

# HIDDEN POTENTIAL *by Wendy Pope*

Hidden Potential

Possibility Profile: Linda

WP=Wendy Pope

L=Linda

(Music)

WP: All right, so Linda, I'm going to start out by reading, and you don't have a copy of "Hidden Potential" in front of you, so I'm going to start off by reading how you start your profile. Do you remember?

L: Oh, Yeah.

WP: OK. So you start off with this phrase: "Giant in the land of intellectual pygmies. Let that just rest on you for a moment. Sadly, that is how I viewed myself and others around me. I hated stupidity in others but really despised it in myself. I was a perfectionist and my talent was problem solving."

All right, so we have talked with Sherry, we have talked with Meg, we have talked with Sharon. Frailty, something we, OK, we can admit, people can see those, we can work on those and people have some compassion with us about that. Fear is of course is something everybody can identify and rallies around to support. Failure is a little less likely to talk about. Faults are a lot less forgiving and a lot less talked about and focused on because we don't want to admit them. Also, one of the things that I say in the book is that faults can cost things. So, pause and do some calculations before you act. So talk to us about, first off, explain where you came from when you said this phrase "intellectual pygmies." That's really how you viewed the world. And let me just say to everybody first, you are an intellect. You certainly had that right, and she doesn't brag about this very often, in fact, she never talks about her degrees, but she is a brilliant, brilliant person, and by the world's standards, she has power in knowledge because she has two degrees, engineering degrees, that she got in three years. Very, very smart lady. So talk to us about the fact that you have that, but then it cost you some things, and how did people respond to you with that aura that you had about yourself.

L: I didn't just always think that way about the people around me. I didn't like....

WP: Don't worry about it. Froze up. Keep going.

L: It was more of, um, when God revealed to me these faults that I had that I realized what I had been doing to the people around me and the world around me.

WP: So you didn't realize that until you started submitting yourself, your inner being, your thoughts to God. You didn't realize that possibly these faults had cost you some relationships, or um, you know, some even positions, maybe.

L: Oh, definitely. I definitely did not think that way. And my heart was never to hurt people.

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WP: Right.

L: It was just that I didn't really have the patience, I didn't have, um; I would see the solution and I was going after it, and I'm like, "Please don't get in my way. Either you come along with me, or get out of my way." And, um, I think that definitely cost, um, it had an impact on the people around me, in the relationships around me. I mean, in the in working world, I worked with mostly men, so it was like...

WP: Right.

L: They're just 'Let's get to the solution and move on.' But for women, I think it's, it has always been very difficult for me to have relationships with females because I'm, there's a hardness to that attitude, honestly.

WP: Right.

L: Um, when you can see the solution almost instantaneously, and it's going to take a while for others to come along, and that can have like, devastating results.

WP: Right.

L: And, um, I didn't really understand that until I experienced the Spirit working in my heart to really bring it all to light.

WP: Right.

L: And He didn't do that first, trust me.

(Laughter)

L: That was not the first issue He brought to my attention. He was definitely very sweet.

WP: And don't we love, exactly, don't we love that He takes His time peeling back the onion? Um, and takes those layers with grace, and a little bit at a time. What a lot of people don't know is that you live in New Jersey and you're at your home right now because obviously we can't be together because of this virus. But how you and I met is truly, really speaks into this fault of yours. Because you said it cost you relationships with females primarily, because you really are a 'bullet-point, let's-get-it-done' type of person. You're my go-to person when I need something done; I know with great confidence that you're going to get it done, and you're going to get it done right. Or you're going to have multiple solutions for us for me and you, because we do ministry together, multiple solutions. But when we met, you were very, I was very put-off by you. And so I can testify to the fact that I didn't want to have anything to do with you, because of how you and I met and how you approached me. You didn't approach me as, "Hey, let's be friends, let's have coffee," which we couldn't because you live in New Jersey. But Linda started

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critiquing me as I was teaching my “Read Through the Word” class, and I had been teaching an online class called “Read Through the Word” for ten years now. Linda started participating in that class, and she started sending me emails with all the things that I was doing wrong. Not, “Hey I appreciate what you’re doing” and she did have some compliments in there, I don’t want to just say she was so hard that she had no kindness, because she does. But here’s the thing, she would send me these emails with things that were wrong. And I was very offended by it, did not like it, they were very staccato, bullet-point type points. But the thing about it is, I looked at the truth of what, I looked at the emails, and there were truths to that, and she was right. So I ended up improving the quality of the ministry that she and I are both right now very deeply involved in because I listened to her, and because of that problem solving. But, just to back up what you just said, I didn’t want to be your friend, because it was, it came across rude and crass. So how has God softened you, and do you still deal with that? Does that control, does that perfectionist, does that problem solver still come up, and how do you deal with it when it comes up?

