circumstances! You see, platinum faith isn't moved or shaken by the situation. Platinum faith looks the negative situation right in the eyeballs and says, "But God!" Platinum faith is that all-in kind of faith—the kind of faith that isn't moved by the circumstances or even by the outcome.

That's the kind of faith the woman with the issue of blood had in Mark 5. Remember that story? Let's read it together:

A large crowd followed and pressed around him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"

"You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'"

But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering" (Mark 5:24-34 NIV).

Not only was this woman chronically ill, which meant she was probably very weak so pushing through the crowd was no doubt physically challenging, but also this bleeding condition

made her ceremonially unclean according to Jewish law (Leviticus 15:25-27). In her condition, she shouldn't have been in the temple at all, and she certainly shouldn't have been bumping up against people in the crowd. In fact, according to the Law, anyone or anything she touched would've been deemed unclean. But she didn't care. She knew Jesus was in her midst, and she believed He could heal her if she could only get to Him.

She'd already tried everything else. She'd spent all of her money on doctors and medicine, yet she was still sick. She was out of options . . . but God.

She risked it all when she reached for His cloak.

Just when she thought she'd gotten away with it, Jesus stops and asks, "Who touched my robe?" In reality, dozens of people were touching his robe. After all, He was in the middle of a large crowd so the disciples thought his question was a silly one, but she didn't. She knew she'd been found out, so she courageously comes forward, falls at the feet of Jesus, and tells Him everything. But Jesus doesn't condemn her. Instead, He rewards her faith and says, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

Have you ever been so desperate for a touch from Jesus that you were willing to risk it all? I know it's scary to step outside of your comfort zone, but let me encourage you to "do it afraid." You see, faith isn't the absence of fear; but rather, faith is being courageous enough to step out when you don't know what will happen, when the odds are stacked against you, when it's safer to stay right where you are. That's what the woman with the issue of blood did, and she received her miracle that day.

The Bible doesn't tell us this, but I believe she was probably saying in a hushed voice, "If I just touch His cloak, I'll be healed," over and over again. As she made her way to the temple. As she pushed through the crowd. And, as she took that one big leap of faith and reached out to touch Jesus.

Because the Bible says that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17), I often say scriptures out loud and make powerful Word-based declarations when I'm going through something. I need to hear myself saying those faith-filled words, and it's like I'm putting the enemy on notice that I trust in God and His promises. Then, I'll recall all of the times God has come through for me and for my loved ones, and I'll praise Him for His faithfulness in each and every situation. (I call that getting my "sassy faith" on.)

PLATINUM PROMISE

This is a biblical principle. That's exactly what David did before he faced the mighty giant Goliath (1 Samuel 17). You see, David already had a track record of victory. The scriptures tell us he had already defeated the lion and the bear while taking care of his father's sheep. So when he came up against the giant, David had no doubt he would defeat him, too. Others looked at the giant and said, "He is too big to kill," but David looked at Goliath and said, "That giant is too big to miss!"

It works the same way in our daily lives. Rehearse those past victories and stand strong as you wait for that next breakthrough, that next answer, that next miracle. Praise God for those breakthroughs, answers, and miracles before you ever see them.

Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (NKJV).

The world says, "I'll believe it when I see it." Faith says, "I'll believe it even though I can't see it, and then I will see it come to pass."

That's easy to say, but not as easy to live. My longtime friends Clay and Tina Caldwell are shining examples of really standing on the Word of God and believing against all odds. They had to have that fearless kind of faith—platinum faith—to see their miracle manifest.

In her twentieth week of pregnancy, Tina went in for another ultrasound, hoping for a good report, but something was wrong. She knew it.

Tina lay on the cold table, sobbing, while her sister stood nearby praying silently.

A few minutes later, a specialist came in.

“Tina,” he said, “your water has broken, but it’s much too early for the baby to be born.”

Tina felt numb all over. When her husband, Clay, arrived, the doctor explained the facts and offered two options: take the baby immediately or wait for Tina to go into natural labor. Either way, he told them that the baby had little chance for survival.

“We believe in miracles,” Clay said. “Let’s wait and give God a chance to work.”

Tina and Clay went home and prayed for a miracle. Three weeks later, Tina’s body went into natural labor. They rushed to the hospital and discovered that Tina’s cervix had begun dilating.

A specialist in high-risk deliveries was called in to examine her. After studying her ultrasound, he leaned back in his chair but said nothing. A few moments later, the doctor turned off the machine.

“I’m sorry,” he said. “I can’t offer you any hope that your baby will survive being born this early.”

The doctor left the room, but the finality of his words hung in the air.

Clay held Tina’s hand as the doctor delivered their tiny baby—it was a girl!

