

# Be Still

## A Story Of God's Providence In The Midst Of A Storm

By Jarred Moss

**"I firmly believe that God's timing is always perfect," says Heath Fancher, owner of Stone Tire of Searcy, Arkansas.**

**A generalized sentimental statement to some, Heath is well acquainted with God's timing. Of all the things life could have handed him a year ago, a job loss wasn't exactly in his plan – certainly not a job of 13 years.** It was August 28th of 2015 that Heath was called in by his supervisor and given the news that he would be dismissed from his position at a company he had worked for with no hiccups or roadblocks for over a decade.

"Generally you receive a verbal warning, but I was taken straight to a written final warning. That was in April, and then in August (I was let go)."

"The writing was on the wall," says Sarah, Heath's wife. Sitting in two chairs amidst the smell of tires in the air on the stone floor lobby of Stone Tire, the couple recalls the story vividly.

"I'd never been fired in my life. . . but hindsight is always 20/20. God knew I wouldn't have left there on my own, and He shut that door and, therefore, I trusted God and I leaned on Him so heavily!"

After 14 years of marriage, The Fanchers equate Heath's job

loss to a storm. "You know, we always talk about how you trust in God and lean on Him when you're going through a storm, but it's a little different when you're going through one," says Heath.

"Absolutely," Sarah agrees.

"I never once was angry with God. I was just angry. But God is awesome. I've grown so much in one year. So much!"

"It was very discouraging," says Sarah. "He must've sent out more than 200 resumes! It was just one after the other – I would find him jobs, he would find jobs, friends would tell him (of jobs) and of all those, we got back about two calls."

Sarah began to consider working extra nights to supplement income, a move that would take her away from her kids and husband more, adding to the frustration in a less-than-desired life season. But amidst the storms and questions, Heath had peace.

Citing Psalm 46:10, Heath emphatically recalls God speaking to his Spirit in that moment of question: "Every time that discussion (of Sarah working nights) would come up, I would just say, 'I can't explain it, but I feel like God is just saying, be still.'"

**"There are many beautiful moments the family gets to share on this journey of local business ownership..."**



Heath was completely convinced that God was calling them to wait on Him. After two months in the midst of a storm, a glimpse of light began to break through when Heath was offered and accepted an opportunity to work for St. Jean Industries in Heber Springs between November 2015 and February 2016. A time which he considers to be a great stepping-stone.

"I'd finished all the honey-do chores around the house," says Heath, laughing. "We had a zero dollar Lowes budget," says Sarah, smiling.

The job at St. Jean was joyfully welcomed and Heath was happy to be working and providing in a special way once again, but inwardly the two could sense that God had a big shift headed their way. and Little did they know that shift would transform their careers and roles into that of local small-business owners.

"In September of 2015 I drove past this place (Stone Tire and Automotive) at least 10 times. I kept thinking, 'I need to go talk to Nathan (Stone),' founder and then-owner of Stone Tire. But I just would not [go] in and talk to him. I felt that I needed to talk to him about buying it, but then I thought, 'He'll never sell, and I don't want to do tires for a living.' You know, just all these things!"

Sarah adds: "And we were just scared of owning our own business! You know, being kind of afraid of it. We didn't have any experience with that!"

When in February Fancher did speak with Nathan about a possible purchase and takeover, Nathan shared with Heath that he, indeed, would have sold it to him in September. But Heath affirms that he wasn't mentally ready for the acquisition in the fall. God hadn't yet brought him to the place he was calling him, but was preparing him all along.

"We kind of had to live through that season of questioning 'What is God planning to do and what are we supposed to do?'" says Sarah. "I mean, even moving or staying in Searcy (was a question)."

"We were willing to go anywhere!" says Heath.

As Sarah, a lifelong Searcy native with family and friends close-to-home, describes it, the family of four was willing and ready to go wherever necessary to pursue a new goal. Together, the pair even delivered resumes in East Tennessee, looking for open doors and new opportunities.

No opportunity, however, truly compared with what God had in store for the Fanchers.

