

Introduction:

- Prophetic words spoken to Freedom Christian Center.
 - A while back the Lord told us to, "...get used to detours." It was during a service in which everything was planned out but God took us a different direction. We worship and ministered to each other and finally got to the Word. It was a detour from business as usual. Get used to the detours. I chose that detour on that given Sunday. It was not forced upon me. Then a few weeks later we received this following word:
 - On October 17th, we were 'reminded' of that word and more was added. *"In this season of, even in the midst of detours, there will be 'major roadwork' taking place in our hearts individually. Road work can be and usually is disruptive, messy, and often takes longer than expected. On the positive side...it is for the improvement of the location/situation. And for those subjected to the road work, there will be improvements. However, we need to obey speed limit! Stay in God's timing as He works in our hearts. Reject temptation to speed up the process or even find another route. Growth is happening as we yield to the good work He is performing."*
- I believe that we are all people of destiny. In other words, God has a plan for your life. You are not a mistake. You were born for such a time as this! Esther 4:14. But on the road to our destined purpose God arranges detours to get us into His timing and to get His character into us. Detours are His way of preparing us for what is ahead and arranging encounters for our enjoyment. Both are needed to get us to our God given destination.
- Scripture: *"When Pharaoh finally let the people go, God did not lead them along the main road that runs through Philistine territory, even though that was the shortest route to the Promised Land. God said, "If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." So God led them in a roundabout way through the wilderness toward the Red Sea. Thus the Israelites left Egypt like an army ready for battle."* (Exodus 13:17-18, NLT) God took Israel on a detour, to accomplish a heart work so that they would reach the bigger purpose (His plan for their lives.)

I. Detours

- A. Defined: a detour is a deviation from a direct course or the usual way of doing things. It is a "roundabout way temporarily replacing part of the route." Merriam Webster Dictionary.
 - 1. A detour is a departure from a direct route or a departure from the usual way of doing something.
 - 2. A detour is temporarily replacing a section of the route or way.
 - 3. A detour is an unexpected event that changes the course of your life.
 - 4. In our life span from point A to point B, God arranges these temporary deviations from the shortest distance between start and finish because He has something better in mind for us.
 - a) It could be to prepare our hearts/character.
 - b) It could be He has somebody he wants us to touch with His love. Ie. Word of knowledge: The lady/waitress at the restaurant who had a child she was concerned about.
- B. Characteristics of detours.
 - 1. Detours take extra time.
 - a) They are no longer the shortest distance between two points.

- b) They slow us down because the route is longer, there are more obstacles to overcome, and the traffic is often times overwhelming.
- 2. Two types of detours
 - a) The chosen detour – chosen detours happen when you have a plan, you are on the path but you chose to take a detour because of possibilities that lie there. I.e. You chose to depart from the path to see more beauty. (Fall leaves - Blue Ridge Parkway) or You chose to leave the road because you are hungry and want to eat. You choose to leave the road to see a friend living close by your route. It is a detour of your choice and making. You see possibilities there.
 - b) The unexpected detour – these are detours that are unchosen and unexpected. They just show up on your route or upon your journey. They are unplanned. They surprise you. You do not choose them they are thrust upon you. And they most of the time they cost you time, resources, aggravation, and are messy.
- 3. Detours are created because:
 - a) There is a blessing/a possibility out there that we are looking for, by our choosing. I.e. The mountain view look out, the best steak in town, the awesome friend you enjoy being with. You choose the detour because you will find more enjoyment there, greater strength, a sense of satisfaction, become a better person.
 - b) There is road work required, bridge may be out, or there is trouble ahead (accident). In other words God sees something in our heart that He wants to change. So while He is working on the heart issue we find ourselves on a detour. In other words, God fixes a fix so that we have the opportunity to be fixed.
 - c) Detours are created to mature and equip us. *"You're on a detour because detours are divine–designed to contribute to our own construction. Because God must address our character, He must mature us if He is going trust us with the destiny He has for us."* Tony Evans
- C. When you find yourself on a detour you still have to obey the rules of the road.
 - 1. You can't speed.
 - a) Maintain the timing of God.
 - b) Do not get ahead of Him.
 - c) So many people speed up the detour and get ahead of God by abandoning the process/the detour that He has created for them.
 - 2. You have to stay in your lane.
 - a) I.e. When you see the other lane moving faster you will be tempted to want to get into it.
 - b) I.e. When you see the other lane smoother you will be tempted to shift into it.
 - c) When we are on a detour we start looking at how much better off everyone else is and we begin to covet where they are at. That is sin and God wants our hearts free of coveting.
 - 3. You must reject the temptation to control.
 - a) Speeding, changing lanes, getting angry are all symptoms of wanting to be in control.
 - b) We must reject the temptation to control and submit to the process so that God can have his perfect work done in us.

