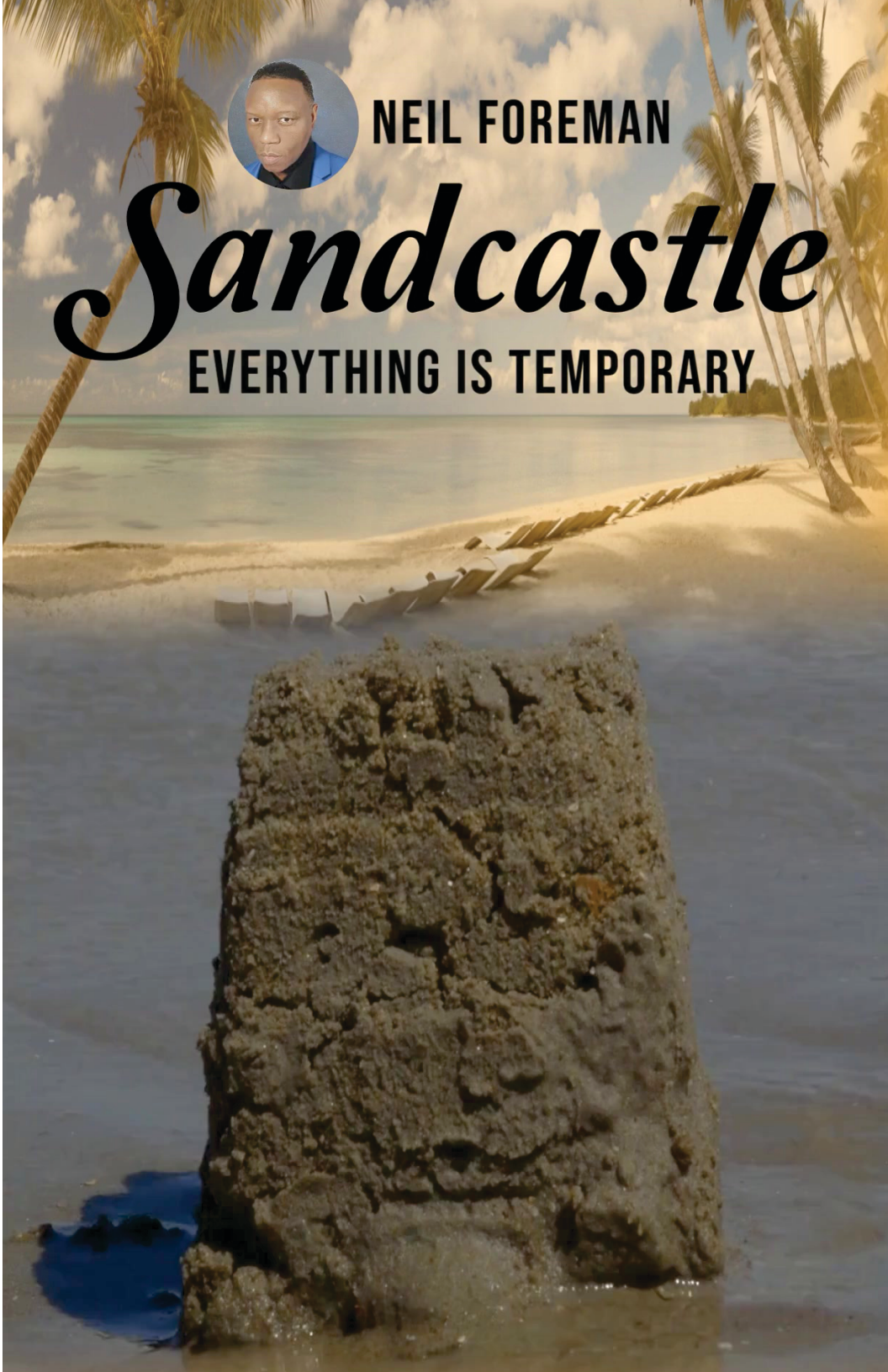




NEIL FOREMAN

Sandcastle

EVERYTHING IS TEMPORARY



Sandcastle: Everything is Temporary

When I was a little boy, my father would take us to the beach. For our family, this was a monumental event. We didn't travel often, so the anticipation of the beach was electric, almost sacred. The night before, sleep would evade me, the hours stretching out endlessly, as if time itself was teasing me. I remember one night, I woke up and looked at the clock. It read 5:00 AM! My heart leapt—until I realized I was looking at it upside down. It was actually 11:30 PM. Such was the agony and excitement of waiting for something truly special.