So, Number 1: How have you dealt with it? And Number 2: When it comes up or does it still come up, what do you do? Do you notice it right away or does somebody say, “Mom,” “Hey, Linda”, whatever, “this is coming up again.” How does that work for you?

L: Well, it is a constant struggle that I have with this every single day because it is woven into the fabric of how God made me.

WP: Right.

L: And so, I, and the world celebrates the ability that I can solve problems and I can control. The world, so you’re always getting this message of y’know, it’s, this is a great skill that you have.

WP: Right, because it’s valued. Knowledge is valued, problem solving is valued. It really is, for true.

L: Right. And so, for me, what helps me to destroy that idol, keep that idol under control because it really is an idol that you can bow down to, especially in very hard times, is being in the Word. And then that, so because I’m so consistently in the Word, every day, the Spirit can recall Scripture, He can quicken my spirit to calm me down.

WP: Right.

L: It’s definitely, I mean, I liken it to someone who has some type of addiction.

WP: Wow.

L: It’s something that you’re always, it’s always with you, and so it really is the power of the Spirit that allows you to know how to, you know, obviously addiction is not helpful, but for me the control, “How can I use this for God’s glory?” And when is it that I can step in and use my control and to, you know,

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obviously help the world like my home or the people around me, and when do I need to step back, and God wants to do something amazing.

WP: Right.

L: And that's I think, the thing. Once I realized how I wasn't trusting God, and I was missing out, on seeing Him in my midst,

WP: Mm-hmm, wow.

L: I'm like, that was mind blowing.

WP: That's a good point. You miss out when you allow that fault to control you, rather than the Spirit, and that's one of the references that I make in the book, is that the fault, we make, it's only a fault when we allow it to control us. Wisdom and knowledge and the skills that we have, that you have, the problem solving, and also the eagerness that you have to help people. A lot of people don't have that. So those things combined are not bad. It becomes a fault when we allow it to control us. So what you're saying is that for many years you probably, you know now, looking back, you missed opportunities to see God work because, you and I have talked about this before, Oswald Chambers calls it an "Amateur Providence", that we jump in, you would jump in, and I've been guilty of that in my life, too, to jump in and try to help the Spirit do His work. Instead, now, because you've allowed the Spirit to control, and Scripture to control your life, it's less likely that you're going to jump in. You'll sit back and let God work out some of those hard things.

L: Right. And especially when it comes to other people. Because my heart, like you say, it was to help other people.

WP: Absolutely.

L: So I wanted to help solve their problems and I, you know, I wasn't allowing God to solve their problems. And sometimes He's going to solve, a lot of times He's going to solve your problems in a completely different, unique, out-of-the-box way and I, you know, we missed that, we missed that opportunity to see God do that when I stepped in and the people would take my counsel. And I wasn't taking the glory for myself, but we totally missed God working.

WP: Yes.

L: And that's sad because that affected the person I helped, their faith, and it affected my faith.

WP: Right.

L: You know, so those are the things that the fault could cost you when talk in the book about your faults.

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WP: Well, it..

L: You know, to not be able to see God in your midst and grow your faith is just, it grieves, for me it grieves me now.

WP: Right. And because you're on the other side spiritually of that. And I do want to back up to the story of us and not leave everybody in that hard place. It took a while, probably, almost a year before I was really able to see Linda's heart to want to help me and what I was doing, and actually God was calling her to kind of work with me. She travels with me when I speak, she does my speaking coordinating, and she also produces the videos for "Read Through the Word". But I did eventually see her heart and I know even now, where there's times when she wants to jump in and fix things, I know it's out of a heart of love and also to advance the Gospel because we're in ministry together. So I've seen that side of you, so I wanted to make sure I backed, backed the bus up to the stop and finish that part of the story.

