

## Along the Road

I walked a mile with pleasure; she chattered all the way. But left me none the wiser for all she had to say.

I walked a mile with sorrow and ne'er a word said she; But oh, the things I learned from her when sorrow walked with me. Author Robert Browning Hamilton

I first read this poem in High School and would later read it again in a book of "Best Loved Poems" of the American People.

This poem spoke to me even as a teenager because I had already known loss and grief had been my mainstay for a period of time. Although it was difficult to see the "lessons learned" as a teenager in years to come I could see what I had learned from grief and loss. For a while I was bitter and unforgiving and angry.

Grief does not last forever although it never truly disappears. It lessens and becomes bearable but sometimes it comes back and enters your heart for moments, but we know it will be okay. It is okay to grieve but we need to use it eventually. It can make us more sensitive to the hurts and grief of others, it can make us want to do something in honor of the loss of a loved one, to live a life that they would be proud of or to accomplish what they would have wanted for us. Sometimes we want to do all of these things. As we experience grief, there comes a time when we are thankful that we had that person in our life, that we loved each other. Grief can make us appreciate those we love and still have and so we become more forgiving and more giving in our relationships. When we reach that point, we realize that love overcomes grief.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.

Dear Lord, we thank you for this day, may we use it in your service. We thank you for the love you have shown us, for the care you give us and for the blessings we take for granted. Be with those who are ill and those who mourn. Help us Lord to serve those who are in need and those who hunger. Be with our church Lord, may we be the hands and feet of Christ. Be with our Pastor Lord and bless his ministry and be with him and his family. Be with our staff and leaders Lord, bless all they do and grant them blessings in their lives. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Grace Epperson