Heath's relationship with Nathan Stone began when Heath was working for a local Searcy company who held a service account with Nathan and Stone Tire, a partnership that ensured company vehicles and fleets were well serviced and maintained. After 11 years of serving the community of Searcy at Stone Tire, Nathan was ready for a change of season and Heath was curious.

It had been 4 years since he had spoken with Nathan, until one fine day when Heath finally decided to text him and see what he thought about a business buyout.

"He told me he texted Nathan and asked if he would sell us his business, and he didn't even ask me!" says Sarah, laughing.

"The first thing he said was, 'Who is this!?' " Heath adds, smiling. "He had changed phones and didn't have my number."

After saving Heath's number, Nathan told him he might, in fact, be interested in selling Stone Tire.

"That was on a Thursday evening," says Heath. "On Monday, I told him this is what we wanted to do!"

Heath cites Stone's fantastic customer base and solid reputation in the community as reasons for his interest in the buyout.

"One of the privileges I got was to keep his name," says Heath. "And I told him I would never do one thing to tarnish that name, but only to honor it and promote it."

Since the takeover in February this year, Stone Tire has seen steady customer-base growth, much to the joy of the Fanchers who consider it one of their highest honors to serve both Stone's original customer base as well as new customers from the Searcy-area community.

One customer, seated in the lobby adjacent to the Fanchers while waiting for her car's oil change to be completed, chimed in:



**"My favorite thing is our kids getting to be here. Our dog getting to be here. I get to talk to the customers. I truly get the best of both worlds. I have my family right here with me and I get to help meet people's needs!"**



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"I still continue to recommend (Stone Tire)," says Farrah Robbins, a long-time happy customer of Nathan Stone's and Stone Tire and Automotive. "I was heartbroken when I heard they were going to sell but he (Nathan) assured me that he would not have sold to them (the Fanchers) if he didn't completely trust that they were going to take care of the customers and maintain a good name. He said, 'Don't go! It's going to be just as good.' And it has been just as good!"

Farrah is an enthusiastic supporter of the Fanchers and the quality that comes from Stone Tire's service:

"I have one car with 270,000 miles and another with 250,000 and they continue to run just fine because of these guys, just from routine maintenance!"

"It's a tribute to the guys who work here," says Heath. "I was very fortunate to keep the employees who worked here."

After seven months, the Fanchers are blessed enough to enjoy their job.

"It's not like going to work!" says Heath. "Even the most stressful day is a cake-walk. My favorite thing is our kids getting to be here. Our dog getting to be here. I get to talk to the customers. I truly get the best of both worlds. I have my family right here with me and I get to help meet people's needs!"

Sarah firmly believes that owning the local tire shop is a certain answer to prayer: "We quit praying for God to give Heath just any job, but we started praying that God would give Heath the job that he was born to do."

Heath had always had his hands in car-maintenance and customer service, and it all came together in the job that he truly feels he gets to do.

"And I get to pull the cars around!" says a smiling Sarah.

The husband, father of two, and now business owner truly feels

he's in a role given by God to be a blessing to the community. "All I ask God is that the bills are paid," says a smiling Heath Fancher.

God's timing and plan has taken the Fanchers around multiple turns over the course of a year. Being a business owner isn't always a walk in the park. Mr. Fancher affirms that there are definitely moments when he wonders if the next customer will come in, but there are far more moments when the grace of a gracious God shows himself to be faithful.

"It's been overwhelming!" says Sarah, citing how blessed she feels.

Heath adds: "The coolest thing is to come in each morning with nothing scheduled, look out the window and say, 'Okay God what are we going to do today?' and He loads my wagon!"

There are many beautiful moments the family gets to share on this journey of local business ownership, and while not all are perfect, they are confident and overly grateful that they get to serve the city of Searcy each and every day. And for the aforementioned moments of question, as Heath Fancher knows all too well, "It's in those moments that He reminds me again, be still." 🐾

**Stone Tire is a routine-maintenance shop that provides multiple services including tire changes, oil-changes, alignments, struts, etc. And according to Farrah, they are sure to be a blessing to your automotive needs.**



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