

SIDE TRACKED

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INTRODUCTION

An old friend once said "Anne, you are in a groove in the road. You may never come out of it unless you change and make a decision to move forward"

I will never forget those words, I could actually see myself on a road with my feet stuck on one pathway that was the wrong path to be on and yet my eyes didn't open until I heard my friend tell me what he was seeing in me.

Was I Sidetracked? I sure was

DEDICATION

To all those who have gotten sidetracked along life's path and who are determined to get focused on what they always knew they could do and will accomplish it through Jesus Christ.

ARE YOU GETTING SIDETRACKED?

Sometimes we don't even know we are on the wrong path, we just keep moving forward and we find all this opposition come our way and we wonder why it is happening to us.

Here is what is actually going on...

We think we can make our own way and that nothing will stop us. We have decided to go to a different level in our life and yet at times we get off on another road. That was me many times. I would make a decision and used to be so determined to reach my goal but sadly never made it. Most of the time I never understood why I didn't make it to the end but now I see that I had got sidetracked and missed the goal I had set for myself. Have you even felt like this?

I remember when I was a teen having such a desire to serve God. I had given my life to Him and wanted nothing more than to serve Him the rest of my life. Sadly though I found that my thoughts and wishes changed as time went by and I honestly didn't even see it coming. Here is what happened I believe, I took my eyes off of Jesus and His plan for my life. Because I got focused on my relationship I realized that the dreams I had for my life soon vanished. Yes they were still in my mind, but the deep desire I had to follow through with the plans I had, had slowly been put to the back of my mind and I found that my future plans had changed because of someone else, but I let them change me.

So determined to do what I had planned at the time and yet within a short time things were different in my life.

See, God has a plan for each life, you may not think so but it is true. Our desires are given to us by God and He does that to fulfill those desires deep within us. God wants us to be happy, full of joy and totally satisfied in every area of our life. He has blessings to give us if we are only willing to accept them.

In Deuteronomy 28 1-13 we read this ...

And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:

2 And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.

3 Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.

4 Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body,
and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit
of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine,
and the flocks of thy sheep.

5 Blessed shall be thy basket and thy
store.

6 Blessed shalt thou be when thou
comest in, and blessed shalt thou be
when thou goest out.

7 The Lord shall cause thine enemies
that rise up against thee to be smitten
before thy face: they shall come out
against thee one way, and flee before
thee seven ways.

8 The Lord shall command the blessing
upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all
that thou settest thine hand unto; and
he shall bless thee in the land which the
Lord thy God giveth thee.

9 The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways.

10 And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee.

11 And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

12 The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

13 And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:

Life can be so simple if we just follow our dreams and listen to what God tells us to do.

When I was a teen I had a dream of helping those who were homeless and living in abandoned buildings or in old barns and under bushes in the park. I felt like God was calling me to do this and for many months I would make sandwiches and take them down by the canal where I knew the men would sit and I would give them a sandwich. It was strange back then how my heart was touched by these old men who had nothing but the clothes on their backs and the little bit of belongings they could carry in a bag. Sitting with them I used to wonder how they had gotten to this place of loneliness and despair. One man had been a great dancer, had his own studio at one time and now all he did was drink and tap out a little song as he danced in front of me. His name was Jimmie and could he dance... never seen anything like it ... Sadly life had taken a toll on him and his singing and dancing were really losing out. He was in and out of jail because of his alcohol problem. The people that knew him would say he was one of the richest men

in our town at one time, with the largest studio. Did his wife and kids leave, some said that was the reason he started drinking others just said that he got too famous and it went to his head. I am not sure which was the right story but I did know that Jimmie was a man that had lost hope in living, he had got sidetracked with other things that took him away from his dreams. Jimmie died and not at an old age, but because of his liver being so badly damaged by the alcohol.

Frank was another one who sat with me back then, he had a wooden leg and walked with a cane. He too was not that old but alcohol had grabbed at his life and he gave in. One day he asked me to drive him home, that he had a gift for me. I helped him into my car and asked where he lived. Honestly, I was surprised when he said he lived out in the country. We proceeded down the country road and to my left I saw this great big house with a huge barn. My heart was glad as I thought he lived there, but quickly he said just park the car down the road. I looked at him strange and he said "I live in the barn" as he jumped out of the car and made his way across the road, jumped the fence and ran with his can swinging in the wind. He was so cute, his wooden leg made him look like a movie character jumping in the field. He came back about 10 minutes later with an umbrella in his other hand. "Here Anne, this is for you" he said with a big smile on his face. "Thank You Anne, for bringing me home" and then off he ran

again through the field to his home of straw, dust and a barn full of cows. My heart was heavy that day as I drove away. His life sure wasn't like mine and I wondered just what had happened to this man to bring him to this place of living in a barn.

Many times we meet people and we really don't know how they live or what they are going through. How sad for them but also for us for not caring like we should. This man somewhere along the road had got sidetracked in life. Now he was living in a barn, certainly not his dream of the life that he wanted and yet it seemed almost too late for him.

