

**Katie Langston 00:16**

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**Linda Booth 01:00**

Welcome to Coffee Connect. My name is Linda Booth. I served as a Community of Christ Apostle for nearly 23 years. And during that time, I collected and continue to collect and share stories of how God interacts with us. For me, each encounter or story is a modern day scripture. They're holy, inspiring and transforming. My husband, Doug, and I have four grandsons, uh, two granddaughters and one great-granddaughter. One grandson, uh, two granddaughters and, more recently, one great-granddaughter were added to our family through a marriage. This story is about our two oldest grandsons, Brock and Corbin. When our grandsons, Brock and Corbin, were five and six years old, our son, Bart, discovered that his wife, their mother, was habitually smoking crystal meth. He said that she agreed to go into a three month drug rehab program. However, when she returned home, he felt nothing was ever the same. Bart said she would disappear for a night and had violent outbursts. Bart and my daughter-in-law entered counseling. And tensions were high the summer before Brock entered third grade. Doug and I were on vacation in Crested Butte, Colorado, when Bart called and told us that his wife had disappeared with the boys. Her cell phone had been disconnected. He didn't know where to find them. So, we immediately packed and we drove home praying. And I must say, I cried a lot. The next three months were the hardest our family has ever experienced. Not knowing where they were or if the boys were safe was excruciating. One evening, Bart called me and he was crying. On the news that day was a story of a woman who drove her car into a lake with her three children in the backseat. All four had drowned. And Bart spoke the fear that I had been feeling that day after I had heard the news report. What if she does that, too? We were desperate to find Brock and Corbin. We felt helpless as we searched for them and called our daughter-in-law's out-of-town family asking about them. My sister even suggested driving to Kentucky, my daughter-in-law's home state, to look for them. I hired a private detective who couldn't find a trace. Bart remembered that his wife's friend lived in St. Joseph, Missouri. He located her address and I offered to drive the two hours to investigate and persuaded Doug to go along with me. When we arrived at the three-story brick apartment building, we searched the parking lot for her van. Doug drove up and down the streets around the building looking and the van wasn't there. Finally, Doug said, This is senseless. We're not going to find her here. So, we drove home, a long, tearful ride. That night, I told Doug that we needed to get up early the next morning and drive to St. Joseph apartment. I reasoned that perhaps our daughter-in-law was out that day and if we got there early enough, she and the boys would be sleeping and the van would be in the parking lot. But Doug refused to go. After a sleepless night. I got up early, drove the two hours and reached the apartment before the sun came up. No van. No daughter-in-law. No boys. Devastated, I drove home, crying and praying. And in my pain, I spontaneously began to sing that, uh, campfire song, I love you, Lord. And I lift my voice to worship you. Oh, my soul rejoice. Take joy, my king in what you hear. May it be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear.

**Linda Booth** 05:10

I sang that praise hymn over and over until my voice was hoarse. I worshipped God during that two-hour sacred da, drive. God's presence was tangible. I realized that God had been with us as we had cried out on behalf of our beloved grandsons. God was now with Bart, our daughter-in-law, Brock and Corbin and would continue to be with them no matter what happened. After all we'd been through, I was surprised to feel an intense love as I drove home for my da, daughter-in-law. She was still my beloved daughter-in-law. On my birthday on September 17, I was driving to the Temple to attend a Council of Twelve Apostles meeting, when I received a call from an unidentified caller. I answered and heard a little voice say, Happy Birthday, grandmother. It's Brock. Can Corbin and I spend the night with you on Saturday? You know what, that was the best birthday ever. They had returned. My son's marriage lasted for four more years and then dissolved. And no matter how painful this experience has been, I continue to try to show my love for her. About a year ago, she dropped the boys off to spend the night and for the first time when I invited her into the house, she came in. And as we stood in the foyer, she looked to the right and saw a photo on the wall of her holding Brock when he was a few weeks old and she began to cry. I didn't think you still loved me, she said. I do love you, I said. And you know what? I meant it. My friends, no life is immune from heartache and pain. It is my testimony that even in the most difficult of times, God's Spirit is with us to bring comfort, assurance, and a reminder: If you love God, then love God's children no matter what.

**Linda Booth** 05:12

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