

# Finding the *Angels* Among Us

## A Q&A with Artist and Author Anne Neilson

*As a fine artist, Anne Neilson is known for her ethereal Angel Series paintings. Anne paints with passion and purpose, giving back to others by contributing to charitable causes near to her heart. She sat down with our editor in chief to talk about her brand-new devotional, Anne Neilson's Angels.*

### Your Angel Series paintings are so powerful. When did you begin to create them?

As a little girl, I knew God had created me to create. Eventually I started a successful pottery line, but put it on hold after my husband and I started our family. I began to miss painting, especially, so I built a little studio and would paint there while my children were at school.

One day I wanted to create something that reflected my faith, so I painted an angel and sent an image to my sister. She said, "I think you found your voice."

Later on, I was having shows a couple of times a year in my home. People just gravitated towards the angels, they were moved by them. That's kind of how it started.

### You've had some fascinating people take a shine to your angels: Steven Curtis Chapman, Maria Shriver, your good friend Kathie Lee Gifford—even Oprah!

God has put these people in my path. He weaves us all together, and it's for a purpose that we might not even know.

Kathie Lee is truly one of my dearest soulmate friends today. When I was painting pottery, I was a *Regis* and *Kathie Lee* junkie. I mean, I loved watching them. When I released my first book *Angels in Our Midst*, I knew Kathie would be blessed by this book. So I sent her a copy, and I got an email back from her saying, "Oh, my gosh, I'm gonna be late the first time ever to start my show!"

She has become one of my incredible sisters in

Christ and huge supporters. She'll tell me, "God has called you to do this. You have been given this gift. You go out there, you paint."

### Tell us about your new devotional *Anne Neilson's Angels: Devotions and Art to Refresh, Encourage, and Inspire*.

Words are powerful. Every day we choose which words we're going to cling to, and which words we're going to speak over our children, our spouses, our relationships, our marriages.

I learned how powerful words were when I taught school for a year right out of college. I was in a district where veteran teachers were paired with new ones. The veteran teacher went around the class and said, "He's disruptive. She's not going to amount to anything." These labels were so harmful. I just took all those words off, and I just replaced them with words of affirmation. "She's a studier. He is kind."

For this devotional, I've painted forty new angels, and every day, I've paired one word with an angel. It's a word that people can take and use daily.

For example, let's take "busy." The number-one word I hear is, "Oh my gosh, I'm so busy." I don't want to glorify that word. I want to transform that word to B-U-S-Y: "Be Uniquely Serving Yahweh" by doing what is specifically yours.

I hope this book is a blessing. Especially today in the broken world we're living in, I feel like our words are going to be very impactful.

*Adapted for print from an upcoming interview on the Jesus Calling Podcast.*



Anne with some of her celebrated works, including *The Lord Will Guide You*, top, and *A Deeper Love*, bottom-left.

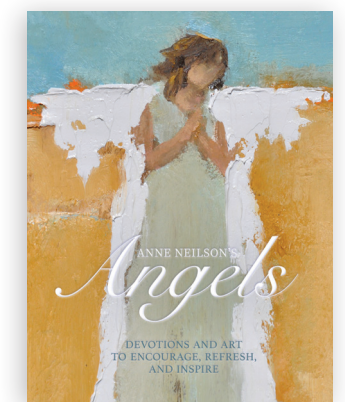


## Anne's Favorite Jesus Calling Moment

I have been a *Jesus Calling* fan for I can't tell you how long. It's something I go to, and share, and pass out like lollipops because I do believe that it's anointed.

I have four kids, and my oldest daughter begged and begged to go to boarding school. Tenth grade we decided, "Okay, we can do that."

The day I dropped her off, it was August 23rd. I'm driving home, and I'm sobbing because I'm like, "What have I done? I've given my child to the world." And I'll never forget coming home and picking up my copy of *Jesus Calling*, and reading that day's devotion: "Trust your loved ones to Me. Release them into My protective care. They're much safer with Me than in your clinging hands." And boy, were my hands clinging. That spoke to my heart.



Anne's new devotional, *Anne Neilson's Angels*, is on sale November 3.