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Subject: marriage  
To: "Michelle McCloud" <[theyearofthelordsfavor@gmail.com](mailto:theyearofthelordsfavor@gmail.com)>  
Cc:

Dear sister Michelle,

It was on my heart to come and see you the other night but it didn't end up working out since Ryan and Jake went to meet with you and I spent time with sister Liynaaa. Now you have family here and I have some trials going on here at home and cannot leave nor am I sure that it would be very easy for you to take much time to talk (though I know you would want to. :))

Sister, I wanted to share with you the essence of a dream that I had a while back about you and brother Troy, and the essence was that you had such a steadfastness to stay by Troy's side and marry him no matter what happened. Even at one point he gave you a very strong reproof about you being as Jezebel (or some woman like her in the Scriptures) and you were not swayed at all from staying by his side and was even more determined to marry him. It was a blessed dream in the sense of the message it portrayed, and oh sister, how I do hope that is your earnest, steadfast resolve.

I was remembering how the Lord had put this same resolve in my heart to marry my dear godly husband during our time of courting. Sister, it was all by the hearing of faith that the Lord brought Ryan and I together. Prior to even thinking about each other the Lord had given us the willingness to do His will no matter what it was and to follow Him wherever He led, and so when He revealed it to be His will for us to marry one another (this happened separately, although nearly simultaneously in the timing) we had no alternative but to submit to the will of God, and when there was true submission, oh the sweet blessing of love that He poured forth in giving us a love and desire for one another. I am still utterly amazed at the love Christ has given my husband for me. It astounded me when I first began to feel it, and it still amazes me, because it is a love that is not based upon how I look, or what I do, or how well I meet his expectations, but an unconditional love and laying down of his life that is like unto Christ's love, which is that Christ loves us because He loves us. My love for Ryan looked more like having a desire to be with him and to go through with the will of God to become his wife, his helpmeet. I just wanted to help him, to love him, to strengthen his hands, to be his 'Deborah', to be what the Lord wanted me to be to him. And yes, I was tried and tempted in this calling. That was what I desired to share with you, about when I was counting the cost of marrying Ryan and what the Lord was working within my heart at the time.

We started courting right before Family Camp and it was at Family Camp that I began to be tested on whether or not I would walk by faith and do the will of God. I will just share with you some things from my journal from during that time, in hopes that it will help you.

"October 1, 2010

Last night the adversary attacked me with fear, even with thoughts of walking away from the Lord's will in marrying Ryan. It was fierce for a few moments then the Lord sent a shooting star [I was probably crying out for a token, I don't really remember] and after that I battled the Lord with marrying Ryan in November [the Lord was trying my willingness of marrying quickly]. I have been battling it until a few moments ago. The Lord used "Make me a Servant" [a song] to break my heart. I am His handmaiden, his servant, and I must abide by the rules of his kingdom.

Last night the reference Deut 16:20 came to mind, I haven't read this verse for months, nor has it ever been a rhema.

"That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live and inherit the land which the Lord thy God given thee." - This is living according to the laws of God's kingdom.

This morning the second verse I read, the Lord smote my heart with, "How long will ye judge unjustly and accept the persons of the wicked?" This is judgment according to the natural mind of men, the expectations of society. Oh, I have been reluctant to set aside cultural expectations and even the good opinion of friends and family. If we marry in November, people will think we're crazy and rushing matters. I have have to pray through my family and also stand firm on the will of the Lord. But I'm ready to if the Lord calls us to marry in November.

I just want to follow the Lord so closely, I do not want "the persons of the wicked" to put a gap between me following closely after the Lord. "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand, I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Ps. 84:10 - I must obey the Lord! I want to! Even if it just means being the doorkeeper, I'd rather be there than at ease amongst the tents of good opinion [of wicked men].

Promise, Ps 84:11, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Oct 1, Evening, Spurgeon - wow, the Lord will give grace."

notes from a Keith Daniel sermon from that night (Oct 1):

"Jer. 1:4 - "I am with thee". If God commands you to do something it is the highest possible evidence equal to an oath that you can do it. You can fulfill that calling if God called you. All you are required is to follow God when he calls you. It's His business to equip. When God says "come", don't doubt it, go. If I have the calling of God upon my life, nothing, not even hell itself must keep me from fulfilling it. Even if those I love oppose me, example of his brother Dudley who said to his parents, "I will obey you in anything you tell me in life until you tell me to disobey God." Even if people cannot understand and even despise your calling, do not let it stop you...It is not a sacrifice to serve God, it is a PRIVILEGE....

Oct. 2, 2010 (during a meeting)

"I don't care what anyone says or thinks, I will follow the Lord by marrying this man next to me. If I have to fight through ever family member and friend, I will, by God's grace, I will."

Sermon note from Keith Daniel:

"Don't let anything divert you from God's blueprint [for your life]. Don't give your time to anything else, even if all men say it is legitimate. You give yourself WHOLEHEARTEDLY to follow what you know is God's blueprint for your life!

