

# A Word Of Hope

“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” Proverbs 25:11

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## “Following God’s Unfamiliar Road”

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step!” so the old proverb goes. Most of us know it is true and yet we often stand paralyzed at the thought of going somewhere new. Journeys seem exciting until the moment we must start walking on the unfamiliar pathway. We stand perplexed at the crossroad worried that if we go left we may find out later that we should have gone to the right. So instead of going somewhere, we end up going nowhere and become motionless.

And yet Life’s journey does not become motionless at all. Seconds and hours and days and weeks and months and years continue to pass by without skipping a single beat. The world around us grows and changes continually. Every now and then it calls to our spirit to come along, but we often ignore its beckoning. Or worse yet, we groan and yearn within ourselves to follow and continue to stand still - frustrated and full of discontent.

God has set each one of us on a journey that must also begin with a single step. For the Christian that first step is yielding our will to God’s will, after which the next steps bring us toward a destination of promise and fulfillment - ordained by God long before we even knew there was such a journey as this for us to travel. As our relationship with the Lord grows over time, he reveals promises, visions and dreams of plans that He has purposed for us. Our hearts are full of excitement.

And this is where many of us are at in our lives today. The journey is set before us. We stand looking down the road with wonder and mixed emotions of anticipation and anxiety. Part of us is ready to see where it takes us. The other part has second thoughts. We can’t seem to take that first step. We think about taking it. We daydream about taking it. But most times we stay stuck in our fear and doubts.

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### *From the Founder’s Pen* ~~~

Dear Readers,

Welcome to summer! It’s been far too long since this has been published. How easy it is to get busy with things that crowd out what’s really important. Even things you might think are good for you to be doing. This issue is dedicated to the journey we travel and the priorities we must set along the way. I hope that it helps you to look at your life and realize what is important and what is not. I hope that it challenges you to re-evaluate the activities and pursuits that fill your day. I hope that it encourages you to know that if you have made a wrong choice, then you can always make another choice and change direction. And most of all I hope it gives you the courage to take the first step that starts the journey and if needed make the necessary changes to put your priorities in order according to God’s will. He always makes an opportunity to get back on the right road.

*In His Service,  
Cheryl Botelho*

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## “Following God’s Unfamiliar Road”

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The reason? As humans we always want to know what to expect on the road we travel. We want to see what’s up ahead before we get there...just in case. But I don’t need to walk the journey guessing or worried about what is awaiting me. This journey was planned by God and not by a human. It is a journey of faith and trust.

*Psalm 37:23-24 (NLT) says, “The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives. Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the LORD holds them by the hand.*

God has promised to direct my steps on a road **He** has prepared for me. I need not be afraid of where it is taking me because I am assured that the Lord knows every detail of it. Nothing along the way will take God by surprise. And even if I were to stumble, I’m promised the Lord who is holding my hand will keep me from falling.

*In Psalm 17:5 Job declares, “My steps have stayed on your path; I have not wavered from following you.”*

There are three things that Job brings to light in this passage...

**One-** He acknowledges “my steps” have stayed on the path. It was an act of obedience for him to take the first step and start walking.

**Two** – He declares that the path is God’s and not his. Job was not following his own way.

**Three-** He declares that God went ahead first and he did not waver from following where the Lord was leading him. Though the path was unfamiliar to Job, it was not unfamiliar to the Lord!

The words of Job encourage me. Though the path may seem unfamiliar, it is not unfamiliar to the One who is leading me. No matter what I may encounter, the Lord has encountered it first. He has planned a journey for me that He *delights* in.

After reading this, the prospect of the journey may seem exciting again. Now the promises, dreams and visions have begun to beckon once more. And now here we stand yet again at the same place we were before...needing to take the first step. So what if your knees feel weak and tremble? God said he will hold you up! So what if you’re not sure where it’s taking you? God has gone before you! So what if you stumble? God won’t let you fall! So what if right now you found the courage to finally take the first step you’ve been afraid to take? Do you know what will happen? You will find yourself following the Lord on an exciting journey full of promise, purpose and fulfillment... Do it! ☞



***For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.***  
***Jer. 29:11 (NIV)***

## Silent Conversations By the Fireplace



***“Be still and know that I am God”***  
***Psalm 46:10***

***Psalm 27:14 Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.***

Being still is probably one of the hardest things to do when we have a pressing need. The word “still” means to be peaceful, calm and at rest. God invites us to be at rest in him. To trust Him in all circumstances. To know that He is in control. When we have pressing needs our first response is to handle things in our own strength and abilities. Unfortunately, this approach usually makes matters worse. God wants us to wait before jumping in and let Him handle things. To be calm and at peace knowing that his ways are not like our ways. His thoughts are not the same as our thoughts. He always knows what’s best in

any situation and He is dependable to perform it when we put our trust in Him. He also tells us to wait on Him. He encourages us to be strong and take heart To “take heart” means to have courage. It means to be convinced and confident. Do you have a pressing need today? Are you trying in your own strength to handle it? Be encouraged that God is able to meet every need that you have. Let your spirit be at rest in Him. Be peaceful and calm. Be convinced and confident that God has your answer and He will act on your behalf. The Lord will prove Himself faithful to you.

