

**THE**  
**Supra-Natural**  
**LIFE**

**Christen Forster**



**INTEGRITY**  

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All Scripture quotations are based on the author's own translation.

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# Series Introduction

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In March 1965, Goldie, a Golden Eagle escaped from London Zoo. Though it happened a year before I was born, I remember as a child watching the retelling of the story of his escape on the children's magazine show "Blue Peter". For twelve days Goldie hung around in the trees of London's Regents Park, where hunger drove him to attack a couple of Yorkshire Terriers and eat a duck who lived in the garden of the American Ambassador's house. Goldie was recaptured when he spied a dead rabbit that had been tethered to the ground by his keeper.

During his bid for freedom, there were several traffic-jams around the park as crowds of people flocked to see this magnificent bird flying free. But watching the TV footage you can't help feeling that they must have been a bit disappointed. Goldie didn't behave like a Golden Eagle soaring majestically in open skies, roosting on mountain-tops and cliff edges. He lived his twelve days of freedom like a big pigeon hopping from tree-top to tree-top, never venturing far from home and only occasionally flirting with what he could be. That said, Goldie obviously enjoyed his freedom because in December of the same year he escaped again. This time the sweet breeze of liberty gusted under his wings for a mere four days before his re-capture.

Over my years of following Jesus, I have often applied the metaphor of Goldie the Golden Eagle and his great escape to my own life and to the lives of others. We know we are free and we love our freedom. We look up at the sky above us and feel the “upward call of God” (Philippians 3:14), but we are not sure what we are supposed to do with the freedom Jesus has won for us.

**It is much easier to know what we have been set free from, than it is to know what we have been set free for!**

Jesus said He had come to give us an abundant life (John 10:10). This promise is like the open sky above us, and it is only as we dare to go higher that we will start to see the possibilities beyond our old horizons.

## **The Life You Were Set Free For**

Jesus had a disciple called John who in turn had a disciple called Polycarp and Polycarp had a disciple called Irenaeus. In about 180AD, Irenaeus wrote these words:

“Jesus Christ, by His transcendent love, became as we are in order to make us as He is.”<sup>1</sup>

Three generations after Jesus’ earthly life, His Church still believed that He had come to give them the kind of life that He Himself had lived. Sadly, in the millennium that followed, Jesus’ Church gradually relegated the “abundant life” to the “after-life”. Being a follower of Jesus meant believing the right things, keeping the right rules and being in the right church.

However, the good news is that over the last 500 years, Jesus has been restoring lost truth to His Church. Our faith is not, and was never meant to be, just “pie in the sky when you die”. Abundant life in Christ Jesus is not boring - it is an adventure and a challenge. It is a life lived in connection with heaven by the Holy Spirit; a journey into the fullness of God’s favour, supernatural encounters and spiritual authority. It is a life naturally and easily

connected to meaning and purpose. It may be painful and costly at times, but it is the most satisfying life you can ever live. It is life in full *technicolour* and once tasted it is addictive. It is what I call the “*supra-natural*” life! In other words, the life we were made for and for which we were set free!

## Participating in the Divine

*“His divine power has provided everything that enables life and holiness by the means of fully knowing Him who called us to glory and excellence. By this means we are given the biggest and most precious promises: That by these you become participators of the divine nature”* (2 Peter 1:2-4a)

This series of books is about how we participate in Jesus’ divine nature. It is about how to press in to the life and holiness that fully knowing Jesus and His divine power enables in us. It is about the “abundant life” that Jesus modelled and promised to us. It is about having the life and holiness that Jesus had and for which He endured the cross so that you could have it too.

## Why “Supra-natural”?

“Supra” is a prefix that describes going *above and beyond the usual*.

In attempting to communicate its meaning, I used to use the term “the naturally-supernatural, normal Christian life” - a reference to Watchmen Nee’s famous book on discipleship<sup>2</sup>, but it was a bit of a mouthful. I needed something punchier and more memorable. The word *supernatural* seemed too narrow and overused. Of course, the *supra-natural* life includes the supernatural: words of knowledge, healings, miracles etc. But the word supernatural doesn’t capture the full experience of life connected to heaven that I want to explore in these books. And so I have coined the phrase “supra-natural”.

Supra-natural living is experiencing the flavour of favour. It is the hallmark of blessing on a life that is fully connected to the purposes and values of a good Father God. It means that all the natural aspects of life - working, playing, relating, developing, ageing, parenting and so on - get done with heaven's help in a way that is beyond what is normal without it.

The supra-natural life that Jesus has for us cannot be understood just in terms of the life we have led so far. It requires an inner transformation that changes everything, but that still leaves the essential you and me intact. If we just pursue a bigger, slicker version of who we are today, or if we try to emulate one of our heroes in the faith, we will never be who we were made to be. The journey into the supra-natural life requires us to cross borders into unfamiliar territories. As we pass from glory to glory we find that whole new ways of being, thinking and experiencing are opening up to us.

