

**LAURA HARRIS SMITH AND
CHRISTOPHER LEE SMITH**

MAKE YOUR splash

**Maximize Your Career and Cultural Impact
by Discovering Your Spiritual Personality**

“Chris and Laura Smith take their decades of experience in both ministry and the marketplace and walk you through the discovery process of your unique giftings, leaving no question in your mind as to why God put you here. *Make Your Splash* is an energizing, mobilizing read!”

Dr. Robert Jeffress, pastor, First Baptist Church, Dallas

“I wish I had read this book many years ago—I have struggled in my life, failed at times, and learned many lessons in trying to understand what my God-given gifts truly are and how to use them. So now, instead of having to learn how to take care of your eyes by yourself, you are now offered help from two great ‘eye doctors.’”

Ming Wang, Harvard and MIT (M.D.), Ph.D. (laser physics);
director, Wang Vision Institute, Nashville

“Chris and Laura Smith have offered practical, applicable advice on how to share the love of Jesus in a military and paramilitary environment, or in any environment or industry you are called to.”

Richard Travis DeLano, district fire chief, LCFD

“Chris and Laura Smith are well-known and respected, and their family is also known for their varied talents and impressive creativity in worship and in work. This book’s theme of the quest for self and fitting into our world as a part of God’s design—great thoughts for all.”

Randy Atkins, Chick-fil-A owner/operator
and former employer of several Smiths

“An inspirational guide to finding and flowing to your personal path of purpose. Chris and Laura have created a new lens to view your unique gifts and go make what only you can.”

Lea Little, TV host, Amazon influencer, lifestyle entrepreneur

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**LAURA HARRIS SMITH AND
CHRISTOPHER LEE SMITH**



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To Eastgate Creative Christian Fellowship:

For the last twenty years of Sundays you have afforded your pastors the creative liberty to dream, innovate and develop our enterprising ideas in real time for you. This book is one of them!

There is no other church like you, Eastgate, and we love you.

Contents

Forewords by Cindy and Mike Jacobs 11

Part One Test the Waters 13

(The odd chapters are written by Laura; the even chapters are written by Chris.)

1. Just Add Water 15
2. There's Something in the Water 27
3. Waterworks 33
4. Your Net Worth 39
5. In over Your Head 48
6. Born of Water and Spirit 58
7. Uncharted Waters 66
8. Go with the Flow 76
9. Come On In, the Water's Fine! 90
10. Sink or Swim 98

Part Two Take the Plunge 105

(These are the twelve rivers of cultural impact, with subchapters written by both Laura and Chris, as indicated.)

11. Home and Family River 107
12. Information Technology River 115

13. Healthcare and Therapeutic Sciences River	126
14. Politics and Law River	140
15. Military and Paramilitary River	154
16. Creativity River (Fine Arts and Intellectual Property)	166
17. Entertainment and Recreation River	175
18. Consumer Services and Commerce River	185
19. Academics and Training River	195
20. Press and Telecommunications River	204
21. Energy and Utilities River	213
22. Ministries and Charities River	222

Part Three Turn the Tide 233

(In this third part you will make some applications that will help you get in the flow of your particular river.)

“Wet” Your Appetite	235
See Your Reflection	237
Plot Your Course	239
Dive In!	241
Get in the Flow	243

Notes	247
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Foreword

Every generation must be willing to seek God for an expansion of understanding and revelation for the hour in which they live. As Bishop Bill Hamon says, “There is no new truth, only restored truth.” This flows into his definition of what he calls the saints movement. This is the last of a series of biblical restorations found in Ephesians 4:10–12. According to Bishop Hamon, the 1950s saw restoration of the office of the evangelist, the ’60s, the pastor, the ’70s, the teacher, the ’80s, the prophet, the ’90s, the apostle, and then with the turn of the 21st century, the saints movement.

In each season of restored truth, meaning that it was there all the time, it was just not seen except by a few forerunners or early adopters. Restoration truths, however, become more mainstreamed throughout whole movements as they are taught. This is when the understanding moves beyond the initial early-adopter stage to mid- or even late-adopter stage.

