

## Chapter 1



# The Journey Ahead

*O God, be my Savior and rescue me!*

*Then he broke through and transformed all my wailing into a whirling dance of ecstatic praise!*

*He has torn the veil and lifted from me the sad heaviness of mourning.*

*He wrapped me in the glory-garments of gladness.*

*How could I be silent when it's time to praise you?*

*Now my heart sings out, bursting with joy - a bliss inside that keeps me singing, "I can never thank you enough!" (Psalm 30:10-12 TPT)*

Take just a moment. Let those verses sit with you. *Really* sit with you. Read them again, but slower this time. Listen for the promise. Give it permission to seep into your bruised and broken heart today. Then take that spark of hope and let it encourage and strengthen you as we begin our journey. The journey through healing. A journey through the beautiful and the hard. Speak life into God's promises today.

*God, I am giving you my journey today. I am giving you this process knowing that there will be painful and difficult moments but that, if I lean into you, I will leave this season completely transformed. I'm believing in your promises. I am speaking life into them. And as I choose daily to seek your voice, your heart, and your plan, I'm believing that you will...*

*"(Transform) my wailing,*

*(Lift) me from the sad heaviness of mourning, (and)*

*(Wrap) me in ... gladness,*

*(Until) my heart sings out, bursting with joy...*

*I can never thank you enough!"*

As we begin this journey together, I encourage you to believe in one promise, one seed of hope, watering it daily so that it deeply roots in your heart. And that promise is this: We serve an incredible Father. He knows you, individually, and He loves you deeply and unconditionally. He *will* see you through. This season, this pain, even your next step... you will never face any of it alone. He will be your comfort and your guide; your place of rest and your source of strength and fire. He will provide. He will heal. And you *will* dance again. That's His promise to you.

...

I'd like to take just a moment to pause and share with you a sneak peek into what you'll find in the pages ahead. You see, very few (if any) of us will journey through this life without meeting the bathroom floor at some point. Seasons of brokenness affect us all. I say the bathroom floor because that's where I found myself... ugly crying, broken, and lost on the bathroom floor. Sadness, fear, and debilitating anxiety pouring through me. How did I get here? And how will I ever get out?

But in that moment, God reached into my life and held out His hand. "Take just one step with me, my child. Just one. Lean into me. Let me hold you. And when you're ready, we'll take another. Trust me with your heart and we will walk out of this wilderness and step into your healing, hope, peace, and joy... together."

For the better part of the year that followed, I chased His healing, His fire, His joy with great eagerness and intentionality. I held onto His promises like they were *the only thing* that could keep my head above water, the only thing that kept me from drowning. I cried, I screamed, I ached, and I doubted Him. And yet, through it all, He was unwavering in His love and faithfulness and He absolutely changed my life!

He saved me. He poured over me and He held me.

*He healed me.*

Because of Him, I am a completely different person today than the broken one that He held on that bathroom floor. And my friend, here is His promise: *He will do the same for you.*

But His goodness doesn't end there. In fact, there was another unexpected and seemingly impossible gift of the journey through healing...

A renewed joy like I had never experienced in my life.

It was not a joy that came from a lack of difficulties and hardships. It was a joy deeply rooted in the realization that even on the hardest days, He is for me, He is guiding me, and I can trust in Him and rest in His plan.

The truth is that I did not, and still don't, always know which direction to take, but I have learned to anchor deeply to my relationship with Jesus and allow Him to teach me along the way. And that is why I'm sharing my journey with you... because when we anchor to Him, truly anchor our safety, hope, identity, and peace in Him, joy *will* follow.

You see, when your world is shaken and you find yourself indescribably broken with pieces of your heart shattered and scattered, sometimes it's difficult to believe that you can ever be made whole again. But if I can give you any promise, it's this... He will reach into the rubble and He *will* carry you out.

We serve a God that is always moving, always working behind the scenes. Always present in the details. Always speaking to us and sharing with us pieces of His heart. You are not here ("*here, here*" or "*here on this journey*") by accident. You found this book because you are meant to be here. We are meant to be here, together. And just as He promised, He is here with us.

He is holding your heart. He knows you by name. He knows exactly what you are facing and what you have already overcome. He is working in the unseen, right now, reweaving your pain and your heartache into something beautiful.

Do not be discouraged. At times, it may feel momentarily uncomfortable, but if we continue to press in, the healing will be absolutely transformational!

Believe this...

The healing that I am speaking of throughout this book .... *it is for you*. Yes, YOU.

Do not let the enemy tell you that this message is meant for everyone else. Do not let him convince you that you are somehow left out, forgotten, alone or unworthy. The truth is... God is right there with you, right now, in your car, in your bedroom, at your work desk, or on your bathroom floor. He is there. And He will make good on His promises.

Life may have bent you. You may never look the same. Forever changed. But He won't let it break you. You will not be lost. *He is there in the bend*. He will hold you as you fall apart. And He will pour His love into you, bringing healing to your heart and slowly piecing you back together.

As you journey through this book, I encourage you to give your pain the space to flow and let the tears land at His feet. He can handle it. *All* of it.

This is not the end of your story and your life will not be defined by this season.

Some days will be hard. Sometimes the only thing we have the strength to do is speak His truths over our journey and allow Him to carry the rest. And that's ok. He is faithful.

He will meet you right where you are... in this moment. On this day. And throughout this season.

You see, as I grow daily under the blanket of His grace, I am in constant awe of His goodness and His faithfulness, even in my messiest seasons and even when I doubt Him the most. But there is one more thing that I have also come to realize...

*Joy does not come passively.*

It's not a season or an emotion. It's a daily choice.

It's a way of walking with Jesus that allows you rest. It's a process of recognizing who you are in Him and dancing in the truth of your beauty. It's the letting go. It's the learning to lean in. It's facing the hard things and putting them where they belong. It's the re-defining of who you are. It's opening your heart and letting Jesus show you His plan. It's taking back power from the enemy and knowing your strength and authority in Jesus.

*It's the little actions we take every day to change how we process and react to the world around us.*

It's peace, strength, grace, and love! And that is what Jesus wants for you ... and with you!

He wants to deepen His relationship with you. He wants you to find rest in His promises and to dance in celebration of His goodness. He has gone before you to prepare the way and He has a plan. All that He is asking of you is to take that first step in faith. He will light the path and He will prepare you for the journey.

Fall into Him today and know that *you will be healed*. There is hope for a better tomorrow. Cling to Him and speak life into your healing with the words of His promises. Take my hand and we will step into His healing together. I am praying for you today. From my heart to yours, blessings on the journey ahead.

From my heart  
to yours...

Blessings on  
the journey ahead.

- Shannon

