

## CHAPTER 1

**If we claim that we experience a shared life with him (Jesus) and continue to stumble around in the dark, we're obviously lying through our teeth—we're not living what we claim.**

1 John 1:6 (The Message)

"Nickeeeeeee...hurry up! We're going to be late for church," Tonya yelled from the bottom of the stairs.

This was no ordinary Sunday for the Taylor family. Pastor Stone would be announcing Nickey's new position as Choir Director today. Nickey was sure the announcement would shock many of the faithful at Love Faith Tabernacle Center (L.F.T.C.). She was surprised herself when Pastor Stone informed her of his decision to appoint her to the high-profile position.

It's not that Nickey wasn't talented. By the time she was five, she was hitting soprano notes that would make Beyonce blush. Now at seventeen, she had it going on. The problem was that the 10,000-member congregation believed she was too young to hold such an important position in the church. There were older, better-qualified members that could do the job.

Everyone loved Nickey though. She had a way of capturing people's attention when she spoke. And, when she praised, it was like watching the angels worship God—her praise was that beautiful. Nickey was also a model student. She was on the Honor Roll and never got into trouble. As far as everyone could see, Nickey was the perfect teenager.

"Nickey, I'm not playing with you. Come on! We'll be in the car. I'm giving you three minutes, then you'll be walking," Tonya threatened.

"Mom, I'm coming. I have to fix my makeup! You know how important today is to me. When they telecast this on NTB tomorrow morning, I need to look right!"

## Purchase at NickeysFlesh.com

Nickey was not the most attractive girl, but you couldn't tell her that. With her chocolate-almond skin and lanky runner's legs, she was very good at buying the right items to accentuate her assets.

Within a few minutes, Nickey glided down the stairs with her purse, Bible and backpack in hand. Tonya glared at her daughter as she reached the bottom step. "I thought you were wearing the black Ralph Lauren dress."

"I was, but I didn't want to look like I was going to a funeral, so I decided to go with something else. You know, Mom, I am seventeen! I gotta rep for the youth at the church. Pastor always tells me that I'm an example for the youth as well as for the adults. I just gotta do me and keep it straight Nik-key," she playfully poked her mother and giggled.

"Well, Miss Nik-key, let's go. Tony and Sam are waiting in the car for your slow behind!"

Nickey swayed her hips as she walked past her mother onto the porch. Her stepfather, Tony, watched her as she bounded the steps. "Nickey, you look lovely this morning," he said.

"Thanks, Tony. You know I try to do what I do for Jesus!"

\*\*\*

Tony always encouraged Nickey in everything she did. When he married Tonya after the death of Nickey's father, he instantly fell in love with Nickey. In the beginning though, their relationship was pretty rocky. Nickey gave him a hard time. As time went on, Nickey realized Tony was there for the long haul and she started to feel comfortable with him being around. It also didn't hurt that Tony gave her everything she wanted. He believed children should get whatever they asked for, so he raised Nickey that way, and when Sam was born, he spoiled her too.

Just as Nickey approached the car, her younger sister Samantha yelled, "'Bout time you came out the house! Dag, why does it take you hours to get dressed? You cute, but you ain't that cute!"

## Purchase at [NickeysFlesh.com](http://NickeysFlesh.com)

Nickey ignored Samantha and turned to her mother, “Mom, can I go with Shae to the skating rink tonight?”

“I don’t know, Nik. You have school in the morning.”

“Please, Mom! Let me celebrate! It’s not every day that a seventeen-year-old becomes the head choir director of a mega church,” Nickey pleaded.

“If she gets to go, can I go with her, please,” Samantha chimed in.

“Why are you always trying to be up under me? Dag, can I breathe? You’re in my atmosphere sucking out all the air! In a minute, I’m gonna need CPR,” Nickey snapped at Sam.

“See, Mom? She never wants me to go anywhere with her. She acts like I’m 13 years younger than her. She’s only got me by five years. C’mon, Mom. Please let me go,” Sam whined.

Tonya became irritated. “Enough,” she shouted. “Okay, Nickey, you can go. Be back in my house by eleven. Sam, stop whining like that! If you want to go, find a friend to go with and be back home by 9:30!”

\*\*\*

When they arrived at L.F.T.C., the parking lot was practically empty. Only a few saints with pre-service responsibilities were there. Nickey imagined that it was difficult preparing for three services and 10,000 members.

She walked to the front of the cathedral envisioning what it would be like to perform a solo at a concert in front of all those empty seats. She was consumed with the idea of becoming the bestselling and highest-paid gospel music artist. She loved singing about God. She loved the control she had over people. Nothing pleased Nickey more than seeing people react whenever she hit high notes and riffs. Singing professionally was her dream, and she would stop at nothing to achieve it.