The revelation that God has given five offices—apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher and evangelist—is coming of age, as it were, for this time. But what about the saints? Do they have a part in being apostolic, prophetic and so forth? Chris and Laura Smith say yes!

Ephesians 4:12 says the offices are for the equipping of the saints. This word *equipping*, in the Greek, literally means to “set a bone in order.” Ephesians 4:4 says there is one body and one Spirit.

Could it be that in order to see the full measure of the restoration of the saints, we need to expand our thinking to understand that each believer also has a job to do in order to see the full equipping of the Body of Christ? This in no way negates the fact that God has anointed those who will equip through their fivefold offices.

How are we to see the full restoration needed to see God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven, without attributes of who He is also being distributed broadly through what Chris and Laura have called the twelve rivers? Each sphere of society needs the power of God specifically flowing through it.

Chris and Laura Smith are not novices to biblical truth. They are pastors of a very creative and wonderful church and students of the Word. Please read this book with an open mind and prayerful heart. It is a pioneering work, and I encourage you to seek the Holy Spirit on how He would have you implement it. Now, open the pages and dive into *Make Your Splash*.

Cindy Jacobs, co-founder, Generals International, Dallas, Texas

I'm not adept at writing book forewords and would hesitate to do so, but I'm pretty good with relationships and have known Chris and Laura Smith for many years. The insight and creativity I have observed in this couple have always seemed remarkable to me. So since they have been willing to take the time, as a couple, to lay out what might be some really fresh concepts for your future success, I would suggest this book for you.

Mike Jacobs, co-founder, Generals International, Dallas, Texas



PART ONE

Test the Waters



Goals

1. For you to hear about the origin of the twelve rivers concept and find your purpose
2. For you to revisit the multiple times God has used water to perform miracles
3. For you to discover your “net worth” through your natural and acquired gifts
4. For you to review the world’s top 20 personality tests and what they reveal
5. For you to learn the five personality types of God and test yourself to discover which of those most flows through you.



Just Add Water

Are you sitting down? What I mean is, are you sitting, standing or reclining? The answer is actually none of the above, because despite the stationary position you think you are currently in, the truth is that you are moving. Fast. And no, I'm not describing the earth's rotational pull that would cause constant physical acceleration were it not for the laws of gravity upon your body. You see, your very life itself is in a current that is flowing in a decided direction, a direction determined by you alone. And even if you believe that your life course is being entirely dictated by a divine force, you can at least admit that you have the free will to mess around and get lost, or to stay on course. So in that sense, you are responsible for the movement of your life. You belong to the present time, but you are moving steadily toward a future that God has created just for you. And guess what . . . He is already there! With Him in front of you and Chris and me behind you, cheerleading you on, you are sure to arrive in perfect time.

As a naturopathic doctor, I enjoy helping people get healthy—body, mind and spirit. But I also enjoy helping them figure out why they were born. So does my husband, Chris. As pastors, we do not claim to have the power to hand out destinies, but we do observe people, their skills and their passions, and we often offer course correction in order to help steer folks in what we perceive to be the right direction for their lives. God gave us such an opportunity in the late winter/early spring of 2021, as we found ourselves encouraging a church full of our people who were wondering if they had just lost a full year of their lives to a global pandemic. Mind you, they are a faith-filled bunch at Eastgate Creative Christian Fellowship near Nashville, Tennessee, but many were asking themselves questions like, *What was last year even about? Did I lose ground—physically, emotionally and spiritually? How do I get it back? Will this year be any different or better for me?*

As 2021 stretched into another year that seemed a carbon copy of the one before it, with so many still in isolation, recovery or both, people were forced to think hard about their lives. Forced to lock down, they began to look up and reimagine life. Entrepreneurs were born. Homeschooling parents were born. And of course, literal children were born. At Eastgate, shortly after the national lockdowns, we had a baby boom that tripled our previous church record of babies born in a single year. Suddenly, this question was nagging us all: *Was this worldwide Pause button a mechanism that might provide me with the ability to reinvent myself and create a brand-new life, or will I just press Play on the old one once this is all over?*

These are just some of the questions that people were asking at Eastgate. Maybe you were asking them, too.

