

DETOURS IN RELATIONSHIPS

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Traveling is something that is enjoyable for many people. Following highways towards a destination means knowing several things: Where one wants to go, what roads to take and why you are going. One thing we may not always fully plan for are detours along the way. Detours alter our route, bring us to new places, and at times hinder our progress. We complain, express disgust and generally do not think of them in a positive light. The thing about detours we often forget is the difference in perspective they create for us.

As we travel through life with the Lord, we may often find ourselves taking detours. Detours may be relationships that both rob us and teach us about the deep intimacy we all need. Detours may be attitudes that we become aware of within our thinking such as critical thoughts, hidden hurts that lead us to diminish others, unresolved losses about what we think we have a right to have, or unforgiveness towards others or ourselves for not “knowing better”. This last one amazes me...as if we should know all things ahead of time. Detours may also be behaviors we had hoped to end or behaviors that we come to realize are not as loving as we once thought. They may be speaking for someone, interrupting others as they speak, taking over projects of others in an effort to help when in fact we may be creating dependency. Behaviors like these may include using verbally abusive language, having an affair, and ending a friendship without explanation. The fact I hope we can take note of is the perspective that is available to us should we ask God to reveal it.

Detours teach us about ourselves. They show us the truth in “There is a way that seems right to a man but its end is the way of death.” (Proverbs 14:12, NKJV) As much as we think we know ourselves there is always more that God has for us to learn. This is not to say that the perspective is always negative. On the contrary, detours often show us both the life and death aspects of our relationships, attitudes, and behaviors. Dear children of God, please allow yourself the privilege of being explorers throughout life. God’s perspective on who we are includes all possible avenues and is covered by His deep love and mercy. Will you experience grief around some of the detours you have taken? Yes. Will you experience the warmth of His healing embrace? Yes.

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