

AND THE JOURNEY CONTINUES....

By Jeannette Flynn

It is my firm belief that God is always calling His people to “go out!” (Hebrews 11) That calling looks different for each of us. Sometimes it is more spiritual or emotional; sometimes it is positional or even geographical. For the last year or more, God has been speaking to me through scripture about His call for me to “go out.” As I have read, studied and prayed, God has been calling me to “go out” in a variety of ways.

I can tell you not the entire journey has been easy or comforting. And it certainly has not been in my time frame! One of the realizations for me very early on was that this journey was not just about a new assignment. Rather it was also a work being done in my heart and spirit.

God’s call to “GO OUT” is often about a work of heart and spirit

I have been keeping a journal for the last year and a half. Each entry begins with the title above – “and the journey continues.” As my introduction to the ministers, congregations, and leaders of Florida I wanted to share small portions of that journal with you. It is my hope that these words will give you a window into my heart, the journey I am on and give you understanding of how to pray for Chuck and I as we come to serve you and work with you for the sake of the King and the Kingdom.

Because these are clips from my journal, they don’t read like an article, but rather like snapshots along the path.

I am so intrigued by the encounters Jesus had with people. The paralytic man at the pool of Bethesda. (John 5:6) Part of the healing process was Jesus engaging him in a conversation about whether he really wanted to be healed. There are the blind men who continued to follow Jesus, calling out for healing. Jesus appears to ignore them, walks on, and goes inside a building. Only after they “blindly” navigate steps or doors and halls and follow him into the building and approach him does he seem to notice them. (Matthew 9:27 – 31) In conversation with them, he seems to tie their healing to their level of faith. Fascinating, since it doesn’t seem to be the faith of any person other than Jesus that is needed in the raising of the widow’s son. (Luke 7:11 – 15)

God longs to engage the WHOLE person - it is His nature.

So many encounters – all causing me to reflect on just how intimately God works in my life bringing direction, healing, growth, and calling. I am so goal oriented and focus driven, I can sometimes approach God as though He is my heavenly encyclopedia or GPS (God Pointing System). “Just tell me what you want me to do God. Where do you want me to go?” What an injustice to the very nature of God. He longs to engage the whole person – body, mind, emotions, and spirit!

Beginning very late in 2008, God began “engaging” me through scriptures, events, conversations, experiences, and the passion He seemed to be stirring in my heart. The more I listened, prayed, and reflected the more I kept hearing Him say, “I am calling you to me... trust me as the Lord of the whole church.” Interesting how God engages us when we are intent on hearing Him. He doesn’t just give information or direction for a new task, He deals delicately but deeply with the fears we hide even from ourselves; the hurts we pretend don’t matter anymore; the “real living” of faith that is harder than the preaching of it; our frustrations with people or organizations we can’t change; the dreams and hopes that form our rising up and laying down; even the prayers and the priorities of our lives.

The summer of 2009 - I resign a long-term position to follow an intimate relationship with the Lord of the church, not knowing where that will take me or what that will mean. Hebrews 11:8-10 literally becomes the plumb line of my life. I think only time – (probably more time than I hope) - and hindsight will reveal the full depth of God’s healing and re-commissioning in my life.

Wrong age by our society values; wrong gender by some interpretations; wrong economic setting by all standards; wrong whatever else by other perspectives. But driven by a “spirit and word-testing” and “wise-counsel confirmed” deep-burning passion that these are urgent days to be involved in significant, transforming ministry that would make an eternal difference in the Kingdom.

*As the journey continues, my mission statement becomes crystallized - **My clear objective for ministry is to find the most effective and significant way to partner with a team committed to recognizing, utilizing, and leveraging all our gifts, experiences, resources, and abilities for maximum Kingdom expansion!***

These are urgent days for the sake of the Kingdom!

I assumed God might require me to ‘step out’ not knowing where I was going, but I had no idea He meant for me ‘to walk’ that way for some months. How long will this journey take? I know my mission – where do I live that out? It is so interesting to see God addressing so many details in my life. This is not just about the next assignment.

Now He has His finger on my addiction to adrenaline! I love a full calendar and busy schedule. Multi-tasking is a hobby. Again the affirmation – “I am calling you to me.” A time of silence. What if silence is where He is taking me? I don’t know if I can ‘do’ silence. For several months there are no calls, no invitations, no inquiries. What does this mean? “I am calling you to me!”

Finally, the phone begins to ring, the mail starts arriving, and the messages come. Be alert - testing comes in a variety of ways you know! It would be easy to accept ‘something.’ Several more months – “called to Him!”

The fullness of my Hebrews plumb line begins to take shape. In a place I am not looking and where they are not seeking. It is amazing when God connects dots that no person

This is my
provision
for you.

could connect on their own. My question: "Are you sure?" His answer: "I wrote your assignment by the preparation I have made in your life. This provision is from me." The full awareness is that the provision is for the Kingdom.

Reflective comments:

While Chuck and I have considered and prayed about various opportunities that have come our way, we have become increasingly affirmed in the call that His leading and provision was for us to join the Florida State Ministries Team. The preparation, gifts, and experiences in my life seemed to fit well with a need that was evident here in Florida. Even more affirming was that the strengths and gifts of the team and leadership here in Florida would also provide an opportunity for me to grow and develop in my abilities and experiences.

There is a steady, growing acknowledgment in my heart and spirit that God's hand has designed this portion of my ministry to converge with Florida State Ministries and the Kingdom at large. He has been gracious to confirm that in several powerful ways. One of those verifications is the emerging love God is beginning to store up in my heart and prayers for each congregation and minister. It has not been an overnight revelation, but rather like watching an artist skillfully paint a portrait when I can't see the subject He is painting!

"I pray with joy because of our partnership in the gospel and am confident He will bring to completion what He has ordained!" Phil. 1:4-6

I look forward to the journey of "being called to go out" continuing with the leadership, pastors and each congregation in Florida. I come not only to serve you, but to learn from you, hear your stories and know your heart and passions and find ways to extend the Kingdom together.

Thanks for letting me be part of your team!