Your Piece

So, in February 2021 we started an eight-week sermon series entitled “Awaken Your Piece,” focusing on helping people discover the “piece” (their gifts, talents, contributions) that they could bring to this “new” world. To look upon the world scene like a giant

puzzle and see the gaping hole that is just waiting for your piece to be dropped in. We had been praying all winter at Eastgate for another Great Awakening—believing that the “woke world” was a counterfeit for such a global awakening—and by spring we were coming to the conclusion that a worldwide awakening must simply just be a collection of little personal awakenings. We imagined a whole world full of people awakening to their individual purposes and then plugging them into society, and Chris and I decided we could at least be responsible for *our* church experiencing such an awakening. We never dreamed that those next two months at Eastgate would give birth to a movement . . . this book, spin-off videos, commissioning services, testing material, television specials, merchandise and more.

This book is a crash course in what Eastgate members experienced in those two months. Jehovah Sneaky gave us a sweet gift just as the sting of winter was leaving and the last snow was melting, and as green was starting to bud on the trees all around us. It was as if nature was awakening on the outside as we were awakening on the inside.

Chris actually took the first four Sundays in the series, and I didn’t even step in until weeks five and six. His spirit was so full that he inspired people for a month straight and most definitely “awakened” them to the idea that they were each created for a specific purpose. That means that the piece I brought to the series—which was the fun and playful concept of the rivers—had not even dropped into my spirit yet. Keep that in mind as I describe these first four Sundays to you, because they stand on their own as incredible revelation that God gave Chris about how He wants to partner with *you* on earth to accomplish great things. Things, in fact, that God simply cannot do without you!

To be honest, I think I expected on week one for Pastor Hubby to tell us all to take a typical spiritual gift test and then to study the Ephesians 4 “fivefold ministry” passage to get an idea of how God gets things done in the earth. Instead, Chris laid out a beautiful, relational picture of what he calls the five personalities of God, which you will read all about in chapter 6. You can actually go to

the YouTube Eastgate Creative Christian Fellowship channel and watch the whole series, although the teaching has evolved since then. Just scroll down to the “Awaken Your Piece” playlist and you will see the entire series.

We also decided to share the eight-week series teaching duties with our son, Jhason, who is Eastgate’s associate pastor, along with his wife, Brittany. But first, their son would teach us something. If you watch the series on YouTube, you will notice that on the first Sunday that Chris spoke, our then two-year-old grandson and Jhason’s oldest, Jadwin, spoke into the microphone a two-word message that would sum up Papa’s (his grandfather’s) upcoming sermon, and in many ways this whole book (at minutes 44:24–46:20). In a kids’ movie Jad liked at the time, one of the main characters felt purposeless. The character even said she had “no purpose.” Jad’s parents didn’t want him to have that concept left in his head, so instead of saying “no purpose,” they began teaching him to say, “yes, purpose!” With his mama’s help (a very pregnant Brittany), a two-year-old child inspired us that Sunday at Eastgate with those two words—to remember that yes, we had a purpose, too.

Three days later, Brittany gave birth to their second son, and she and Jhason began their paternity/maternity leave. At the same time, I was finishing up writing *Give It to God and Go to Bed* (Chosen, 2021), with a looming deadline. It was a good thing God had inspired Chris to speak for a month of Sundays! Having taught on the five personalities of God, he then spent a couple of weeks discussing the ways of God, using Galatians 5 as a very practical springboard to describe how the nine gifts of the Spirit manifest themselves in each of these distinct five personalities.

By the way, let me just say from the start that we are in no way implying that God has multiple personalities or some sort of multiple personality disorder. Just think of these “five personalities” like five personas, or five traits or attributes of God that play out in your own God-given personality. If anything, this ideology that we are about to roll out for you brings incredible order to the Body of Christ, and of course, purpose! It is so practical. You are going to love chapter 9, as you discover which of the five personalities

primarily flows through you. This discovery will both help you reach others with the Good News of Jesus Christ *and* help you stop comparing yourself to the way others do that. Let everybody else be what God created them to be. You do you.

