

LEFT TO TELL

by Immaculée Ilibagiza
David W. Allan - Book Report

Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust is a true story that will change your life – bringing you closer to God. Immaculée's messages are most profound and applicable for our day:

- 1) Keep fear, doubt, hate, and worry out of your lives; these are Satan's tools and are not of God.
- 2) Pray every waking moment; the power of prayer is beyond our comprehension. He is always there for us, if we will but reach out to Him. Through Him we have power over Satan and his minions.
- 3) We need to forgive and love everyone – especially our enemies. The Lord will teach us, as we ask, how to love this intently, and by this love and forgiveness Immaculée gained power over her enemies.

Immaculée internalized these three profound messages as part of her survival, while hiding for 91 days with seven other women cramped in a bathroom of a local pastor's home. During the Rwandan Holocaust, she learned these lessons, and miracles occurred when they were preserved against all odds while a million Rwandans were murdered during the horrible 1994 genocide. As the story progresses in this page-turning Book, you come to know that the Lord wanted her to be LEFT TO TELL. Not so much to remind us of how horribly far bigotry can degenerate man into murdering his neighbors, but so that the world could learn from her the above profound messages.

Now, as she travels the globe sharing her story, many thousands have been deeply touched by her spirit and her message. As she came to know the Lord on a very personal basis, she was filled with His pure love, and that made all the difference.

Dr. Wayne W. Dyer, who wrote the preface to her Book, said, When she converses at a dinner table, all who are present not only listen, they're magnetically drawn to her; and in large audiences, you can hear a pin drop as she speaks from her heart with so much conviction. There is something much more than charisma at work here – Immaculée not only writes and speaks about unconditional love

[foot note; Chauncey Riddle pointed out to me that unconditional love is actually a misnomer. God does not love Satan the way He loves Christ. The pure love of Christ, which we should all seek to be filled with, is conditional.] and forgiveness, but she radiates it wherever she goes. She lives at an elevated level of spiritual consciousness, and by doing so, she raises the energy level of all those whom she encounters ... including myself. Immaculée didn't seek me out for assistance in having this Book published – I was the one who did the seeking. That inner glow of joy and love that I felt in her company wouldn't leave me,...

The very first moment we met, I knew in an absolute flash of insight that I was in the presence of a uniquely Divine woman. To me, Immaculée not only was left to tell this mind-blowing story, but more than that, she's a living example of what we can all accomplish... What some others have said of her Book:

"Left to Tell reminds us that we are all sons and daughters of God; that with faith, miracles will always appear; and that forgiveness is the key to freedom. A must-read for all of us in these troubled times." – Colett Baron-Reid, The author of Remembering the Future

"Left to Tell is an incredibly important story. It addresses both the best and the worst aspects of our humanity. Immaculée is a living example of the undefeatable human spirit! Her story is timeless." – Steve Kalafer, three-time Academy Award-nominated producer

Her story is both "timeless" and incredibly timely. Indeed, It's About Time for the whole world to hear her amazing and inspiring story. The Savior's glorious Second Coming is eminent. For good reason, we know not when, but just like the Rwandan holocaust brought out the best in Immaculée because she turned to the Lord, the cleansing of the Earth will bring out the best in those who also place their trust in the Lord, so that we may be purified and prepared for his coming. The Book is the story of how in the midst of a horrible holocaust she developed the above divine attributes.

Her parents were pillars in the community – loving and serving everyone they could regardless of tribal heritage. Immaculée was raised with her three brothers with no feelings of bigotry; they were true Christians. There was a tremendous bond of love between all the family members, and that love extended beyond the home into the lives of many of the community members. The parents were educators and helped many others besides their own children get good educations. They had many friends both in the Hutu and Tutsi tribes. Tribal differences didn't matter to them.

When the Hutus began their attack on the Tutsis, large numbers of the Tutsis came to Immaculée's father wanting to know what to do. They respected him for his wisdom and knew that he had many Hutu friends in the government. Because of the extensive propaganda build up, the hate feelings and bigotry were so strong that these friendships dissolved. When Immaculée's father saw this, he sent her to a Pastor friend who had had a Tutsi wife, who had died – feeling that he would hide and protect Immaculée, which the Pastor did under great threat to his own life.