This series is written for those who are prepared for the lifetime adventure of the upward call of God. We will explore what it really means to be human in the way that Jesus modelled it. We will look at the general purpose and calling of all disciples. But we will also see how the Father specifically calls and anoints each one of us, turning our life from a series of half-planned and accidental events into a redemptive story with real meaning and purpose. We will all learn to hear Jesus more clearly, both over time and in the moment, so that we know how to act and behave. We will learn how to nurture and weigh prophecy so that it can carry out its creative work in us. We will learn to feel and cooperate with the Holy Spirit and understand better how to exercise faith without presumption. We will learn how to grow spiritual fruit, how to use spiritual gifts and how to see and think from heaven's perspective.

These books are written to facilitate fresh Holy Spirit revelation as you read them. On it's own, information puffs us up, but revelation transforms us. But of course, information can be the seed for

revelation if we let the Holy Spirit get hold of it. So as you read through these books you will discover there are places where I ask you to pray and hear back from Jesus; to reflect and remember and write things down as He talks to you. There are things to try out and discussions to be had. You don't have to do all the exercises, but you will get more out of these books if you do.

The life Jesus died to give you is a life full of colour - a supernatural life. The thought of you living life this way was part of the joy Jesus anticipated as He faced the cross (Hebrews 12:2). Fulfilling your destiny is the reward for His suffering. So jump in. Live your earthly life like this from now on! Don't hang around waiting for eternity!

You were created to live like an eagle. Don't settle for being the biggest pigeon in the park.

**Endnotes:**

1. Preface of "Against Heresies" Book V, by Irenaeus.
2. *The Normal Christian Life* by Watchman Nee

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# Introduction

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**You have a destiny! But your destiny is less about the things you are supposed to do in life, as it is about the life you are supposed to do things with.**

You have an inheritance in Jesus. But it is not an inheritance that you will automatically claim in this life and, sadly, a vast number of those who follow Jesus don't. However, the tide seems to be turning. It seems that every year more and more Christians *are* discovering the truth of what it is to live the supra-natural life.

The moment we are saved, we metaphorically cross the Red Sea and are externally free from the slavery of Egypt forever. But Egypt's grip on our inner lives is harder to shift. Between ourselves and the inheritance Jesus has for us there is a wilderness. The journey across this wilderness is not instantaneous. For the Israelites it was a journey that could have taken less than a month, but in the end took forty years, resulting in just one person in a million actually crossing the Jordan and making it into a land flowing with blessing.

**It took just days to get out of Egypt, but it can take a lifetime to get Egypt out of us!**

This book is about how to be changed by the journey out of slavery to be ready for Canaan.

When I was 16 a man called Harry Sprange prophesied a prophetic ministry over my life. As a teenager I would imagine what this might look like. I used to imagine myself at public landmarks, wild eyed and dramatic, long hair blowing in the wind, or on TV debates railing against the evils in our nation with insight and passion.

The first obstacle to me achieving my expectation of Jesus' calling was the early onset of male pattern baldness. My hair may have been blowing in the wind, but unfortunately it wasn't stuck to my head! A more serious obstacle to me being what I thought a prophet should be was that I didn't really hear Jesus very clearly. For many years the idea of me having a prophetic call seemed so unlikely I had stopped even trying to realise it. I became comfortable in telling people that I didn't really hear God in the moment, just over time with lots of thinking and meditation.

Today, I operate in a prophetic ministry, but it looks nothing like I imagined it would all those years ago. I've discovered that Jesus was telling the truth when He said, "*My sheep hear my voice*" (John 10:27). Everyone can learn to hear Jesus. Even when we don't understand what He's saying, His words can still calm us, guide us and change us.

Nevertheless, my history in this area means that I am still surprised when someone confirms the details of a word I have given to them.

But here's the thing: prophesying is now as natural to me as praying and prayer is as natural to me as breathing. I hardly have a private thought these days - they are all part of a dialogue with Father and Jesus. From good deals in the supermarket to my desire to see a sick person healed, every moment of life has the possibility to transcend the normal - but in the most natural way, because Jesus does speak to me, the Spirit does lead me and Father really loves me. The same is true for us all! The tragedy is that we can miss out on the incredible life Jesus has for us because we have tried

living according to our pre-conceptions of what our lives should be. When it doesn't make sense or doesn't work, we think we have failed and then we give up. The supra-natural life is actually very natural. It is not something we achieve in ourselves, or strive to be successful in, it happens as our nature is changed, as the old version of us is taken off and the new version is put on (Ephesians 4:22-24).

## Supra-natural Life 101

This book is about the general process of personal transformation and growth, and its ultimate goal. A process that takes us from who we are naturally (shaped by our personal history, DNA and choices), into who we are prophetically (re-shaped by revelation, redemption and cooperation), until Christ is formed in us (Galatians 4:19).