My Turn

March came, and it was my turn to add my perspective to the series. I felt led to bring in the piece of finding your purpose in the workplace and how you could actually make a living with the gifts of God within you, while also making maximum impact for God. Immediately, I thought of the “Seven Mountains of Influence” teaching, an incredibly powerful and popular concept that originated with Loren Cunningham (Youth With a Mission—YWAM) and Bill Bright (Campus Crusade for Christ) in 1975, and has gone on to be expounded upon by insightful authors such as Lance Wallnau and Johnny Enlow. (And perhaps we should give original honor to Bishop Bill Hamon, who long before that was urging the Church to get out of its four walls and impact culture for Jesus Christ.) The mountains concept is one that basically says the world is molded by seven main facets of society, and that the influence you are able to have in society will happen in one of those seven spheres. Each sphere is symbolized by a mountain on which God wants to place you occupationally and use you for His ultimate glory.

The seven mountains are education, religion, family, business, government, arts/entertainment and media. Champions of the seven mountain idea propose that culture is most impacted by these seven industries, not to mention that by working in them you can also have maximum influence in the earth. This is a fascinating concept that has been criticized by some as being an agenda by which Christians are scheming to attain global domination. Some detractors even go so far as to say it suggests that Christ cannot return until we accomplish this domination. But I don’t see that as the heart behind this concept at all. And its message is turnkey enough that I immediately thought of it as a means by which to introduce

my portion of the Eastgate teaching series and inspire people not only to find out what their purpose is, but to use that information so naturally in their occupations that they would wonder if they were even working for a living. My father used to tell me, “Find something you love to do, and you’ll never work a day in your life.”

My plan was to have everyone stand up in the church at the very beginning and seat them according to what I felt their mountains would be (interviewing the visitors briefly from the stage and then sending them to their sections). I realized it would be a bit discombobulating for those who prefer to sit down, stay put and not engage much (which were a few more than normal due to social distancing). Yet knowing what a flexible bunch of eager learners we have at Eastgate, I figured it was a safe place to conduct such an experiment. But boy, was I in for a big surprise as I sat preparing the night before. With the church database pulled up in front of me, I suddenly became aware of how many people in our congregation simply would not fit into one of the seven mountain categories. Most did, but what about the medical/health professionals? What about the engineers and scientists? They could plausibly be worked into one of those existing mountains, but didn’t they deserve a mountain of their own since they have so much cultural impact? We had all of the above “extras” at Eastgate, and I was finishing up medical school to become a naturopathic doctor myself. So which mountain should I go scale?

I also saw another gaping hole that was not going to work for our church. By my initial guesstimates, a whopping 42 percent of our congregation should be on one mountain—the arts and entertainment mountain. Also, when I separated the quiet artists (painters, writers, textile workers) from the magnetic entertainers (actors, singers, performers), they were split 22 percent and 20 percent respectively. Their giftings were so different that it just didn’t seem fitting to put them on the same mountain path.

At first, I decided that maybe I could add new “mountains.” Not because I wanted to change this very God-inspired concept, but because very practically, it was crucial that everyone have a place to sit the next morning in church! And more importantly, it

was crucial for everyone to have a place to fit in the world. I knew if I didn't figure something out, it would be embarrassing for the people who were standing around wondering where they fit in. They would get dumped into a miscellaneous category, not knowing where they belonged and how God could use them there. Still, I felt hesitant to alter this amazing seven mountain concept, even though countless spin-off books have been written and rewritten about it, and I wouldn't have been in any "trouble" for doing so.

God's Shift

Then about 1:00 a.m., as I considered that I really should be in bed so I could be clearheaded for the teaching, the Holy Spirit instructed me to shift the sermon completely. Trust me, I was so tired and wanted to call it a night so badly, but what happened next jarred me wide awake. I heard the following phrases in this order:

Rivers, not mountains, for your teaching.

