



(Haiti Women's Conference—On a journey to share Jesus.)

Journeying With Jesus

By Kalyn Vogelmann

I love to travel. At the first mention of a journey, I am already romanticizing the landscape, the fascinating towns along the way, and hopefully, a more pleasant climate than my current location. Jesus invites us to journey with Him. He uses journey language, like “I am the way” (John 14:16) and “Come, follow me” (Matthew 4:19).

Sometimes, we romanticize our journeys with Jesus. While the journey I've been on with Jesus has brought more joy and blessings than I could have thought or imagined, it has also caused me to walk through some challenging times, times that I would never have anticipated or chosen. Those moments have taught me that Jesus is enough. He was been with me every step of the way. And no matter what comes, journeying with Jesus is better than any other path I could have chosen to follow.

I am deeply grateful that over 40 years ago, the Church of the Nazarene in Bethel, Ohio, invited me to join them in their journey with Christ. I am also thankful to the leadership in the Church of the Nazarene for the rich, beautiful, and clear language they offer in the new discipleship framework—A Journey of Grace.

Our Expectations and Jesus' Itinerary

Lately, I've been reminded that we are invited to *press on* when the journey becomes difficult and our hopes as ministry leaders are not achieved. Sometimes, I have to remind myself that Jesus didn't promise the journey to be always easy or comfortable.

Have you ever looked at Jesus' travel itineraries? At times, Jesus' itineraries did not make sense because they were unpredictable. And as missional leaders, should we expect our journeys to be any different? Journeying with Jesus will bring surprises—both joyful and challenging.

I confess I'm a "happily ever after" journey seeker. I like it when my path is predictable and pleasant. Yet my path through life has provided other ways of growing more like Christ. I've learned that in places where my path is unpredictable, I learn best how to reflect and follow Jesus.

Setting Your Face...

As I was studying Jesus' travel narratives in Luke, something caught my attention. On one occasion, He "set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51). I wonder about the phrase "set your face" and its significance! And why didn't Luke write, "Jesus set His eyes, His feet, and His mind on Jerusalem"! The phrase reminds me of the expression from Isaiah 50:7— "setting your face like flint." Was the prophet Isaiah foreshadowing that Jesus and anyone else who proclaim the gospel would need to "press on" when their journey gets rough?

The Hebrew word for "face," *panim/pane*, in Isaiah 50:7 is used to mean not only the face or "front" but also to convey a sense of the "presence" of someone. As I think about these two passages, I contemplate about the way missional leaders need to approach their journeys by setting their face on God's call on their lives. We know that the power we need to "not shrink back" but to move forward is already available to us. So why don't we consistently "set our face" toward whatever God calls us with unwavering confidence? We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to courageously and firmly set ourselves toward our callings.

We do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed,
but to those who have faith and are saved.
Hebrews 10:39

Like all those who have gone before us, we face challenging days ahead of us. Therefore, we are wise to "set our faces like flint" as we continue walking A Journey of Grace. The good news is that we never walk alone. Jesus goes before us, beside us, and behind us. We don't need to look elsewhere for strength; we need to imitate Jesus and "set our face" toward whichever places God has called us.

A friend recently reminded me of the beautiful words of the hymn, "All the Way My Savior Leads Me" (Crosby, 1875).

*All the way, my Savior leads me
What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt His faithful mercies?
Who through life has been my guide.*

As a prisoner of hope, I pray that all the believers around the globe will grasp the beautifully optimistic doctrine we hold as Nazarenes. May we together "set" our "face" on the gracious provision of God for the journey ahead. Let us sing wholeheartedly, *All the way my Savior leads me!* Jesus is our guide.