

My name is Liz Jarnigan....

I remember the first time I read Proverbs 3: 5 & 6. I was in Sunday School, and probably about 10 years old. I really don't remember why they resonated so strongly with me at the time, but I memorized them then and they have been part of my daily prayer for nearly 50 years.

As I thought about what I might briefly convey about the message in these verses, Robert Frost's poem, The Road Less Traveled kept popping into my head, like at 3:30am 3 nights in a row. You're likely to know the poem well, but just as a reminder for you, the poem opens with:

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood And sorry I could not travel both

And it closes with:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I— I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference. I think that poem can be understood as a beautiful acknowledgement that by placing your trust in God you always end up where you're supposed to be.

Trusting in God to guide your paths requires a willingness to take leaps of faith; **and** it's important to provide you courage in times of crisis, uncertainty or change (something I'm certain everyone experiences from time to time). Our trust in the Lord should be at the front of, and guide us through, any challenge or choice we have. Faith must be present as you follow the path God sets before you because the results of your choices are rarely certain when you initially make them. Frost's poem, though, speaks to the clarity of hindsight as proof that taking those leaps of faith (even when they may be difficult or filled with uncertainty), allows you to have experiences you need to have, to meet the people who matter in your life, and to do the work you are meant to do.

Just over a year ago, I was faced with a big challenge. Did I stay on the professional course I thought I should be on, or did I accept a new job opportunity working with the student-athletes at Valparaiso (a place I had grown fond of through the experience of my son who graduated from here in 2019). Common sense at the time seemed to indicate that I should stay where I was. I prayed for guidance (as I've had to do so many times in my life) and realized I needed to TRUST THE LORD AND LET HIM DIRECT MY PATH.

So, one year later, here I am! I took that leap of faith, for me...the road less traveled (but the path God laid out for me), and that has made all of the difference!

Our world can get so crazy, and people seem to be more and more stressed all the time. We need to make choices every day. What should I major in? Should I marry him or her? Should I buy a house or rent? Should I find a new job?

Looking back, I see so clearly why the trials, tribulations, stresses, and changes in my own life occurred, and thank God for the path on which He has led me. The sum of the decisions I've made have led me to here! And that's a wonderful thing! As you encounter life's diverging roads, please don't fear that you will make the wrong choice, rather let God lead you...and I hope you remember Proverbs 3: 5 & 6.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding,

In all thy ways, acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.