As Nickey stood at the pulpit, she thought of how to answer all of Pastor Stone’s questions about the consecration he’d put her on in preparation for this day. She replayed the conversation she’d had with him in her mind:

“Nickey, this position is very important. You will be ushering people

## Purchase at [NickeysFlesh.com](http://NickeysFlesh.com)

into the presence of the Lord. You must be that example we know you to be. We know you can sing, write, compose and direct, but can you remain pure? Can you lead a holy life with all the crap that will be floating around you? Nickey, I know you're a prayer warrior and that you know the word of God. However, the Lord has revealed to me that He wants a deeper relationship with you. So, I'm asking that over the next month, you follow this strict consecration. I'll e-mail full directions to you, but for now, here are the basics. No secular TV, music, excessive conversation, meats, sugar or BOYS!"

Those words would run through Nickey's head non-stop for the next month. She was cool during the first week. After school and church, she would go straight home to pray and read her Bible. She'd always had a hunger for emotional experiences with the Lord. So, something like this was actually enjoyable for her. She loved the feeling of being "slain in the Spirit." Not to mention the other things she was involved in that no one knew about.

Nickey was lost in her thoughts when Sister Bernadette, one of the most faithful church members, gave Nickey a slight nudge. "Nickey, Nickey, Pastor Stone would like to see you now."

Startled, Nickey cleared her throat and replied, "Uhh, hello, Sista B. How are you doing this morning? I know you got a word for me."

"You know I do, Suga. Go talk to Pastor first and I'll catch up with you sometime before first service."

"Ok, Sista B."

\*\*\*

As Nickey walked toward Pastor Stone's office, she tried to formulate answers to the questions she knew he would ask. Nickey had been attending L.F.T.C since she was three. Back then, there were only 15 members. She knew Pastor Stone like the back of her hand. The only problem was that Pastor also knew her. He could always tell when she was lying because he said her voice got higher.

## Purchase at [NickeysFlesh.com](http://NickeysFlesh.com)

Nickey was sure Pastor only knew how to read her at church and that he had no idea who she was outside of church. He didn't know anything about the Nickey that came on the scene when she hung out with Shae. There were things that went on in her and Shae's world, that only the two of them knew about. Nickey had more than "skeletons in her closet"—she had a host of demons that she liked hanging out with too.

Nickey turned down a small corridor and soon found herself standing outside Pastor Stone's office. She took a deep breath, adjusted her blouse and knocked.

"Come in," Pastor Stone said from the other side of the door.

"Good morning, Pastor. How are you doing?"

"I'm great, Nickey. I'm blessed! Ready to release this word the Lord delivered to me."

"Aaight, I'm ready to receive it, Pastor."

"So, Nickey, today is the big day. You're about to step into a portion of your purpose. How do you feel about that?"

"Pastor, I was nervous in the beginning, but this is what I have dreamed about for a long time. When I wake up, all I think about is singing. I can't believe you're giving me this responsibility at such a young age. I'm like, WHOA! For real? God is moving faster than I expected! You know it's all on His time. I'm just going one step at a time; waiting on Him so I can mount up with wings like an eagle. Pastor, I'm ready! Let's do this!"

Pastor Stone laughed.

"Same ole' Nickey. So, how did the consecration go?"

"It went well, Pastor. It was a little hard, but you know me, I handled my handle."

"Amen," Pastor Stone chuckled. "I wanted to talk to you more extensively, but it's fifteen minutes before praise and worship starts, so we have to get to the cathedral. I'll e-mail or call you later this week. Go do it for Jesus, Nic!"

"You know I will, Pastor!"

## Purchase at [NickeysFlesh.com](http://NickeysFlesh.com)

When Nickey left Pastor Stone's office, she felt like she had just dodged hundreds of bullets in a shootout. She thought about last night with Shae. She had told her mother she was only going to the movies.

\*\*\*

Shae was Nickey's best friend. She was about 5 feet tall and was filled out in all the right places. With very light skin and brown eyes, Shae used her physical features to pull in the guys. Nickey had to admit that she learned to dress from Shae's sense of style. In fact, when Shae was younger, she'd read and reread *Fly Girl*, and literally attempted to become one.

When Shae and Nickey arrived at the movies, they met up with Trevon and Keith. Keith and Shae had been dating for about a year after they'd met at a concert at Temple University. Keith was a junior at Temple and Shae really liked the fact that he was well off. He had his head on straight and his parents had money. Shae took full advantage of his generosity. Wherever Keith went, he wanted Shae with him. Although Shae didn't think Keith was very attractive, she figured he was worth all the perks.

Keith took Shae to all the hottest, big-name concerts and events. He treated her well when she gave him what he wanted. He got aggressive at times, but Shae knew just how to calm him down. All she had to do was put on a porno film or have phone sex with him, and that would do the trick. Shae didn't mind using sex to control Keith, just as long as he had money for her car payment and cell phone bill each month. As far as Shae was concerned, Keith didn't have to know that her mother was already paying those bills. She used the money she got from Keith to buy all the latest fashions, shoes and pocketbooks. A girl had to do what a girl had to do.