Decisions we make can change our direction very quickly. We never think they will affect us but a quick decision can. Being a teenager, I had my plans all made up to do so much for others but when a man came along and asked me for a date to meet with him over dinner I got sidetracked and found myself change little by little... Yes I still had the desires to help others but those desires got set aside more and more as time went on.

You too may have a desire to meet your goals in life, but as you look back on the years that have passed you see that you no longer are accomplishing what you wanted to do. You may have been sidetracked by someone or some circumstance that has interrupted your heart's desire. Now even if that has happened there is still time for it to change.

Change can come by asking God to give you back that dream or vision that you carried for so long. Ask Him to show you what you have to do to make change in your life. For some of you it might be asking God to forgive you and to lead you on a different pathway than what you are on right now. Never think that you are stuck and can't make change.

For many years I thought that I had made such a mess of my life that nothing or no one would ever be able to get me out of the groove that I was in and I used to feel that God really was disgusted in me. Little did I know that He was with me all the time and was just waiting for me to turn to Him for help. Here is a little prayer to say if you feel this has happened to you .

Father God,

I sure messed up my life, I tried and tried to live right, I wanted to finish my dream and do the things that were in my heart those many years ago and yet here I am totally on a different path and wondering how to change. Forgive me Lord for all the mistakes I have made, take my life back again and give me the desires that you gave me years ago and help me fulfill them to the fullest. Lead me to the right path and walk it with me. I thank you Lord as I know that my life is going to change. You said if I just had the faith of a grain of mustard seed, I could move mountains and I want to do that ..

I give you me, I don't want to be sidetracked anymore by anyone or anything. Thank You Lord, in the name of JESUS.

Well, now you probably feel different after saying that little prayer, See God listens to each prayer we say and when we mean what we say He starts to move on our behalf.

Today I see so many who were once lawyers, teachers, mothers, fathers, and yet they gave up.... They left their dreams and turned to drugs that totally robbed them of everything and every person that they loved. They are wondering the streets now wishing they could go back but feel it is hopeless. They got sidetracked with other things that led to a life of misery and despair. Some die on the streets, some just disappear and are never found, they at one time wanted a good life but just didn't know how to keep focused on the right road.

Get a piece of paper and write down some of your goals, some of your dreams that you had years ago and the ones that you have today. Don't get discouraged and look at the years that have passed since you first wanted to have your dreams come to reality. Just keep writing things down and take a good look at it. Is there anything that you can change now to make them happen? What do you think you can do to make them happen? It is going to take time you know to do this but it will be well worth it. First, Get your Bible out and start reading it ... Most answers are in their to every question you may have.. just search it out.

Then, pray and pray and ask for wisdom. God is waiting to hear from you. Nothing is impossible for Him or you with Him. You can do anything through Christ Jesus.

People say of the millionaires that when they were little children they always talked of being a millionaire and doing great things. You can too. Just watch it happen.

Speak it out. You have to change your mindset. You have to stay focused and work on it ...

Romans 4:17 says "(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

Speak those things that be not as though they were.... Start today... even if it doesn't look like anything is happening.

When we start to think positive in a situation it will change, don't let anyone rob your joy.

Now you have your dreams written down, you are reading the Bible and praying so you are doing great. Search out some good loyal friends who you can talk too about what you feel you should be doing, have they help you and keep praying. God will send the right ones to come into your life that will support you in all that you do.

Now, picture yourself standing in front of this road, to the right there is a turn and to the left there is a turn, but you want to keep going straight ahead to meet your goals. To the right you see a quick fix for your endeavors, and to the left that road looks pretty good too but remember they are only sidetracks that will end up with nothing and no meaning. You must stay going ahead in the right direction. If you feel that you can't do it alone think about this... You are not alone because God is with you. He is making all things right for you as you keep moving straight ahead.

I was down at the Social Security building today.. I took someone down there to get their food stamps. Most of the people knew me and started telling me of their situations, most were evicted because their houses had been condemned. One lady sat crying saying she didn't know what her family and her were going to do as they had no place to live. Another lady was living in a rooming house that was infested with bed bugs and a man who was elderly told me that his wife had just passed with liver cancer and he couldn't afford to keep the house payments up and had lost his home. Now he was looking just for a room to merely survive. Their dreams were shattered and here they sat hoping for someone to help them. I got a call the other day from a man begging for help for his family of five. His wife was on dialysis 2 days a week and yet she was a young woman. Their three children who were young were all out on the streets asking for help from anyone. Isn't it sad how people end up this way and yet most it is not their

fault. The homes had been condemned cause the landlords had let them get into such bad shape that the City condemned them. What can be done to help them? Teach them to make a better life for themselves that is one way.

But, for today let's just concentrate on you... yes YOU... are you feeling any better about your life now? I know you want everything to happen quickly and sometimes it doesn't happen that way. God rearranges things to happen at certain times... It is only our job to walk the right path and not get sidetracked at all.

I know many because of a person they have come off their road of their dreams and ended up following that person and their dreams which only led to disaster. They finally saw it but at a great expense and heartache. Wisdom sometimes comes from going through the fire and seeing the mistakes that we have made because of our emotions. Don't let anyone who whispers sweet things in your ears take you from what you believe God wants you to do. It will never work and you will only find out years later that you made this biggest mistake of your life.

