

# The Journey of Life

A bend in the road is not the end of the road — unless you fail to make the turn.

By Deb Burma

Open with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide you and reveal God's truth to you as you journey through His Word.

Imagine, for a moment, your life as a journey, traveling down a road. The Lord has set before you a great adventure! Though you're not sure what lies ahead, you are eager for the journey, to experience the grandeur of the countryside or the magnificence of the city.

## Variable Weather Conditions

You're traveling along, enjoying the scenery. The forecast calls for a clear and sunny day. Travel conditions are perfect. Suddenly, thunderheads roll in from nowhere, and you're hit with a rainstorm so heavy you have to pull over and stop for lack of visibility. Transitions in the journey of life vary widely, too, bringing everything from sorrow to joy, creating anxiety, and often disrupting our lives.

Share about times you have been met with the sudden storms or winds of change.

## Detour Ahead

Your journey has led you to an area of planned road construction. Crews have let you know there will be a detour ahead, and you can expect a change in travel plans. Sometimes we anticipate a change in life, knowing it is a part of life's journey. Such changes may include graduation, a wedding day, the birth of a child, an empty nest, or retirement. Though we have seen them coming, and they may bring us great joy, these changes are not necessarily easy when they arrive.

What detours have you experienced recently in your journey? What reassurance is found in **Psalm 139:7–10**?

## Road Closed

The construction crew has not cautioned you this time. Suddenly and without warning, the road directly in front of you

is closed. These are the times when change comes unexpectedly, stopping us in our tracks: the sudden death of a loved one, a routine exam that becomes a doctor's grim diagnosis, the betrayal of a spouse. Often, "road closed" changes are the most painful and wearisome parts of our journey.

Have you come face-to-face with a closed road in your journey? How does **Psalm 23:4** bring you comfort?

## Under Construction

Sometimes the road is not under construction, but WE are! We are, in fact, continually under His construction. God does not desire for us to sit complacently in our comfort zones. He nudges us to shift lanes. He uses the variable weather conditions, the detours, and even the closed roads to grow us, to move us into a closer walk with Him, and to affect the people around us. What promise do we have in **Romans 8:28**?

How have you seen God use past transitions or changes in your journey "for the good of those who love Him"?

## Limited Visibility Ahead

Remember the rainstorm that caused you to pull over because you could no longer see the road? Most of the time, we have limited visibility; we DON'T know what lies ahead. God in His mercy spares us from knowing the difficulties we will have to endure in the future. Even when we don't understand (in the midst of our circumstances) where we are going or how God could use this change for our good, what are we called to do in **Proverbs 3:5–6**?

How might God be using a recent change in your life (or the life of someone close to you) to change YOU, bringing you closer to Him?

## Roadmap Available

Have you gotten off the road and found yourself lost during your travels? Have forks in the road or unmarked highways

baffled you? You would never attempt to locate a new destination without the aid of a road map, GPS, or street sign pointing the way for you. God's word faithfully directs us in the way we should go. What does **John 14:6** reveal?

How does God's Word equip us for the journey of life? (See **2 Timothy 3:16–17**.)

Complete each statement of promise and assurance from our loving Lord. [See the online leader helps for answers.]

In the midst of change, we can be assured of this: God does not \_\_\_\_\_. **Malachi 3:6a; Hebrews 13:8**

We also have His unswerving promise: He is always \_\_\_\_\_ through ALL of life's changes, for the entire journey. **Deuteronomy 31:8; Isaiah 46:3–4**

Nothing can separate us from His \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ Jesus. **Romans 8:38–39**

God has a \_\_\_\_\_ and a purpose for our future, even if we are unable to see it in the present changes. **Jeremiah 29:11**

God gives us \_\_\_\_\_ in the journey! **Romans 15:13**

As we take the "road less traveled," the scenery will continue to change, weather conditions may vary widely, detours might pop up along the way, and closed roads could loom ahead. We may even be forced to change lanes as we undergo

construction! But we can face whatever lies in our road with confidence, knowing that Christ has gone ahead of us. As true God, He traveled from heaven to earth, also becoming true man. He made the journey to the cross and bore our sins upon Himself, dying and rising victoriously for each of us, that we may inherit eternal life.

With Christ in the driver's seat, there is joy in the journey of life. We can face anything on the road ahead!

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us by Your Holy Spirit to face with confidence the road that lies ahead on our journey of life, knowing that You are in the driver's seat. Your victory over sin and death gives us the ultimate assurance of heaven, our final destination! In Your Name we pray. Amen.

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