So control is one of those things that you've dealt with, but a lot of other people might not deal with that. They might have pride. Or they might have whatever some of the faults that they may have. Things that they allow to take over them, rather than letting the Spirit take over their lives. So how long, Linda, would you say that the Lord worked with you on this? I know He still works with you, but, when did you, that's a hard question to answer, isn't it? A 'how long' question?

L: Well, I think He made it really evident, um, maybe six years ago when, um, so my oldest child has special needs, and I really believed that I was trusting God in everything. Because there's a lot with my daughter that I can't control. So when my oldest son went to college, and started to struggle and God was leading him to another major, um, I realized I wasn't trusting God.

WP: Wow.

L: And that, and the control, even though I thought I kind of had it under control, was, I, I really had an idol in my heart that I was bowing down to.

WP: So there's layers that God, even within our different things that he deals with us, there's layers with the one thing, so little, still revealing things to you. So what you're saying is you've got to stay, it's not really about time, how long, it's just about remaining teachable and moldable to the Spirit's work and to the work of the Scripture in our lives, right?

L: Right. And to be in the Word. And, you know, I was reading devotions all the time, which is you know, a couple verses of Scripture, but it's when I really dove in and started reading chunks, like chapters, and of course, we read through the Word, we're getting through the Bible in a year. Um, that, especially reading chronologically, that really helped me see God, His (unintelligible), just a whole new way.

WP: Right.

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L: Um, that it, I really could see myself, that mirror image, you know, of Christ where you're being molded every day to be more like Christ, and you can start to see where the images are clear.

WP: Mmm-hmm, yeah.

L: And I just love how He does it so sweetly and so gently, because I did not feel condemned.

WP: I love that you said that. That statement gives a lot of home to someone that may be feeling the pounding in their chest right now, that they're being, you know, convicted, not condemned, convicted of something that they might be dealing with wrongly and something that they've allowed to overtake their lives. So, submitting to God's work is not condemnation that He is, and you and I have talked about before, He's a gentleman; He loves us and He would never do anything in a way that would bring harm to us. Even if it's painful, it may be painful, and in fact, it probably will be, but He does it, there isn't anything that He does that He doesn't do out of love. And that's what I hear you saying.

L: Right. And even when, you know, like my heart was always to help people, you know, with this whole control . . .

WP: Right.

L: And so God saw that in me, He just was, you know, just kind of shift my perspective enough, to say, "Look what, you know, you've missed Me working in your midst.

WP: Yeah.

L: Like, and of course, when I couldn't control a situation, like with my daughter, I would see God working all the time.

WP: Right.

L: And so He just kind of made that even more evident with my son as he changed his major at school. And everything that's been happening, I've seen God work, and it's so hard because we want our kids not to suffer or hurt. . .

WP: Yes.

L: And we want to smooth that road and it's like 'No, you need to get out of the way and let them have those bumps and do a little off-roading with Jesus' because, well, not only do we get to see God at work, (unintelligible) and how are we going to help them be obedient to God unless they start seeing God work, if we're always the one fixing the problems. . .

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WP: Right. Absolutely.

L: They aren't going to see God.

WP: Absolutely.

L: And that's what we want. We want our kids to be able to see God and be obedient to Him.

WP: Right.

L: And have that relationship.

WP: Well, I'm thankful and I tell you this probably not often enough, that you're in my life, and I'm thankful that you allow God to work in your life, and there's a whole back story that we don't have time to talk about, um, about what God was doing in your life, as He was bringing you in my life, and being an irritant, and you really were, and we nicknamed her "Bulldozer", she has to shirt and everything, and that's what my family would refer to her as those emails would come, I'd say, "Bulldozer's emailed me again." But now it is met with great sentiment and love. But I love that you are in my life and I love that you, um, have allowed God to work in your life, and to shape you and that you were able to share a testimony with all of us because we all have things that we allow to overcome us, when we should allow the Spirit to overcome us. That's what the fault is – when we allow whatever it is, whether it's pride, whether it's unforgiveness, whether it's control, whatever it might be. So thank you for sharing your story, your life with me, but sharing your story in "Hidden Potential" and with us tonight.