GOD'S PLAN...

When I preach I often tell people that God has a plan for our life, I truly believe that and have experienced the joy of following Him, there is no greater peace that you can ever have when you are in His perfect will.

Most of us want to know what God has for us and want it right away, but that is not how it works... We have to trust him completely. Our desires He has placed within our hearts to fulfill those desires to make us happy, truly happy.

The Bible tells us to live one day at a time right?

Ecclesiastes 9 Contemporary English Version (CEV)

One Day at a Time

9 I thought about these things. Then I understood that God has power over everyone, even those of us who are wise and live right. Anything can happen to any of us, and so we never know if life will be good or bad.[a] 2 But exactly[b] the same thing will finally happen to all of us, whether we live right and respect God or sin and don't respect God. Yes, the same thing will happen if we offer sacrifices to God or if we don't, if we keep our promises or break them.

3 It's terribly unfair for the same thing to happen to each of us. We are mean and foolish while we live, and then we die. 4 As long as we are alive, we still have hope, just as a live dog is better off than a dead lion. 5 We know that we will die, but the dead don't know a thing. Nothing good will happen to them—they are gone and forgotten. 6 Their loves, their hates, and their jealous feelings have all disappeared with them. They will never again take part in anything that happens on this earth.

7 Be happy and enjoy eating and drinking! God decided long ago that this is what you should do. 8 Dress up, comb your hair, and look your best. 9 Life is short, and you love your wife, so enjoy being with her. This is what you are supposed to do as you struggle through life on this earth. 10 Work hard at whatever you do. You will soon go to the world of the dead, where no one works or thinks or reasons or knows anything.

11 Here is something else I have learned:

The fastest runners
and the greatest heroes
don't always win races
and battles.

Wisdom, intelligence, and skill
don't always make you healthy,
rich, or popular.

We each have our share
of bad luck.

12 None of us know when we might fall
victim to a sudden disaster and find
ourselves like fish in a net or birds in a
trap.

Better To Be Wise than Foolish

13 Once I saw what people really think
of wisdom. 14 It happened when a
powerful ruler surrounded and attacked
a small city where only a few people
lived. The enemy army was getting
ready to break through the city walls. 15
But the city was saved by the wisdom of
a poor person who was soon forgotten.
16 So I decided that wisdom is better
than strength. Yet if you are poor, no
one pays any attention to you, no
matter how smart you are.

17 Words of wisdom spoken softly
make much more sense
than the shouts of a ruler
to a crowd of fools.

18 Wisdom is more powerful
than weapons,
yet one mistake can destroy
all the good you have done.

Take one day at a time and do the best you can in that day. Even if things don't go right for you always remember that God is in total control and is working all things out for your good...

Don't turn to the right or to the left but keep focused on what you are supposed to be doing. You may not see any big changes right away but know that behind the scenes God is at work in your life. **STAY FOCUSED... DON'T GET SIDETRACKED..** Grass is never greener on the other side of the fence and if you get sidetracked precious time will be waste, time that you can get back but it may take so much longer to accomplish.

No one said the road would be easy but it sure is worth it in the end. Never get discouraged, never get depressed wondering why things are taking so long. Our hope is in Jesus and He will soon show you what is going on behind the curtains of life. Trusting Him each day is what it is all about.

There is a song that Jimmie Swaggart
sings composed by Ray Boltz I believe
and it sure goes along with this book

The Anchor Holds

I have journeyed through the long dark
night

Out on the open sea, by faith alone
Sight unknown; and yet His eyes were
watching me

The anchor holds

Though the ship is battered

The anchor holds

Though the sails are torn

I have fallen on my knees as I face the
raging seas

The anchor holds in spite of the storm

I've had visions, I've had dreams

I've even held them in my hand

**But I never knew they would slip
right through**

Like they were only grains of sand

The anchor holds

Though the ship is battered

The anchor holds

Though the sails are torn

I have fallen on my knees as I face the
raging seas

The anchor holds in spite of the storm

I have been young but I'm older now

And there has been beauty these eyes
have seen

But it was in the night, through the
storms of my life

Oh, that's where God proved His love for
me

The anchor holds

Though the ship's been battered

The anchor holds

Though the sails are torn

I have fallen on my knees as I face the
raging seas

The anchor holds in spite of the storm

I have fallen on my knees as I face the
raging seas

The anchor holds in spite of the storm..

Don't let your dreams slip away from
you ... God is able to help you make your
dreams reality.

Well I got the name of this book from a friend of mine who said "Message me so I don't get sidetracked" He was coming to drive me somewhere that day... Yes I did text him to remind him and yes he did come on time too... But with a bit of thought on the word Sidetracked I realized it would make a great title for a book, so here it is ...

If you have any questions please contact me at

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Check out our Webpage too:
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Write me and let me know what you have accomplished because you didn't get sidetracked in life. I love stories and will certainly welcome yours.

God bless you so much,

Anne