## Four Steps to Salvation

**First - Recognize** that only God can save you. You cannot be saved because you are “doing the best you can,” or because of your religious efforts. Your only salvation comes from what Jesus Christ did for you on the Cross of Calvary. *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and not of yourselves, it is the gift of God- not of works lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9)*

**Second – Confess** that you cannot save yourself, that you are a sinner worthy of God’s righteous judgment because everyone has sinned. *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” (Romans 3:23)* *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)*

**Third – Believe** the good news that Christ died for you and that He rose from the dead and now lives to save all who are willing to come to Him. *“Wherefore he (Jesus) is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” (Hebrews 7:25)* *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Romans 10:13)*

**Fourth – Trust** God’s sure promise, not your feelings. You are forgiven because God loved you and would not leave you in your sinful condition. By faith declare that you are saved through the Blood of Jesus that was shed on the cross as payment for your sins. *(John 3:16)* *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”* Openly confess Him as your Lord & Savior. *“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” (Romans 10:10-11)*

*Take a moment and talk to God now. Don’t worry about what to say. It’s not your fancy words He is listening to... It’s your heart.*

## Getting Off the Parallel Road!



Did you know that it’s possible to be going in the *right* direction and still be on the *wrong* road? Even though the destination may be the same and the road gets you where you need to go, the avenue by which you arrive may be incorrect. It’s called a parallel road! And it means not only a road that runs along side another going in the same direction and never merging, but it also means a road that is the same in course, nature and tendency. In all actuality, to the human eye they look the same.

I hadn’t really given that much thought until recently when I began to re-evaluate and prioritize the goals of this ministry. While praying the Lord showed me that I was on a parallel road and that my ministry had somehow begun traveling a road that was actually running along side the original road it started on.

At first I didn’t understand what He meant because I knew I was headed in the right direction. But He showed me that sometimes we don’t even realize we’re on the parallel road until we pull over and stop long enough to take a close look at our surroundings. It’s in that stillness that the Lord can reveal that you’ve gotten off his originally ordained road.

He showed me that sometimes we will deliberately choose the parallel road because it seems less busy or easier to travel.

We may think that it’s the less expensive way or it will help us arrive sooner. But remember, the only difference in a parallel road is the scenery you encounter along the way. And he showed me that it could be unintentional. Sometimes we honestly don’t know we have shifted roads until He reveals it to us.

Now what’s interesting about the parallel road is that it *will* get me to my destination. However if I continue on the parallel road I will not encounter all the lessons, experiences and blessings that only God’s chosen road can provide me with. I risk reaching my destination not fully equipped and ready to possess the promises that the Lord has waiting for me.

And even if I reach the destination and obtain it by the parallel road, my ministry won’t have the fullness and effectiveness the Lord desires it to have. By not traveling the ordained road, divine encounters and opportunities will have been missed. Valuable lessons will have gone unlearned. Rich blessings will have passed by unattained.

**Prov. 14:12 says,**

***There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.***

We always attribute this passage to the road of salvation and spiritual death. But God has given me another insight. It is possible to travel a parallel road that seems right in all ways. And though its destination does not cause spiritual death to the traveler, it will cause your promise, dream or vision to lack “fullness” of life. In essence it will die to the life that God desires it to abundantly have. Pull over a minute and stop. If you recognize you are on the parallel road then take the next right turn and put yourself back on the original road. In the end you’ll be glad you did. ☞

# A Word of Hope

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## *Holding Out HOPE to the Hurting!*



### *“Something to Think About”*

Goals, priority and focus! Three words that can rarely be separated. If I am to reach my goals, I must prioritize my actions. And if I am to complete my actions, I must keep them in focus so that they do not fall to the wayside. It's way too easy to become distracted in this present age. The lifestyle of most can be described as busy, fast-paced and scattered. We are spread in different directions, sometimes it seems all at once, as many voices and needs call for our attention. Though my physical body is in one place, a part of my mind can be here, there and everywhere. But rarely are we completely focused on just one thing. For most of us our mind is a whirlwind of multi-tasking thoughts. The ability to keep focused on what the moment calls for is a noble task to be conquered for sure, and few it is who can master it. When I am scattered, I cannot place 100% of me into the present need. What happens is that everything gets a “little” of me, but nothing gets “all” of me. Unfortunately, this type of continued lifestyle can eventually result in unfocused actions that are un-prioritized and in turn reap unreached goals. To successfully reach the goals set before me, I must commit to setting priorities and I must discipline myself to give each a period of undivided application where I can put “all” of me into the task at hand. Let's face it. In all honesty, there are very few interruptions that cannot be made to wait for just one hour. And in one hour of uninterrupted time, you will be surprised at how much you can accomplish... Think about it!

**Restoring Hope Ministries is an outreach to people of all denominations and backgrounds and operates as a ministry extension, under the covering of Promise Land Church of God in West Haven, CT.  
If we can be of any help or assistance to you, please call us at (203) 933-3563**