The morning finally arrived, and my father would rise before dawn, quietly gathering the family for the journey. The car was loaded with sandwiches and fried chicken, their aroma occasionally escaping into the cool tropical air as we drove with the windows down. The wind would sweep across my face, carrying with it the scent of the ocean and the promise of adventure.

Arriving at the beach was like stepping into another world. The sun would be just rising, painting the sky in hues of gold and pink. Sea birds called out, and the sand, still cool from the night, slipped between my toes. After a few joyful sprints along the shore and splashes in the waves, it was time for the main event: building sandcastles.

A sandcastle is a beautiful, ephemeral creation. We would pack the sand into buckets, turn them over, and gently lift them away,

revealing towers and walls. Sometimes we'd decorate them with seashells, bits of driftwood, or tiny flags made from sticks and leaves. But even as we built, we knew the tide would come. By morning, all our efforts would be gone, washed away as if they had never been.

Sandcastles are more than just childhood play; they are metaphors for life itself. We pour our energy, creativity, and hope into things that are, by their very nature, temporary. Like sandcastles, our achievements, possessions, and even relationships are subject to the tides of time.

I remember one particular sandcastle—a grand fortress built with my father and brother. We stood back, admiring our handiwork, convinced it would withstand the waves. But as the tide crept in, the walls crumbled, and the towers fell. I felt a pang of loss, but also a strange sense of peace. The joy had been in the building, in the laughter and teamwork, not in the permanence of the castle.

The ancient scriptures echo this truth. In 1 John 2:17, it is written: 'And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.'

Sandcastles teach us about impermanence, creativity, fragility, and the wonder of childhood. They symbolize our desire to create and leave a mark, even as we know that everything in this world is transient. Yet, there is a longing in every human heart for something that lasts. Ecclesiastes 3:11 says, 'God has placed eternity in the

hearts of men.’ We yearn for the eternal, for something that the tides cannot erase.

Perhaps you, too, have built sandcastles in your life—dreams, relationships, careers. Maybe you’ve stood back, proud of what you’ve built, only to watch the high tide sweep it away. Maybe you invested in a relationship you thought would last forever, or a career you believed would define you. But the waves came, and what seemed so solid was gone.

I once knew a man who built his life around his career. He rose early, worked late, and poured his soul into his job. But when the company downsized, his position vanished. He was left standing on the shore, staring at the place where his sandcastle once stood. It was then he discovered a deeper truth: only what is anchored in the eternal truly lasts.

The Bible offers us hope that is ‘an anchor for the soul, firm and secure’ (Hebrews 6:19). The rock of God’s love and purpose is never swept away by the tides of change. Romans 8:38-39 reminds us that nothing—neither death nor life, nor anything else in all creation—can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

So, what is the purpose of living? Perhaps it is not found in the permanence of things, but in the beauty and meaning of our temporary experiences. We are called to build, to create, to love, and to cherish, knowing that these moments are gifts. Yet, we are also

called to remember that our true treasure is not in sandcastles, but in the eternal.

So go ahead—build your sandcastle. Laugh, create, and enjoy the fleeting beauty of life. But remember, as children of God, we are pilgrims on a journey. The scriptures urge us: ‘Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also’ (Matthew 6:19-21).

What have you built that time cannot take away? What have you invested in that will last forever? May your heart find its anchor in the One who is eternal, and may your life be a beautiful story—one that leaves a mark not just in the sand, but in eternity.