Mountains don't move, but rivers flow everywhere and touch everything.

Mountains can be intimidating because they must be scaled; tell people to find their river and just go play in it.

God impressed upon me certain concepts that revolved around a different approach to influencing culture. In no way does this undermine the seven mountain teaching (which I obviously respect and was planning to reference), but those are the phrases that I heard, and these are the questions that they begged:

How do you "find your river and go play in it," God?

Do you just jump in from the steep bank?

Or do you flow into it in the same way that rivers are made up of other smaller streams that empty into them?

As the daughter (and now wife) of an avid fisherman, my mind was suddenly abuzz with river ideas, idioms and images! In the wee hours, I gathered online pictures and videos of running water as a backdrop to my sermon, in order to visually inspire the people with the life-changing advice I was about to deliver. I wanted them to see the water, and at times the audio even peeked through so they could hear the rushing waves. I exported it all into a 30-minute video to be played under the majority of my teaching. Just as a good soundtrack is important to any movie, I knew this soundtrack was important to this teaching that I then was calling “The Ten Cultural Rivers of Influence.” (I didn’t know yet that a couple more rivers were yet to rise.)

I wound up never going to bed at all that night, finally finishing the sermon as the sun came up, then rushing to get ready and get to the church to preach it. I was brimming with the energy that fresh revelation brings. It doesn’t matter how tired, hungry or scattered you are when God wants to do a new thing and you think you are the first to know about it. You are suddenly sharp, satisfied and have no sense of self. I now had a shiny new revelation and one hour to try it out on a familiar audience. And you will see in chapter 7 how the rivers concept flowed perfectly (pun intended) with the previous month’s theme of Chris’s five personalities of God.

That morning, I stood everyone up and had them line the walls and even the back of the church. It was in the middle of a pandemic and we had about 40 percent of our people out, but you can watch the service on YouTube and see how I accomplished it. Perhaps it was a blessing that the crowd was smaller. With the database in hand, I called names and numbers and instructed people to sit in their designated sections. I didn’t tell them why I was doing it or even mention the rivers yet. As for visitors, I did my best at placing them after a brief chat, or I just had some sit with the friend who had brought them until they knew which section they belonged in.

Their Reactions

The results? Everyone had a place that morning. No one was left out! We learned about each river, who belongs in it, and how you make your splash there. Some who were in certain occupations quickly learned that they were just doing their job to “pay the bills,” and they wound up moving to another section to “stick their toe in the water” and see if God might be calling them to step out and use their gifts to influence culture from there instead. Sitting for an hour with kindred spirits was a good jump start for them, and very affirming for those veterans already sure of their callings.

The rivers concept was so well received that we planned a part 2 for the next Sunday, which wound up becoming a full-fledged commissioning service. Cultural influencers sat together again by group and lined up at the end to come through and have their hands washed by our pastors—in a water baptism of sorts—into a new calling, or an affirmation of the calling they were already living out. The week before, they had heard and seen the water as I taught. This time, they touched it. It was momentous! And it is the exact type of commissioning service that we recreated and filmed so that you might take your own church or company through a similarly beautiful experience by using the videos at the end of this book. Just add water!

Still glowing from the whole experience and all the positive feedback, that very afternoon as I was arriving home from church I got a text out of the blue from Carra Carr, my former director of marketing at Chosen Books. We had not even spoken since the year before, and that was only by text. She had dreamed about me in the middle of the night—at the same exact time that God was shifting my sermon theme from mountains to rivers—and she shared it with me. In her dream, I was sitting on a bench in between where two rivers met. We were in her hometown of Anoka, Minnesota. (The name *Anoka* is a combination of Dakota and Ojibwa words meaning respectively “on both sides” and “working waters,” and locally they say it is “the place where two rivers meet,” because the Mississippi River and the Rum River meet there.) Carra said I

told her it was my favorite place to come, and we talked about a possible book (which you are now reading). I pointed out a cove farther down that I liked to visit in order to go deeper into the river, and I kept urging her to pray. Finally, she pointed out to me a familiar coffee shop nearby that was being modernized with a remodel. Then she woke up.

