

LIFE LABYRINTH

Louise Gough

LOUISE GOUGH SHARES A MEDITATION
TO HELP US TO REFLECT ON THE UPS AND
DOWNS OF LIFE'S JOURNEY.

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Wythenshawe Circuit. She has a passion for music, writing,
liturgy and dance, and enjoys leading Quiet Days.

BESIDE ME

Companion me God
on this uneven journey
called life.
Travel beside me
and in my heart.
Be my destination,
my goal,
my every moment.

Even when I wander far from you,
on the outside edges of faith,
never let me out of your sight.
When I teeter on the brink
of rationality,
perspective blurred,
guide me on the paths
that lead to life,
that lead to you.

When I enter your gate,
you shelter me in the tent of your presence,
and your peace burrows deep in my soul.
Though I long to stay
in the still centre of your love,
you build me up
and send me out
to serve you in the world,
to companion others.

You are with me
on the road;
just beyond
lie more green pastures.

BROKEN

God
sometimes
I feel broken.
Smashed up
on the inside.
Sometimes
a careless remark,
a memory's echo made vivid,
will catch
on the jagged edges of my heart.
It jars.

When I react in pain,
crying out in protest,
you understand.

God
I am broken.
Bits of me
are fragile,
vulnerable,
susceptible to damage.

But I am also
fearfully and wonderfully made,
your own beloved child,
crammed with gifts,
a unique song to sing.

God,
in your gracious love,
restore me.
Show me
your presence
in pain,
in the life
that comes through
the agony of the cross.
In time,
let your love
smooth over
my rough serrations;
create shapes
and patterns
of wounds and scars.
Where suffering
has worn holes,
Indwelling God,
may your light
shine through.

Make your glory known
through the gashes,
and where tears have coursed,
may your life-giving waters flow,
that all might know
your life,
your love.

BURDENED

God
this burden
is breaking my back.
I ache from the strain.
My shoulders stoop
and I cannot lift my head.
This pain
this fear
weighs heavy
and I don't know who I am
without it.
God
my steps
are getting slower.
My legs are leaden.
I cannot carry on.
Everywhere I go
shadows prowl,
whispering words
that convince me I'm worthless.
Finally
I slump to the ground,
crushed under
the bulk.

You crouch beside me
and wipe away the tears.
You gently prise the load
away from me
but I cling to it.
You tell me it's time to look
but I shut my eyes.

Slowly
together
we unpack.
Every item
taken out
and placed in the sun.
In your light
things don't seem so dark.
It takes time
this unboxing
of guilt, of fear, of shame.
You have time.
And compassion.
There is no fear
and no judgement
in your love.
You tend my wounds
and begin my healing journey
to wholeness
to freedom
to joy.

BLESSED

I never dreamed
peace like this.
Your perfect acceptance of me,
this weightlessness
in my heart.
Being here
with you
is all I need.
I am complete.
You have filled me
with your love,
overwhelmed me with grace
and my battered soul sings.

I now know
there is no fear
in life
in death
because you are with me
and love is eternal.
You have plumbed my depths
and waded through the murk
of my shame.
Through the life-giving waters of
baptism
you have claimed me,
and I am yours.
Wherever I go,
whatever lies ahead,
I know that you love me
and that is everything.
From my core
flow prayers
of praise and thanksgiving.
I cannot contain
my gratitude.
I never dreamed
peace like this.
Your perfect acceptance of me.