
Dear Family and Friends,

I hope and pray that you are well!

The last two months I have done a lot of thinking, praying and listening to the Lord. Since the start of 2019 I have realized that I cannot predict what the Lord has in store for me. Often, His plans are very different than mine. I think we are all experiencing this truth in 2020. So much of life has been unstable, unpredictable and just plain unbelievable. Starting with a worldwide pandemic, a crazy Presidential election in the US, human trafficking on the rise, and continuing news of popular Christian leader's moral failures - I am about ready for a new year to begin....or a revival. Whichever comes first.

I have been learning, daily, that no person on earth – whether it be your spouse, a friend, the church, or your President - is going to bring ultimate stability or predictability. People will always let us down in some way or another. That is why the Psalmist says that the

“Lord is my strength and my shield; in Him my heart trusts.” “He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the Lord.”

These, and so many other truths from the Bible, have carried me through some very dark days.

In fact, I realize that many of us are going through dark days and will continue to. Following the Lord does not mean we will always have an easy life. I have experienced this truth first hand, through sitting in darkness and suffering since the moment I found out about my husband's moral failures almost 2 years ago. Many of you are sitting in darkness fighting cancer or a different physical ailment. Others are sitting in darkness and suffering because of this pandemic or the distressing state of our world right now. Physical, emotional and spiritual pain are an intrinsic part of the human experience.

I want to encourage you that we can suffer well! None of what is going on right now is out of God's control. This was a very painful truth for me to learn. I always knew in my head that God is sovereign and good, but to actually live through some of the most painful days I have ever lived through and still believe that God is sovereign and good, in my heart, is a completely different experience. Disappointment and suffering are to be expected. This does not mean that the Lord has dropped the ball or has somehow lost control.

On the contrary, 1 Peter 4:12-13 reminds us

"Do not be surprised by the fiery trial when it comes upon you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed"

James 1:2-3 tells us to

"Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of many kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness."

Finally, Deuteronomy 31:8 says

"The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."

In the last 2 years I have been devouring God's word, books, and Bible studies. Something Lysa Terkeurst (one of my favorite authors) wrote, along with countless other truths, has settled deep into my heart. She wrote that

"we are most triumphant when we place our disappointments in God's hands and say, Lord, I trust you to redeem this and return it to me as part of my testimony."

I have to do this on a daily basis, and I think that is how the Lord wants it to be. Because, once I stop laying my pain, anxiety, and disappointments in His hands, I am taking control of something that I am not meant to control. In the state of the world today, I believe that this is a place so many of us find ourselves. Let's remember that God is in control and will redeem this world.

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you"

There is hope!! This is the message we share with new girls who were just rescued from the pits of hell. There is hope in Christ! There is a God that loves you, a God that never leaves you or forsakes you. There is hope in the one true God whom you can trust to redeem you. Why? Because He has promised that He will. This is the life changing message we all need to hear and remember when life is just so painful, and disappointments come and tear the rug out from underneath us.



This is what hope looks like!

(They had a great time getting dressed up and celebrating. Thank you Trevor and Roberta!)

Hope in Christ Jesus is the core message at the Butterfly Project. You have played a vital role in helping us share this message with the girls. This year has not been an easy one, but I want to make sure that you know what a blessing you are to me and to the girls at the Butterfly Project. I value your friendship and partnership in doing God's work, especially during disappointing and trying times.

Thank you so much for your continued prayers and support!!

Love to all,
Michele Clinton and the Butterfly Project