Tina instinctively shouted, “God, please breathe the breath of life in her!” At that moment, Clay decided the baby’s name would be Zoë, which means “life.”

Clay had been told the baby would be small, but he was not prepared for what he saw. She was purple. Her ears were only half-formed. Her legs were drawn up, and her skin was transparent—so thin her veins and organs were visible.

Baby Zoë weighed only 1 pound, 3.5 ounces and was 8 inches long.

She had a 1 percent chance of survival.

After Tina was stabilized, Clay staggered into the hospital hallway and fell to his knees. Several nurses cried alongside him.

Later that day, Zoë lay under a heat lamp. Her head was covered with a tiny pink hat. She was so small, that Clay's wedding ring fit over her arm. Tubes and monitors surrounded the little life, but so did the glory of God.

Clay copied scriptures and taped them to Zoë's incubator. Philippians 1:6 became their promise: "And I am convinced and sure of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you will continue until the day of Jesus Christ [right up to the time of His return], developing [that good work] and perfecting and bringing it to full completion in you" (AMPC).

During Zoë's first three months of life, she overcame tremendous medical hurdles.

"Her health changed every fifteen minutes," Clay remembered. "It was a real struggle to not give in to your emotions."

Against all odds, Zoë thrived. The doctors and nurses could offer no medical explanations, but Tina and Clay knew the reason—God, the Great Physician, had taken over and was caring for their daughter.

Weighing 4 pounds, 3 ounces, Zoë was released from the hospital on June 3, 1997. And, today, more than twenty years later, Zoë is a happy, healthy, living testimony of God's faithfulness. Clay, Tina, and Zoë share their testimony every chance they get, hoping to encourage others to stand on the Word of God and not be moved by the circumstances.

Live Brilliant: The Healing Edges

BETHANY

It's important to understand why the woman who was bleeding specifically touched the edge of Jesus's garment. In Greek the word is *kraspedon* and "can also refer to the tassel that the Israelites wore on the four corners of the cloak."¹

The *tzitzit* are the fringes of the prayer shawls that God instructs the Israelites to attach to their garments to be physical reminders of the commandments of God (see Number 15:37-41). Malachi 4:2 says, "The sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings" (ESV). Some have interpreted this passage to mean the Son of God will have healing in the corners of his garment, the *tzitzit*. "The word 'wings' used here is the same as the word 'borders' seen in Numbers 15:38. So the woman knew that if this is the Messiah, then surely if I can just get close enough to touch the hem or the borders of His garment, I can surely receive healing."²

By touching the edge of Jesus's cloak, the *tzitzit*, not only was she believing for healing but also she was demonstrating her belief that Jesus was the Messiah. And she was not alone in believing that she would be healed by touching Jesus's *tzitzit*. In the Gospel of Matthew, we see that multitudes of people believed

this as well: “*And* when the men of that place recognized Jesus, they sent word to all the surrounding country. People brought all their sick to him and begged him to let the sick just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed” (Matthew 14:35-36 NIV).

The woman was bold, brave, and courageous to reach for Jesus’s *tzitzit*. She had platinum faith.

PLATINUM PROJECT

You might be thinking, “I don’t know if I could’ve stood in faith like the woman or that family. How do I ever get to the place where I totally believe and rely on the Word of God?”

In other words, how do we ever walk in platinum faith?

I think that answer is simply, when we get so full of the Word that it becomes bigger in us than any situation we’re facing, then we will have moved into platinum faith.

But don’t misunderstand. Platinum faith doesn’t mean perfect faith; it just means “all-in” faith. We all may not walk in platinum faith every day, but we all have a measure of faith, according to the Word of God, which means we all have the potential to grow our faith to a platinum-faith level. That’s good news, right?

So, here’s your platinum project. Just start where you are today and ask the Lord to develop your faith. Get in the Word every day. Hang out with people who are also on this journey of faith and encourage each other, and don’t quit. Eventually, you will see the victory. You will inherit the promise. You will walk in platinum faith.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Scripture, when David looked at Goliath, he said, “He’s too big to miss.” In the modern example of Tina and Clay Caldwell, they stood in faith for their daughter, Zoë, to live, despite what medical experts said. The biblical story of the woman with the bleeding issue shows someone who had exhausted all her resources for solving a problem yet believed Jesus for healing and demonstrated her belief that He was the Messiah.

Has there been a time when you felt your faith so strong that you believed God for a certain outcome despite how circumstances may have appeared? If so, please feel free to share if you are comfortable doing so.

2. Recall a time when you felt overwhelmed and your faith was challenged. How did you react? How has your faith grown since then?
3. What are some practical steps you can take to strengthen your faith so you can stand firm when circumstances tempt to cloud your spiritual vision?