

OCTOBER DEVOTIONAL: *Happy Trails*

How many of you remember watching **Roy Rogers and Dale Evans** on television? And who could forget their signature song, “**Happy Trails**”?

It paints such a peaceful picture, doesn't it? Riding off into the sunset, enjoying the open range, without a care in the world.

But apparently, not every cowboy has that kind of day.

Imagine a cowboy describing his day when absolutely nothing seemed to go right. He'd been kicked by a cow, taken a tumble out of the silo, banged up his elbow—and, as if that weren't enough, he'd spent the day being bossed around by another cowboy who was getting on his last nerve.

By the end of the day, he wasn't feeling particularly peaceful, cheerful—or even very Christian-like toward his fellow cowboy!

So he decided that, at least for that day, the old song needed a new title:

“Happy Trials.”

I don't know about you, but I've had a few “Happy Trials” days myself!

Maybe nobody kicked us, and hopefully we didn't have to resist the urge to punch another cowboy—but we've all had days when one thing after another seemed to go wrong.

And that's when our faith becomes so important.

Many people in the world think a happy life is one where nothing goes wrong. No trouble. No heartache. No difficult trails. But after living a few years, we know better than that.

Jesus never promised us a trail without trouble. What He promised us was something far better: that we would never have to travel it alone.

Isaiah 43:2 NIV says:

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze"

Notice what God doesn't say.

He doesn't say **if** you pass through the waters.

He says **when**.

Psalms 23 doesn't say that God will keep us from every valley. It says that even when we walk through the darkest valley, we don't have to be afraid because **He is with us**.

That's a promise that becomes more precious the longer we live.

Most of us can look back over our lives and remember some trails we never thought we would have to travel. We've experienced disappointments. We've said goodbye to people we loved. We've faced changes we didn't want, problems we couldn't fix, and circumstances we couldn't control.

But we're still here. And so is God.

The same God who walked with us then is walking with us now.

And whatever trail lies ahead, He will be there too.

James 1:12 NIV says:

"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."

It's easy to trust God when the trail is smooth. But faith becomes visible when we keep trusting Him even when the trail gets rough.

And after all the years you've lived, you probably know something today that your younger self didn't fully understand: that God has been faithful.

Through the good days and the difficult ones, God has remained God.

He has been faithful **behind** you.

He is faithful **beside** you today.

And He will be faithful on the trail **ahead of you**.

So whatever part of the trail you find yourself on today, keep going.

If you're on the mountaintop, enjoy the view and thank God for it.

If you're walking through a valley, keep putting one foot in front of the other.

If the trail has taken an unexpected turn, trust the One who can see what lies around the bend.

So today, let's keep riding the trail God has given us—trusting Him through the good days, trusting Him through the hard days, and encouraging one another along the way.

And until we meet again ...

Happy Trails to You!

Closing Prayer: Lord, thank You for being with us through every part of our journey—the mountaintops, the valleys, and all the miles in between. When the trail is difficult, remind us that we do not travel it alone.

Give us strength to keep going, faith to trust You around every bend, and grateful hearts as we remember how faithful You have already been. Help us continue down the trail with confidence, knowing You are with us every step of the way. Amen.