At the end of the genocide, all of Immaculée's family had been killed except for a brother, who was out of the country going to college. This was heart rending to Immaculée because of the closeness of the family. Toward the end of her 91 days of hiding at the Pastor's home in a small bathroom with seven other ladies, she recounts the following amazing experience: I heard the killers call my name. A jolt of terror shot through me, and then the devil whispered in my ear again: Now they know who you are... now they know where you are...

My head snapped back, and I was thrown completely off guard. Why did they call out my name – how did they know I was here? Were they coming to the bathroom? I tried to call on God, but all I could hear was the negative voice blaring in my mind... along with the vicious, sadistic chants of the killers echoing through the house. Clothes soaked in sweat, I fumbled with my faith.

There were hundreds of them this time. They were yelling at the pastor, accusing and threatening him. “Where is she?” they taunted. “We know she’s here somewhere, find her... find Immaculée.” They were in the pastor’s bedroom, right on the other side of the wall. Less than an inch of plaster and wood separated us. Their footsteps shook the house, and I could hear their machetes and spears scraping along the walls.

In the chaos, I recognized the voice of a family friend. “I have killed 399 cockroaches,” he boasted, “Immaculée will make 400. It’s a good number to kill.” As I cowered in the corner, the devil was laughing at me: They know your name... they know you’re here. Where is your God now?

The killers were pressuring the pastor: “Where are the Tutsis? You know what we’ll do if we find them. Where is she, Pastor? Where is Immaculée? This is the last place she was seen. Where are you hiding her?”

My spirit tumbled back into the arms of fear and doubt, and I was even more frightened than I’d been the first time the killers came. Their voices clawed at my flesh, and I felt like I was lying on a bed of burning coals. A sweeping wave of pain engulfed my body, and a thousand invisible needles stabbed my flesh. Yet I tried again to pray:

Dear God, forgive me for my lapse of faith... I trust in You, God... I know that You will save us. You are stronger than the evil in this house... Oh, God, please! I screamed silently. Why do You want me to go through this? Why? What else can I do to show You my love? I want to believe that You will save us, God. How can I have more faith? I’m praying so hard, God, so hard... but they’re so close, and I’m so tired! Oh, God... I’m so tired. I felt faint – consciousness slipped away from me until the killers’ thundering voices were only a soft, distant rumble. Then I was sleeping... and dreaming a sweet dream of Jesus.

I floated like a feather above the other women. I saw them trembling below me on the floor, holding their Bibles on their heads, begging God for mercy. I looked up and saw Jesus hovering above me in a pool of golden light, and his arms were reaching toward me. I smiled, and the constant aches and pains that had become part of my body after weeks of crouching disappeared. There was no hunger, no thirst, and no fear – I was so peaceful... so happy.

Then Jesus spoke: “Mountains are moved with faith, Immaculée, but if faith were easy, all the mountains would be gone. Trust in me, and know that I will never leave you. Trust in me, and have no more fear. Trust in me, and I will save you. I shall put my cross upon the door, and they will not reach you. Trust in me, and you shall live.”

Suddenly I was back on the floor again with the others. Their eyes were still closed, but mine were wide open, staring at a giant cross of brilliant white light stretching from wall to wall in front of the bathroom door. As I looked, radiant energy brushed my face, warming my skin like the sun. I knew instinctively that a kind of Divine force was emanating from the cross, which would repel the killers. I knew that we were protected and safe, so I jumped to my feet, feeling like I had the strength of a lioness. I thanked God for touching me with His love once again, and then I looked down at the others.

For the first and last time while I was in the bathroom, I shouted at my companions: "We're safe! Trust me... everything is going to be okay!" Then Immaculée knew that the Lord would lead them to safety. At 2:00 the next morning the minister came and got them to show the way to a French encampment nearby. As they were walking toward it, coming the other way were about 60 Interahamwe killers in a double line with their machetes, guns, etc. looking for the likes of them. They walked by them as if their eyes were holden and did not see them.

Later, as a French truck was carrying them from that encampment to a safer place, they heard gunfire, and the officer in charge stopped the truck and told them to get out as he could go no further, because he had orders to avoid fighting at any cost.

