

TAKING GROUND

Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. Joshua 1:3

This scripture has taken on many applications for me throughout the years. I love the adventures of the children of Israel and have learned so much from them, but today Holy Spirit used this particular verse to speak to me in a very real and personal way. I've been on an amazing journey since January 2006...a personal exodus from slavery and a journey to the promised land of freedom. It has all been good but it sure hasn't been without its rough spots...the hills and valley...the battlegrounds. Before you read this and get discouraged let me say that even though it hasn't all been easy, I wouldn't change one thing. He is so beautiful and good and it's been worth every step He and I have taken together. I've seen His hand on my life and His heart for me through it all and I'm learning to trust Him more with each step we take.

Having said that, the biggest valley for me has been walking out, fighting for, and claiming the freedom I know I have been promised, and that Jesus died for me to have, in one area of my life. There have been things that I've been delivered from in an instant and things that have taken a little while, but this one has been a full blown adventure. I don't know why God chooses to do some things in the blink of an eye and some things over time. All I know is that He's going deeper than deep and we are making progress. He will reveal things that have to be dealt with in my heart daily for several days in a row and then we may not 'go there' again for a week or so...then He reveals another layer and we work through that and then rest for awhile. That's been the cycle these past few months. Today I began to feel much frustration. I even told my pastor I wish we could just get to the root of it and get it over with quickly and that I feel like I am on a wild goose chase. She assured me the Lord was getting to the root of it, I was where I needed to be and freedom was on its way; and that He will complete what He started. I knew that but I sure needed to be reminded of it again. Thanks Brandy!!!

Sure enough, I got off the phone with her and up came another layer of yuck that He wanted to exchange for His goodness. During this time is when I heard Him gently say, "Be patient and trust Me. Every step you take is a piece of ground I'm giving you. You are taking a few steps and then you are learning to occupy that new place. Then you take a few more steps and you learn to occupy again. With every step you're taking you're gaining ground." Those sure were sweet words to me (and I am reminded of why "be strong and of good courage" is mentioned so many times in that chapter!!!). I'm not on a wild goose chase after all. It really is the journey and I'm seeing how all the little areas that I've dealt with lately are each a part of the whole picture. Exodus 23:29 & 30 says this about the battle in The Message: God says, "*I won't get rid of them (the enemies) all at once lest the land grow up in weeds and the wild animals take over. Little by little I'll get them out of there while you have a chance to get your crops going and make the land your own.*" That verse is packed full of rich truth so let the Spirit speak to you in that however He chooses. I just know I'm learning that there are times I have to get used to new found freedom. That sounds strange but when certain bondages have been considered a

normal part of our lives...all our lives...and for generations before us...we have to learn how to live without them when He drives them out. We also have to learn how to receive (plant) and grow in the goodness of God in their place. I keep hearing that I have to be *established and strengthened* before I can move on.

On a side note, the word 'tread' in dictionary.com means:

- a. to step or walk on, about, in, or along.
- b. to trample or crush underfoot.
- c. to form by the action of walking or trampling: *to tread a path*.
- d. to treat with disdainful harshness or cruelty; crush; oppress.
- e. to perform by walking or dancing: *to tread a measure*.

Nothing in this definition indicates tiptoeing or walking lightly. We are all taking ground from an enemy that has come to steal, kill and destroy us. These steps we are 'treading' are strong and on purpose and sometimes violent. The Lord does not take it lightly. It is a battle for the land in our lives and our families. The land has already been given to us as a promise. We are just in the process of possessing it by driving out the enemies and setting up a new government...yes, there is a Kingdom to be established in our own hearts just as there is corporately. In fact, we can't establish corporately without having first been established as individuals.

Please don't get discouraged in the journey. Brandy reminded me today that "*being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus*" Philipians 1:6.

Ongoinguntil the day of Christ Jesus.