As time went on, Keith wanted to keep Shae closer to him, so he introduced Nickey to his best friend, Trevon. At first, Nickey was really feeling Trevon. He was 21, owned a car, had his own place and was in college. Nickey loved the attention and Trevon poured it on thick. Soon after they'd met, Trevon

## Purchase at [NickeysFlesh.com](http://NickeysFlesh.com)

surprised Nickey and asked her out on his birthday.

"Hello, can I speak to Key-Key?"

"This is she."

"How you doin', boo? It's Trevon."

"Yea, I know. I do have Caller ID on my cell phone," Nickey teased.

"Hey, Key-Key. Can we go out today? It's my birthday."

"Sure, I'm not doin' anything. Pick me up at the McDonald's in like an hour."

"Aight bet... I'll be there."

Nickey rushed to her closet to find something to wear that would blow Trevon away. Her mother made sure she had all the latest styles, so finding something on such short notice was no problem. She opted for her Apple Bottom skinny jeans and a big shirt. She dabbed a little gel around the edges of her ponytail, smoothed on some cherry lip-gloss and stepped into her stiletto pumps. Luckily, her mother, sister and Tony weren't home, so she made it out of the house without having to do any explaining. She hated lying to her parents, but she had to do what she had to do.

\*\*\*

"What's wrong wit you," Trevon asked.

"Nothing. Why something gotta be wrong wit me," Nickey snapped.

"Calm down, boo! You were off in space over there. I was jus' lookin' out for you...making sure you were cool. So anywayz! Key-Key, I'm really feelin' you and I have been feelin' you since I met you. You know? I wanted to take you out because I wanted to do something for you."

"What you wanna do for me, Trevon? It's your birthday. Normally, people want something done for them. You know, you're a weird dude sometimes."

Trevon laughed. "Yea, I know. My mom always taught me if you want to keep a woman around, just give her everything she wants before she asks for it."

"So, what do you think I want," Nickey asked with a little smirk.

## Purchase at [NickeysFlesh.com](http://NickeysFlesh.com)

Trevon, picking up on Nickey's cue, lowered his voice and said, "You want me to take my tongue and put it in places no man has been."

Nickey was shocked. "What makes you think no man has been there before!"

Trevon shot back, "Cuz I know."

"Well sweetie, you are sadly mistaken. But you're right about one thing. I do want you to go there. I kind of want to see what you're working with."

"Aaight...well, let's go back to my crib. I hope you can handle it."

By this time, Trevon was leaning over into Nickey's face and running his fingers through her hair.

Ever since that day at his apartment, Trevon would not go away. Nickey loved the fact that he catered to her, but it was weird. He never asked for anything else. He didn't even like kissing. He would just eat and leave. There were times when she felt like he was just using her. He wouldn't caress her, hold her hand or even cuddle with her.

\*\*\*

A million thoughts raced through Nickey's mind as she got off her knees at the altar and took her position in front of the choir. With her 5'7" stature, she raised her hands signaling the praise and worship team to rise. The musicians began to play. The congregation began to sing Israel and New Breed "Friend of God":

**I am a friend of God**

**I am a friend of God**

**I am a friend of God**

**He knows my name**

The church was rocking. Everyone was standing. There were smiles on every face. After the worship team had completed three selections, Pastor Stone

## **Purchase at NickeysFlesh.com**

informed the church of Nickey's new position.

"Good morning, Saints. Today is an awesome occasion," he began. "This morning, we create Love Faith Tabernacle Church history. Never before have we had the privilege of allowing one of our youth into an official church office. This young lady has had the anointing of God on her from the day she was born. She is a vocalist, straight-A student and youth leader. But, today, we place her into the position of Minister of Music. I present to you my spiritual daughter, Nickey Taylor."

The entire congregation stood to its feet in thunderous applause. Nickey smiled broadly. She knew she was talented in the area of music; but in the back of her mind, she knew she should not have taken the position. Her spiritual life was nowhere near where it needed to be for this level of responsibility. She couldn't even pray for two minutes without reminiscing about her trysts and sexual conquests. How could she refuse the position, though? Her dream was to be a gospel artist and this would definitely get her in the door.

Purchase the book at  
<http://Nickey'sFlesh.com>

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

CHRISTina Faith is an all-around creative. She is gifted at making biblical topics, relevant and applicable to everyday life through writing and media. CHRISTina Faith is a resident of Philadelphia, and graduate of Rutgers University. She is currently working on her Master's of Divinity at Palmer Theological Seminary and loves serving at Harvest Time Christian Fellowship in Philadelphia, PA.

Contact CHRISTina Faith  
<http://ChristinaFaith.com>  
[twitter.com/ChristinaFaith](https://twitter.com/ChristinaFaith)