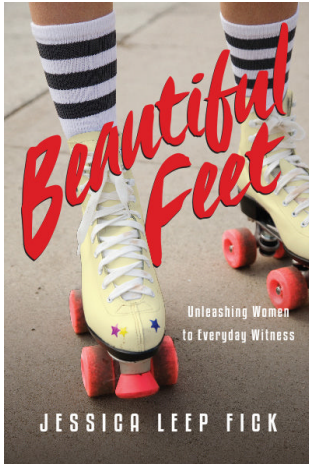




BOOK EXCERPT



Beautiful Feet: Unleashing Women to Everyday Witness
Available September 2015
\$16, 192 pages, paperback
978-0-8308-4320-6

“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’”
—Romans 10:14-15

How do you use your “beautiful feet”?

If you ask me at any given moment, “What’s on your mind?,” I will likely respond with a swirl of ideas of *big* things I could do to help others meet Jesus, live out my faith in practical ways and mobilize others to do the same thing. When I take my sons to the beach in the summer I dream about organizing beach cleanups on Lake Erie to care for my beloved Great Lakes. In the spring, seeing all the kids walk home from school, I picture our neighborhood running summer art camps for at-risk kids in the area. When I walk to CVS to pick up my prescriptions, I see abandoned storefronts and imagine Christian business owners starting bakeries that employ jobless people. (Also, then I could have delicious freshly baked blueberry scones available in my neighborhood every day.) I see moms who seem lonely and disconnected as they push their kids on the swings at the playground, and I imagine what life would be like for them if they came to my MOPS group, and what it would be like if my mom friends did the same thing. I see the dumpsters behind grocery stores and think, “How many families wouldn’t have to go hungry if all the waste from grocery stores and restaurants was donated to the Cleveland Food Bank?”

The problem for me isn’t the lack of ideas; the problem is discerning how Jesus wants me to use my beautiful feet to bring his good news in my relationships, community and world. It’s easy for me to want to do something cool for Jesus, to fix a problem I see or to get frustrated and ignore the people and problems, hoping someone else does something about it. When I spend time with Jesus, he helps me discover that I’m wired to love him and love others, and he wants to do the same in each of our lives. Sometimes loving others involves doing something effortless; other times it makes us uncomfortable and stretches us in our skills and capacity to love. Both of these dynamics are part of the paradox of how Jesus wants us to love others. He invites us to be comfortably uncomfortable in loving others—to do what we enjoy yet take risks to trust him in new ways. As we experiment in connecting with Jesus and others, he directs us in the best ways to use our beautiful feet to bring his good news.

It can feel overwhelming, confusing and immobilizing to think about the needs in our communities and world and to figure out how God wants to use us to care for others. Fortunately, being comfortably uncomfortable often starts in small ways, by taking steps of obedience to trust Jesus and love others. The challenge lies in believing that our efforts are enough to care for a lost and hurting world and that *we* are enough for God to use to love others.

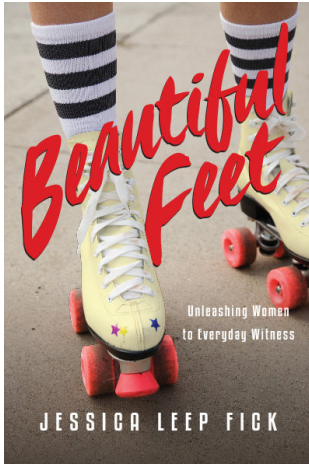
—Taken from chapter eight, “Experiments in Loving Others”

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"If you don't feel comfortable with who God has made you to be in the first place, it's unlikely you're going to want to stick yourself out there even more."
— Jessica Fick

Unleashing Women to Everyday Witness

Why do you think women are often afraid to share their faith?

Jessica Fick: Many women struggle with feeling confident and competent in a lot of areas of life. Evangelism is a risky adventure where we put ourselves out there as witnesses. This fear is often heightened because of the importance of sharing Jesus and perfectionistic tendencies to get everything right or wait for the perfect time. Not only are women afraid to share Jesus because it might harm their relationships, but this is coupled with the fear of disappointing God and themselves.

What role do their physical bodies and world have in that fear?

Jessica: Dallas Willard writes that our physical bodies are our "power packs" that God has given us. Women often have a negative soundtrack running through their minds: "I'm stupid, I'm fat, I'm ugly." I'm too this or not enough of that. When you are consumed by negative thoughts and a culture that underscores these negative thoughts, it's difficult to feel confident. This lack of confidence in who God has made you to be spills over into undermining confidence in witness. Evangelism is quintessentially about putting yourself out there. If you don't feel comfortable with who God has made you to be in the first place, it's unlikely you're going to want to stick yourself out there even more.

What are some examples of ways women can use the things they love and care about to be more intentional about sharing Jesus?

Jessica: Women are diverse in their interests, abilities and talents. Whether it's computer programming and being in a gamer guild or knitting, all of these things can be missional. Evangelism is when we invite people into our lives and build relationships with them to speak about and demonstrate the love of Jesus. It begins with a perspective of simply being mindful – of inviting women who have similar interests and are far from God to join them in whatever they're doing.

Describe the women you are writing to.

Jessica: I'm writing to women who are thoughtful in how they engage with their faith. They want to take risks to share Jesus but might feel overwhelmed in how to go about being a witness. They don't want to be boxed in or limited by what others think they can do or how God can use them. They want to live out their faith in authentic, bold ways and do so in community.

Describe the significance of *Beautiful Feet* as it relates to women sharing their faith. Why was that an important image for you?

The Lord gave me the image of beautiful feet at Urbana 09 when I was leading a seminar

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Q & A

called “women in witness.” I was struck that feet were described as beautiful when feet are some of the last things that would be described as beautiful. It also struck me as a very feminine phrase—I couldn’t think of a man who would want to call his own feet beautiful. I saw an army of women mobilized to use their beautiful feet to share Jesus in bold and loving ways all over their communities and world.

What do you hope women take away from *Beautiful Feet*?

Jessica:

- I’d like women to feel solidarity with the “great cloud of sisters” who are seeking to share Jesus.
- I want women to feel encouraged and confident that they can share Jesus, just as they are in who God created them to be.
- I’d like women to realize that the things they care about (whether nail polish or nuclear physics) can be used missionally to reach people for Jesus.
- I want to remind women that they have been and are strategic in the mission of God.



AUTHOR BIO



Jessica Fick, author of
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Women to Everyday Witness*
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Follow Jessica on Twitter:
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This is Jessica Fick . . .

Most people are super creeped out when they hear the word *evangelism* and think, “No way. Not me. I’m not one of *those* Christians.”

I’m the kind of Christian who likes green smoothies, listening to music on vinyl and dancing with my husband and two sons in our basement, putting a bird on it and baking bread. I also like telling people about Jesus—not in a creepy, robotic salesperson sort of way but in a “this cool thing happened with my friend the other day” sort of way. I believe that sharing Jesus is like a shot of Holy Spirit adrenaline to the soul! In Greek, *evangel* means good news, so evangelism means to share the good news with others. The good news of Jesus should influence every area of life—not just the soul. Sharing about what it looks like to follow Jesus as a wife, mom, preacher, neighbor, friend, frugal fashionista and student helps others to see what it could look like in their own lives.

When I’m not building Legos with my sons, trying to squeeze in a run or bake a loaf of bread, I serve with Stonecroft as the director of evangelism resources. I love to help believers have a ton of fun with Jesus in his mission and talk with people who don’t follow Jesus about their spiritual questions. I live in Cleveland, Ohio, with my husband and two sons and have absolutely no interest in Cleveland’s sports teams.