(I will! Lord, I will do it! ~ the Lord has come)

October 9, 2010 (On a trip to Pennsylvania)

"Talked with bro Ryan. He said that the only thing that matters is the will of the Lord, not emotions, desires, passions, and he told me that I need to know its the Lord's will because it will be so hard because the devil hates him, the Lord is with him and keeps him in the dust...After talking he sang, "More Love O Christ" and I melted into tears before the Lord. All I care about is serving the Lord. I would rather die now than have my own will done. I gave up my will years ago and the Lord has been purging it from me since then. I just want to serve the Lord! I pondered with all sobriety what our future might hold, rejection of family, friends, everyone, our children or even myself being attacked physically and even dying. I looked at [these possibilities] and said, that is the only choice if it is the Lord's will. And I told the Lord, "I'm available, Lord, if you want to place me with this man, I'm available." While I was praying this, the kids were singing "Channels Only" [some ways away from me]. Knowing more than ever before of the cost, before the Lord, I have said, "I'm available."

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I will just add that Ryan preached the costs to me quite a bit during our courtship.

Notes from another sermon by Keith Daniel from during this time:

"God made the woman for a staggering reason - to be a helpmeet (Gen 2). If it isn't your goal to become

the helpmeet God intended you to be to that man, the you will destroy him. You loved ones can be the very ones satan uses to destroy you (Job's wife). Continually embracing negative thoughts will destroy you. Don't be negative. Stope those negative thoughts, take them captive. The last thing a missionary needs is a complaining wife, a negative wife.... "I didn't encourage him with the encouragement he needed. I criticized him when he needed encouragement". Allow your husband to be what God calls him to be.

.....

Oh sister, it is a glorious, wonderful calling to which God is calling you in marrying brother Troy. No woman on earth even deserves a husband, much less a godly man. It is God's sovereign and wise way of putting the men on the forefront of this battle of life. Remember sister that there is a continual war going on between God and satan, and man is in the center of this battle, and the Christian man is on the forefront of fighting against all of the powers and principalities of this earth, and God sees the need for that man to be helped, strengthened and encouraged, and so God gives to a man, woman, a wife, a helpmeet to help him in this battle. Yes, it is true that God is raising up salvation for you, a personal overseer to guide your soul on this well nigh impossible walk on the narrow way, but sister, the Lord is giving you a work to do! Jesus Christ who died to save you, who gave up everything for you, is giving you an opportunity to do something for Him, namely, to become the chief help, main strength and support of one of His beloved servants, Troy. Oh bless the Lord for such an honor, dear sister, such a gift that the Lord is giving you. Oh rejoice in it and delight in your calling.

I remember when I married my blessed husband, I was so thrilled to be able to do anything to bless this man, seeing that he had suffered so much for Jesus Christ, I just wanted to give him pleasure, to bless him, to be a comfort to him, to give him joy upon this earth. Oh it was so glorious to give of my life to bless my husband when we were married. I was so excited to please him in any way that I could. :) I didn't deserve to be married to brother Ryan, much less to be able to bless him and please him, and serve him. That truly was my joy at the beginning of my marriage. Even in the special intimate times of being together, I just wanted to please him and bless him. I wasn't looking for pleasure for myself, but for pleasure for my husband, and we both ended up being greatly blessed of the Lord because we were seeking to please one another and magnify the Lord.

I also desire to encourage you, sister, to receive Troy's love and to be thankful for the ways that he loves you and expresses his love. Oh be thankful to the Lord for such a man, and let him know how thankful you are, and it will greatly bless him and encourage him. It would surely fill his heart with exceeding joy to know that you want to marry him and are longing to be his wife, his helpmeet. And oh dear sister, this is the will of God, such a sweet, amazing blessing from God, the calling of a wife to a Christian man! Oh sister you have so much cause to rejoice in marrying this dear brother. I always smile and rejoice when I think of brother Troy and how much joy he has. And then to think of you, dear blessed sister, marrying him, oh my heart rejoices at the goodness of God in bringing two such blessed people together!!! Surely your wedding day will be a day of joy, oh rejoice in it, dear sister, rejoice in the Lord's goodness, in His love to you! And rejoice at having an opportunity to be a servant of the Lord to one of His servants.

I Samuel 25:39: ¶And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the LORD, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for the LORD hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.

I Samuel 25:40: And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, David sent us unto thee, to take thee to him to wife.

I Samuel 25:41: And she arose, and bowed herself on her face to the earth, and said, Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.

I Samuel 25:42: And Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of hers that went

after her; and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife.

I love you very dearly sister Michelle, and am always available to speak with you. I love being married and rejoice at seeing all of my single sisters get married. :) When I am dead to self and rejoicing in just being a slave, marriage is the most blessed state upon earth!

May the God of peace flood your heart with all joy and hope and peace in believing.

~sister joy

P.S. I am attaching a document on marriage that I compiled over a year ago for some of the other sisters. Maybe the Lord could give you some revelation through it. I love you.