Getting out of the truck, they found themselves in the middle of several Interahamwe killers, who started to move toward them. Immaculée said:

I looked one Interahamwe straight in the eye and held his gaze. My heart told me that he was a person just like me, and that he really didn't want to kill. I held my rosary and summoned all my will to send a message of love to him. I prayed that God would use me to touch the killer with the power of His love.

I didn't blink... and we stared into each other's eyes for what seemed like a lifetime. Finally, the killer broke my gaze and looked away. He turned his back to me and dropped his machete, as if the devil had left his body. As the rest of Immaculée's friends got out of the truck, the killers watched. Bravely, Immaculée said, "Let's go. We'll walk to the RPF camp – the soldiers are close by." When the killers heard her mention the RPF, they got nervous, and for the moment, left them alone. They walked until the wheel chair of one of the sweet mothers, Aloise, got stuck in some rocks and they could go no further.

At that point, Immaculée took two of her male friends, and told the rest to stay with Aloise while they went to get help and for them to pray. Three Interahamwes followed us as we broke away from the larger group, and one of them recognized me. "I know this cockroach," he said. "This is Leonard's daughter – we've been looking for her for months! I can't believe she's still alive... we killed the rest of them, but his little cockroach gave us the slip!"

"Dear God," I prayed, walking as fast as I could and holding my father's rosary tightly in my hand. "Only you can save me. You promised to take care of me, God – well, I really need

taking care of right now. There are devils and vultures at my back, Lord... please protect me. Take the evil from the hearts of these men, and blind their hatred with Your holy love." I walked without looking at my feet, not knowing if I was about to stumble over rocks or bodies, putting all my trust in God to guide me to safety. We were moving very briskly, but the killers were all around us now, circling us, slicing the air with their machetes. We were defenseless, so why were they waiting to strike?

"If they kill me, God, I ask You to forgive them. Their hearts have been corrupted by hatred, and they don't know why they want to hurt me." After walking a half mile like that, I heard Jean Paul say, "Hey, they're gone... they're gone!"

I looked around, and it was true – the killers had left us... I never stopped thanking God for saving us on that road! After reaching the soldiers, through another miraculous intervention, Immaculée was able to get some soldiers to go back quickly to get the others left behind. As Immaculée was praying hard for their safety, she soon heard her merry friend's familiar laughter coming from and approaching RPF truck.

Whatever prayers you've been saying, keep on saying them, Immaculée," Aloise chuckled. "Those killers were looking at us like they wanted to cut us to pieces, but they couldn't move. It was though they were frozen to the spot! We were like Daniel in the lions' den... just like Daniel in the lions' den! It is particularly interesting that toward the end of her stay in hiding, the Lord prompted her to learn English. The Pastor would try to give them scraps of food to eat in the early morning hours when no one would notice. Immaculée asked him for a French-English dictionary and some English Books for her to read. He did that for her and she had them read before they got out – a miracle all by itself.

Her dedication and devotion to the Lord are most inspiring, and even though she went from 115 to 65 pounds during the 91 days in hiding with gnawing hunger her continual companion, she kept her focus on the Lord's will and her desire to be faithful to Him. Now she is circling the globe, inspiring countless thousands – fluently speaking in English or French.

The Book is full of miracles and answers to prayer as Immaculée continues to place her trust in the Lord. There are many other great messages in the Book, and it is particularly fascinating how the Lord can turn every evil into good. This horrible Rwandan holocaust – costing over a million lives – opened the door for many more than a million Rwandan Tutsi refugees from the 1959 and 1973 genocides to return to Rwanda from around the world, bringing children, grandchildren, and all manner of new cultural heritage and strange languages with them. In addition, the above messages will help us abide the days ahead, if we will internalize them as did Immaculée.

As horrible as was the 1994 Rwandan genocide, many good things came out of it. Similarly, but much more dynamically will be the cleansing of the Earth prior to the Lord's coming as the wicked destroy the wicked and great suffering occurs, which need not happen if people would repent and turn to God. After it is over, we will know that He

was with us through it all – like Immaculée. And we will see that it was all worth it. We will be caught up in the incredible joy of His presence, as well as the peace, joy, and communion in that ideal society called Zion under his Divine leadership as He becomes our Lord of lords and our King of kings. His presence will fill our souls with unspeakable joy.

May we learn from Immaculée's lessons and prepare for the great day of the Lord is my prayer.

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