Our transformation in this life seems to be one of the major themes in the New Testament. It is full of encouragements for us to grow into the *“full measure of Christ”* (Ephesians 4:13); to be *“changed from glory to glory”* (2 Corinthians 3:18); to *“be renewed in knowledge according to the image of our creator”* (Colossians 3:10); to *“be transformed by the renewing of our minds”* (Romans 12:2) ... and so on.

In this book you will find testimony stories of healings, words of knowledge, accounts of super-natural provision, miracles and favour. These are all the fruit of the supra-natural life.

*“The blessed man ... Is a tree planted by waters ... with green leaves ... and even in years of drought, they continue to produce fruit.”* (Jeremiah 17:7-8)

So as well as stories of fruit, this book will explore how to draw on the life-giving waters of the Holy Spirit and words of grace. These are the roots of the supra-natural life. And it will look at how to cooperate with the Holy Spirit to produce growth, strength

and transformation, which are the shoots that produce the fruit. Simply trying to do the same things you read in the stories will not produce the life in you that produces fruit naturally.

In many ways this is a book of two halves. The first half looks at the foundations and theory of the supra-natural life: the roots. The second half focuses on the practices of the supra-natural life which produce shoots in us.

### **The key to fruits is a life with roots and shoots!**

It is the Holy Spirit's work to transform us from glory to glory (2 Corinthians 3:18), but both experience and Scripture are quite clear that we can cooperate with His work in us or we can fight against it - or perhaps most commonly we simply miss and undermine what He is doing.

It seems that every now and again we get a glimpse of what this transformed life could look like, but mostly our faith is a set of propositions to be believed - a helpful set of ideas and principles through which to see the world. We eagerly adopt various useful self-help tools and are helped along by our church community to whom we feel connected as we journey through life. But life's journey should be a *pilgrimage*. A pilgrimage, by definition, has an objective, a place to get to. It has purpose and intent. It changes the pilgrim as he or she travels. This book could just be another set of things to believe in, a manual of new self-improvement principles. But I have not written it for that reason. My prayer is that that it encourages and guides you on your spiritual journey in a different way.

## **I Know This Works!**

I feel able to write this book not because I am an expert (I wish I were further ahead than I currently am), but because I have been stuck in a rut as a professional Christian so often, found it deeply dissatisfying, cried out for more, and so have been forced to consciously learn what needs to change.

Wonderfully, what I have found is that the lessons I have learned and continue to learn have been helpful to others too. It has been a great delight while leading River Church to see incredible transformations in individuals, some of whom had been Christians for years, but had got stuck in religious routines.

Today, River Church is a charismatic church not only in name, but in practice with lots of people walking in more of their giftings, ministries and callings.

Take Oliver. Oliver wasn't brought up as a Christian but got saved into what Jesus has been doing with us over the last few years. Oliver was in town and went to buy a copy of the "Big Issue", the magazine sold by those who are homeless. The lady selling the magazine had a bandage on her hand so he asked if he could pray for her. She agreed and after he had prayed she started shaking her whole arm saying, "The pain in my arm has gone!" Oliver had only known about the sprained hand because he saw the bandage, but Jesus had gone beyond what he asked for.

Then there's Louise, Hannah and Tim. One day they went out "treasure hunting" (a practice we learnt from Bethel Church in Redding, California). They each asked the Lord for a word that would help them connect with someone they would meet. The three words they received were "hairdressers", "blue" and the name "Emma". They wrote the words down and went out to meet people to offer prayers and blessings. Towards the end of their time they noticed a hairdressers tucked away down a side street with a blue front, so they went in. A girl approached them and greeted them with "Hello, I'm Emma. How can I help?" They showed her their piece of paper and explained how Jesus loved her enough to send them. Then they prayed for her and left.

On another occasion, a girl collecting for charity approached my friend Dave in a shopping precinct. Prompted by the story of the lame man at the temple he told her "I'm afraid I haven't got any change, but can offer you prayer for healing or a spiritual

reading.” The girl became interested and asked to know more, so Dave explained: “I’m a Christian and if you like I can pray for you if you need anything or I can ask God to show me something for you.” The girl became defensive and cynical at this. It seemed she had some bad experience of church and Christians, so as she backed off she replied, “Oh yeah? Well if God talks to you He can tell you my name!” Dave sent up a quick prayer and said, “Well, it doesn’t usually work like that, but the name in my head right now is ‘Emily’” The girl, who was called Emily, nearly fell over. Dave went on to explain how much Jesus loved her and he prayed with her.

I could go on telling stories like this. I hear them regularly from people in River Church, which is how I know that the lessons in this book, if understood and implemented, can release the supra-natural life. But I also know that they will not be everything you will need. The supra-natural life is *caught* more than it is *taught*, so one of the best things you can do for yourself is to make sure you are in a church community that is really serious about growing in Jesus.

And remember that God, “...is able to do exceedingly beyond what we ask or think, according to the power that works within us” (Ephesians 3:20)