



## Uncharted Waters

As I was tapping away on my laptop, the ring of my cell phone was startling. Dr. Fong was on the other end of the line. I had been waiting for the results of a specialized MRI completed a few days earlier. We had played phone tag the previous day and because he had not tried harder to reach me afterhours, I was not concerned. But the words “I wasn’t expecting this” and “referring you to a neuro-oncology subspecialist” had me listening more intently and sitting a bit straighter in my chair, scribbling as quickly as I could to write down the information.

I had been working on a blog about trusting God, based on His call of Abram in Genesis 12 when the phone buzzed. Rather ironic. Not accidental. Definitely God-ordained and Spirit-encouraged.

Then, this morning as I woke and the pulsatile tinnitus in my left ear reminded me of the upcoming appointment in Spokane, I thought “Uncharted waters. These are uncharted waters for us.” Cardiac issues, yeah, we have dealt with plenty of those over the last 40 years, but this is some place we have not previously ventured.

The Holy Spirit quickly reminded me – the path ahead may be uncharted for me, as I did not plot or plan this new route to the unknown, but this path is not uncharted for my God! He has gone before me. He has prepared the way...

### **Deuteronomy 31:8**

The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”

As the Holy Spirit directed my devotion and meditation that morning in Genesis 12; as He prompted me to dig deeper into the trust required of a shepherd and write about the need to trust the Father; and as he opened the door to see Dr. Fong so quickly in a town where new patients are waiting 6+ months for an appointment, He had indeed gone before me. His face – the literal meaning of the word before in this passage, is a sign of favor and of His presence. He will never leave you literally means that He will not hang limp, sink down, or be feeble... He will not discourage, abandon, or withdraw from me ... or this circumstance. Nor will he forsake me. He will not reject, desert, or neglect me.

What more could I ask? My Good, Good Shepherd will lead me on the path He has charted, on the path He has designed, on the road He laid out before me.

How sweet it is to be a sheep of His pasture...

### **Digging Deeper Questions**

1. Can you recall the times God has gone before you as a shepherd leader where, looking back, you can clearly see His favor and presence?
2. What ‘uncharted waters’ have you crossed as under-shepherd and lived to tell the story?
3. Are there sheep in your life who are in their own uncharted waters whom you can gently help lead through them?