As you can imagine, I was shocked by Carra's text. I had even used the Mississippi River in the sermon (discussing how rivers often flow into oceans). I had also used the convergence of "two rivers" to symbolize how you can be in two occupational rivers at once. I knew that every bit of this confirmed that God was all over this idea. Carra eventually watched both sermons online and wrote back to say, "Laura, you *need* to publish this! It's powerful, prophetic and practical."

Within a week Chris and I left for a two-week vacation at . . . the beach. This trip to the water had been planned since the previous year, but now I viewed it through a whole new lens. I spent a lot of time thinking about water, watching water, experiencing water. While we were there, God expanded the ten rivers to twelve, speaking to me about the importance of our military and how they needed their own place, separate from the politicians on the government mountain. He also spoke to Chris about the service industry heroes and how waste management and restaurant workers have appointed destinies within their industries, too!

As I tip my hat and give my thanks to the many seven mountain pioneers, I believe that the piece in Carra's dream where she was showing me a familiar coffee shop remodel means that this new cultural rivers concept is merely a remodel of the familiar mountains theory. It is not a needless reinvention of coffee, but just a makeover of how and where it is served. It brings a user-friendly, playful way to find your calling and move in it.

This teaching should not feel heavy and serious. It should be completely natural and joyful! If it is not, then it will not be implemented. The world obviously is full of Christians who have no idea what God has called them to do, and who therefore are not doing it. We must figure out what our rivers of influence are and

flow into them with ease. Once we get into the flow, we will learn other details about how we can swim against the current and shift culture. Chris and I will explore all the rivers with you in this book.

Our Role

Whether you are man or woman, black or white, rich or poor, tall or short, young or old, Christian or other, you have a river to discover. It is time to start flowing with God and moving toward your future.

In short, this book is for everyone. Because of that, Chris and I need to state (in case it has not already crossed your mind) that we did wonder if we had the governmental authority to introduce such a culture-shifting ideology to the entire Body of Christ. We certainly know we cannot fill the big shoes of spiritual fathers like Bill Hammond, Loren Cunningham or Bill Bright, even though we have our own shoes and leave our own footprints for others to follow in. But in light of that truth, we had to ask ourselves, *Well, then, why did God give this idea to us? Why did He just drop the rivers concept into the heart of a sleep-deprived shepherdess in the middle of a pandemic, in the middle of the night, just hours before it was to be tried out on a manageable, willing crowd?*

I mean, as stated at the beginning of this page, we are just pastors who love people and want to see them discover why they were born. So . . . we came to the conclusion that the reason God gave the idea to “just pastors” is because pastors have the role of being boots on the ground to see what is actually happening at the local church level. *In real time.* They assess the territory, organize the troops and educate the ranks. Therefore, I think we have our finger on the pulse of what is actually happening—and not happening—in the very Church itself. And we are deeply invested in seeing it thrive. When you say the word *church* to Chris and me, we don’t see doctrines or facilities. We see people. Faces. Families. And we love them all. When they fail, we fail. When they hurt, we hurt. When they weep, we weep. But when they win, oh, how we win with them!

Chris and I invite you to join us on this river tour. You will hear from me in the odd-numbered chapters and Chris in the even-numbered ones. Our voices may sound different to you, but you will hear excitement in both of them. In part two you will learn your actual river (be patient!), but in this first part you will learn more about yourself—about your personality, and what God’s personality looks like on you to the world. You will also come alive as you realize that you don’t necessarily flow in the Spirit the way everyone else does, and shouldn’t feel pressured to. If all of this is stirring you—and if you are perhaps a seven mountain fan—then here is your first move: *Just add water!*

Water is mentioned a total of 722 times in the Bible—more often than faith—so it is no surprise to us that God is still talking today about water. He also frequently used bodies of water in Scripture for miracles. In the next chapter, Chris is going to give you ten great New Testament examples to demonstrate just that. You will never view water the same.

The sound of water is worth more than all the poets’ words.

Octavio Paz, twentieth-century Mexican poet and diplomat