



Matthew 7:13 -14

“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”

If you have been reading my newsletter articles you are aware the first one I wrote was about a dream I had. I shared with you how in great times of trouble God will sometimes come to me in a dream and show me the way. I cannot tell you how much these dreams mean to me and the comfort they afford. I am now going to share such a dream with you as I promised in my first article.

The year was 2008, it was Labor Day weekend and we were preparing to leave our family, our home, and even our church family to make a HUGE move to Colorado....I cannot tell you the sadness that enveloped me. I had cared for Emily since she was a tiny infant and at her 4 years of age I was completely devastated to leave her and I had just been told by my youngest son they too would be having a new little one. We even considered my staying behind and Carlos just commuting every now and then to see us all but I knew deep in my heart that wasn't what God wanted. So off we went and the adventure began. Little did I know God would use the next 2 years to grow us not only as a couple spiritually but to learn to completely and I mean completely rely on him and then he would bring us back...it was truly amazing.

We struggled to find a church we could both agree upon. Carlos was already attending a church as he had been there several months prior to my joining him, but my very first visit there was not pretty. The Pastor got up and read a letter from one of the members per that members request. The letter discussed his wife's affair with a much younger man and how devastated he and his children were that she had run off with this man who incidentally was a patient of hers. I was appalled at such a letter being shared during the Sunday morning service. It went on to read please don't contact us, respect our privacy, however here is my wife's phone number and email address and I want all of you to contact her and tell her how wrong she is. I looked at Carlos and said that woman will never set foot in her again. As he was reading the letter I looked around and there were small children, teens and just people in general with a shocked looked on their faces. This was just too personal and I thought it was something the Pastor should have handled differently, but is this what to expect in Colorado?

So began our journey to "find" just the right church. We seemed to be ignored at a few....one church, not even the Pastor, welcomed us or shook our hands and we were in his Sunday school class! Another skipped right over us when we were standing to introduce ourselves as visitors...we seemed doomed. We ended up attending a mega church. I really liked it even though we were kind of lost in the mix.....no one ignored us because everyone seemed to be in the same boat. It was huge and they even had to have policemen directing traffic but still I felt the Holy Spirit alive and well in that church and the music was simply amazing.

One Sunday we arrived just right before they closed the doors to begin the service. We had to sit in the back as it was packed. As I sat there more and more people entered and soon they were standing all around us. All of a sudden I heard a voice and it said get up. I was like what? It repeated get up and give that woman right there your seat....even though she was much younger than me. I looked at her and she was standing there smiling sweetly and didn't seem a need to sit down. But, here came the voice again, I said get up and give her your seat.....you don't deserve to sit and actually you don't deserve to be here at all. Of course as you have guessed by now this was all going on in my head. Joyce Meyer wrote a book called Battlefield of the Mind and it is a very interesting read. Well, I kid you not I had an out and out war going on inside my head. I knew it was the devil telling me I was undeserving but it wasn't helping me a bit. I was squirming and beginning to have a panic attack although I had never had one before...surely this must be what it feels like. My heart began to race, I was sweating and I felt like I needed a paper bag to breath in as I was beginning to hyperventilate. How in the world could the devil be attacking me smack dab in the middle of church but there he was screaming at me and telling me now that God doesn't love me and I need to leave church immediately. I wanted to get up and just run and run but Carlos was sitting there so calm and relaxed and enjoying the sermon. I wanted to smack him and say can't you see what is going on over here...a little help please...get this devil out of my head! By God's grace I made it through the service without passing out but was ever so happy to get up and really leave.

We drove home in silence as I didn't want Carlos to know, I was so ashamed but I couldn't stop thinking about it. I realized the devil found my weakness and pounced on it. You see I was raised by a stepfather... don't get me wrong he was a wonderful man and couldn't have loved my children more but still I was acutely aware he was my stepfather as my biological father wanted nothing to do with me. When you grow up with that realization it is hard to comprehend God's overwhelming love. After all if you aren't good enough for your earthly father's love why would God love you...after all you are unlovable even though scripture after scripture tell us how much God truly loves us.

That night I had a dream that would change my thinking altogether. I was walking down a road and it seemed as though war was waging all around me. The earth was crumbling away on either side of this road and bombs were exploding all around. Cars were being tossed around as if they were the little matchbox cars, trees were coming out of their roots, and I could hear people moaning and then screaming as if their flesh was being torn away. I wanted to look but I heard a voice say no, no, keep your eyes on Me. It was a very loud but reassuring voice that I heard and I knew it was God himself. He said keep walking with your eyes upon Me and don't look around. Then he said Matthew 7:13 and he said it several times.

I woke the next morning and ran to the Bible to see what that scripture said. I began to cry and thanked God over and over....He does love me I told myself. He just showed me the path to Heaven, and how much more love is that? I shared the experience with Carlos and of course he was amazed as was I. I was worthy of his love and I was worthy to sit in that church and no one can steal that away. He had just reassured me....what a blessing!

I think about this dream often as it keeps me on the right path. If you struggle with acceptance or the fact that God can love such a sinner. I let this be your reassurance....He loves me and He loves you! Keep on the narrow path!

Hugs

Rose