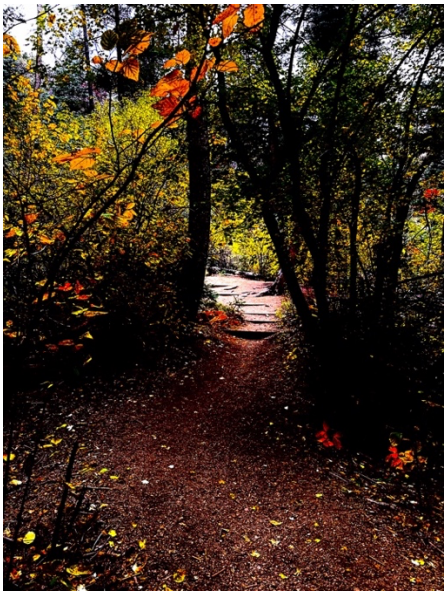
<u>SOULITUDE:</u> Magnitude

Philippians 4:6-8, 'Don't be pulled in different directions or worried about a thing. Be saturated in prayer throughout each day, offering your faith-filled requests before God with overflowing gratitude. Tell him every detail of your life, then God's wonderful peace transcending human understanding, will guard your heart and mind through Jesus Christ. Keep your thoughts continually fixed on all that is authentic and real, honorable and admirable, beautiful and respectful, pure and holy, merciful and kind. And fasten your thoughts on every glorious work of God, praising him always.' (TPT)

I realized, there are many 'magnitudes'. The magnitude of a situation is overwhelming. The magnitude of a decision might be weighty and can carry grave consequences. The magnitude of a loss—or even a win—could possibly not be realized for a long time. Even a person called a seismologist studies the magnitude of an earthquake. And the magnitude of His love for me is vast and crushing, engulfing and humbling.

I am startled by the magnitude of God's love. We can travel all the way back through Scripture, and find ourselves in the very first book of the Bible, in Genesis 1, and we already are immersed in the greatest love story ever written. God desired relationship and so He created a world where humanity could exist. He designed a place of safety and beauty, a place of peace to speak soulitude into our beings. He filled it with light and life, and He called it Garden of Eden, which means 'place of pleasure'. He scooped up some dust and mixed it with Himself, and then breathed His very breath into the lungs of the creation He'd dreamt up. He called His masterpiece 'good'.



But He didn't want His creation to be alone, like He felt alone, so He made a companion. He gave instruction and relationship and ownership and work to the beings into whom He had poured Himself. And they had free rein of their destination, much like we do today. And even when disobedience and insolence broke the foundation God had designed, He improvised and accommodated mankind with a Plan B.

The cost was magnanimous. It cost humanity a world without sin and no longer could they call the Garden, the place of pleasure, 'home'. But because of God's kindness and goodness, ever since, He has been restoring His family to Himself again. And the magnitude of His kindness is demonstrated when the Father looked at His children, wrapped in fig leaves, the future forever warped, hiding behind a new shame and covering up a barren hopelessness, and He clothed them. Not only was He not so disappointed that He refused to look upon them in their nakedness, but in His compassion and grace, He began to sew clothing for them, so they would no longer feel exposed. Can you even picture a Holy God, Creator of a vast universe, hunched over some material in His hands as He fashions a robe of right-standing for His precious children to wear?!

In fact, He loves us so much that He then sent His perfect Son to take your place and mine; that when He gazes at you and me, He sees the glory of His Son. He does not see the remnant of your sin or the shame of my past or the stain of our choices, but He sees the forgiveness in which His Son now covers us. The magnitude of His caring for me is breathtaking. He thought of everything, even down to the grace He stitched to make a garment of praise for me and a robe of righteousness for you so that no longer do we need to wear sackcloth and ash to hide our humanity.

Isaiah 26:3 'You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.' (NKJV)