

## So Glad Steam Rises

I was soaking in a hot bath, and as I glanced toward the candle burning in the corner, I noticed the steam from the hot water rising from the surface. Later, as I enjoyed my morning cup of coffee, there it was again. I watched as little dancing billows rose slowly then disappeared without a trace. It made me think of the many things that we see every day, small reminders of how quickly time goes. There's steam that comes off of our cars on a cold winter morning, or the steamy fog that hovers over a lake. Our God tells us our life is but a vapor. We are here for a moment, and then we're gone.

As I live in the middle of my 'Fall' years, the years that I have already lived through are already growing hazy for me at times. I find it harder to recollect the details of those memories that I have carried with me for so long. I even forget how old I am at times. I have to go back to my birth year and then count by tens until I reach the present. We all know how it feels to enter a room for something, and then stand there wondering what it was we were looking for in the first place. Just another gentle reminder that we are growing older.

I remember as a young mother, seeking guidance from older women around me. My mother passed away the day before my first baby turned two years old. I depended on the advice of these other women, who I assumed were much wiser than I. Many times they were so helpful, and other times they would just smile at me and tell me it would be okay. I would grow frustrated because they couldn't or wouldn't give me the advice I was looking for. I'm not sure I would have taken their advice anyway, and I have a feeling they knew this. Now I find that I am that 'smiling' woman, knowing that no matter what I might say or advise younger women to do won't make any difference, because some things are meant to be learned through experience.

I don't write these thoughts down in an effort to mourn the years that are behind me. On the contrary, as a Christian, I write this down with the overwhelming joy and hope that I feel, knowing I'm over the halfway mark of this life. I look toward the mark and prize that are before me with great anticipation. So much so, that during some of life's difficult times, I ask my Lord to consider calling me home sooner than He may have planned for me. I am ready for whenever He decides my time has come. I have this nagging feeling He has more for me to do though, so I will remain steadfast.

With Christmas approaching, I reflect on these things even more. With both of my parents gone, my husband and I look at his parents, knowing their time is growing shorter. One day in the near future, my husband and I will be the matriarch and patriarch of our family. All will come to our house for the holidays. We will be the ones who sit back quietly and watch the energy taking place all around us. Of course we plan to be a part of that energy for a long time to come, but the time of reflection has begun, and I accept it with a peaceful calm.

I plan to enjoy the years I have remaining, but dear ones, know that I am here for just a short while, and soon, like the steam that rises from my coffee, I will be gone, rising up one day to dance on streets of gold.