

THE JOURNEY

I've had the word 'journey' on my heart lately and Sunday morning as I was flipping through the Psalms the theme of the journey began to jump off the pages. The Bible is full of words like journey, pilgrimage, path, the way, etc. It is a theme that runs from Genesis to Revelation so in the quietness of the morning, I knew Holy Spirit was drawing me to abide on this word and listen to what He wanted to say to me. As I went back through the seasons of my life...some good and some not so good...I was reminded that He has been faithful through it all. He has brought people into my life to be a part of the journey so I don't feel afraid or alone and He's brought people that make me laugh and bring encouragement. I'm amazed at His love and it's in that very love that He began to show me a few areas regarding the journey that were in need of a little correction. His desire is not to condemn me, but to free me from anything that would cause me to stumble.

He reminded me that He designed this journey specifically *for me* before I was born. Yet I have been guilty of looking across the way at someone else's journey and wanting mine to look like theirs; or I will hear a lie that something must be wrong with where I am because it *doesn't* look like where they are. I have also been guilty of judging others because their pilgrimage doesn't look like mine and they aren't where I think they should be. Other times I have felt like I am moving at a snail's pace on my path while I am being passed by someone running to their next destination. A track coach teaches that you should never look at the lane beside you...and never ever look back. Just one look from side to side will distract you and looking behind you will cause you to trip and fall. Always keep your eye on the finish line and run 'your race'. While we are not competing with others in this journey, we are running a race and we cannot compare ourselves to someone else. I had done that and by participating in it had allowed a breeding ground for pride, discouragement, judgment and condemnation. When I looked at someone whom I perceived to be 'ahead of me' on the journey, I'd feel discouragement and condemnation because I felt like I was going too slowly. On the other hand, I'd look at those whom I thought were walking too slowly and I'd feel pride and judgment that they couldn't keep up. I repented to the Lord for these things, He forgave me and like He so sweetly does He asked me to go a little deeper. He always wants to get to the root of the problem and pull it up and out so I had to ask, "Why do I spend so much time looking at someone else's walk and questioning my own?" In gentleness He said, "Because you haven't fully surrendered your journey and what it is supposed to look like to me. It is all in the

surrender...the surrender of your ideas, your goals, and your time ALL to Me...trusting that I know what is best for you even if it doesn't look like someone else." I had been using the road others were on as a measuring stick for my own making a human being my standard instead of Jesus.

Like a road map, each person's journey is an important part of Heaven's strategy to advance the Kingdom. Each of our journeys are designed the way they are for a reason and if followed correctly, will merge and come into alignment with those who are called to the same purpose...the same mandate from Heaven. The unity of the Spirit will only come when each of our journeys are 100% entrusted and surrendered to the Father. It really is a very intricate plan as we merge and connect with those that the Father brings together and it totally fascinates me. There is nothing random about the journey. We are all a part of a very calculated plan. I may not always understand why He has me where He has me but the Bible tells me I don't have to understand. Proverbs 3:5 tells me that I'm to *"Trust in the Lord with all my heart and lean not on my own understanding. In all my ways acknowledge Him and He will direct my path"*. Ps. 119:105 says His Word lights my path. This journey is now surrendered to Him knowing that if I abide in His word and listen to His voice, I'll hear the heartbeat of Heaven and walk accordingly.