- D. Good news: Detours will eventually bring you back to the main road! If you find yourself on a detour in life keep going because God will see to it that you eventually get back to the main path that you were created for. Detours exist because of heart work that needs to be done.

II. Road Work Required

- A. God loves us too much to leave us the way we are! Therefore, He sets up detours so that He can specifically work on areas of our heart. I.e. Maybe you have potholes in your heart and the road to who you are needs resurfacing. Maybe a bridge is out and God wants to construct something in you that enables you to cross-over things in life that would normally stop you. Or maybe that bridge is for others to be able to get to the Christ in you.
1. God knows us way better than we know ourselves. *So it is much easier to submit the work He is doing in us than to object to the process. "And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns."* (Philippians 1:6, NLT)
 2. God has a vision for what you can become. He sees it clearly! And He knows just exactly how to bring it about in us.
 3. Some of these detours God intentionally sets up for us. Other times the enemy has simply blown the bridge to make it impossible to get where we are going. Doesn't matter! God will still do a great work in us.
- B. To get us to where He wants us, major heart work and equipping will be required. Some examples:
1. Love your enemies Mt 5:44 For many this just not happen overnight.
 2. Bless those who persecute you. Mt 5:44 Don't get mad at God either when you are in it.
 3. Endure hardship like a good soldier. 2 Tim 2:3
 4. Put off your former self. Ro. 6:11 Must consider yourself dead to sin and alive to Christ.
- C. Examples of Road work/heart work that create detours for people.
1. School of the wilderness: When Israel came out of Egypt God took them on a detour. *"When Pharaoh finally let the people go, God did not lead them along the main road that runs through Philistine territory, even though that was the shortest route to the Promised Land. God said, "If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." So God led them in a roundabout way through the wilderness toward the Red Sea. Thus the Israelites left Egypt like an army ready for battle."* (Exodus 13:17-18, NLT) God to a longer slower way and brought them to a huge obstacle: The Red Sea. So they would trust Him!
 2. Next they took a 40 year detour through the wilderness. In it He trained a generation to trust Him, love Him and to become warriors who would take the promised land. *"The Lord was angry with Israel and made them wander in the wilderness for forty years until the entire generation that sinned in the Lord's sight had died."* (Numbers 32:13, NLT)
 3. Abraham took a 25 year detour waiting for his Isaac. And in one detour he was faced with the timing of God and sped up...Ishmael.
 4. Joseph - thrown in pit, sold into slavery, thrown into a prison, forgotten by the man he helped get out of prison. And all for the purpose of saving his family, and saving Egypt.

5. David was anointed King of Israel
 - a) Detour - drove him out of Israel, caused him to live in caves, was hated and hunted by the very one he felt called to serve, Saul.
 - b) Was accused by Saul as trying to take the throne.
 - c) Led his band of misfits in very high integrity—they could not sleep around, could not kill whenever they wanted, could not pillage for pillaging sake.
 - d) God was making the king of Israel while he wandered in the wilderness.
6. Apostle Paul
 - a) Spent years in the desert preparing for what God had for him.
 - b) 2 Cor 12:9-10 *"When I am weak then I am strong."* God was teaching him to trust God, and lean on His grace.
 - c) Acts 16:6-10 was forbidden to go to Macedonia. He took several detours. Until he had a vision in the night of a man from Macedonia call for him to come.
 - (1) He went to Philippi in the district of Macedonia Acts 16:12
 - (2) Lydia was saved. She took the Gospel to Europe.
 - (3) Demon was cast out of slave girl and because of that Paul was beaten and thrown into prison.

III. A Better Way

- A. The result of the road construction of our heart is:
 1. A better route/heart for the journey. We are better prepared now, for what is ahead.
 2. A better road, enables life to be smoother even when the going is rough.
 3. A bigger purpose.
- B. Better route, better road, bigger purpose all speak of improvement. But to get there will mean lots of detours and lots of changes in us.
 1. Going from one lane to two, to four all because there are more people. The increase has been so great a whole new route, road, bridge is needed.
 2. Bigger purpose speaks of improvement, increase.
 3. Ie. John the Baptist built a road/a way for the people to connect with God. Big crowds.
 4. Jesus had great crowds than John did and Jesus built a road connect the people with the Father.
- C. How do you think Paul got to the more excellent way? He went through many detours. *"... But now let me show you a way of life that is best of all."* (1 Corinthians 12:31, NLT)

Conclusion:

- God wants us to choose some detour because of the possibilities that located there.
- God wants us to enjoy the detours of His making so that we are equipped and maturing as believers.
- Don't fight the process. Enjoy the journey.
- Don't forget His words, *"I am for you not against you."*