**My Tribe**

by Michelle Hipp. LCSW

I recently watched a movie where a guy gave up singing and playing guitar after a terrible breakup because he lost his “inspiration.” Until now, I never understood that concept; if you were made to sing and play guitar, why would a breakup change that? To be honest, why would any relationship status change what you are passionate about doing? Well, it can and has with me as well, but differently.

I love to write. I have been doing it for years. But in my first year of marriage, I have found that this passion, this “inspiration,” has been altered. The more I thought about what had changed, the more I realized it wasn’t my inspiration that had changed but my tribe. My tribe is that place where you fit. When I was single, that was my tribe. Most of the things I wrote about included my struggles and triumphs of being single, such as the wedding I attended alone. The message on marriage I had heard for the tenth time, while not on purpose, seems to shine the spotlight directly on your season of singleness. Or that fantastic movie you watch alone and have no one to unpack it with. I wrote about what I knew, and now, I’m sure what I know. I’m still trying to find that one place where I fit perfectly. I am looking for my new tribe.

While I could share some insights into what it is to be newly married, I don’t feel that is my story right now. Also, I don’t think writing about being single works because while I understand it, I’m no longer living it. I sometimes feel I am stuck in the “in-between” of life. That space where things are happening that are yet to be seen will one day launch you into something great, but first…wait. Believe me; I know a lot can happen in the “in-between.” Jesus died on Friday, Saturday was silent, and Sunday, He burst forth from the tomb with our salvation in hand. But man, is the waiting difficult.

Hear me say this: my identity has not changed. *Galatians 2: 20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.* I am who He says I am; my marital status doesn’t change that. Right now, I’m simply allowing myself the space and grace to feel grief for what I was while still celebrating what is. Did you know that you can hold both grief and gladness together? It’s a beautiful gift from God to remember and treasure memories from our past while looking towards a hope-filled future.

Dear friend, I don’t know where you’re at in life today. What dreams have you watched bloom, and which ones do you need to lay to rest? Or even what season of life you currently find yourself in. Maybe you’re in a season of spiritual fall where everything seems to be slowing down or falling away. Or perhaps it’s winter when nothing blooms, but rest is bountiful. Maybe spring is your current season, and you’re working hard to till the soil, plant the seeds, and water the ground. Or perhaps you’re in a spiritual summer where you look around and enjoy the blooms of seeds previously planted. Wherever you find yourself today, you can be sure that God is in that place. He guides, heals, restores, moves, saves, speaks, and leads you into what will come next. Just look around and take it all in because you’ll never be again in this exact space or place. Where is your tribe?

**BIO** – Michelle, newly married, wears an array of hats on any given day, but her favorite is Daughter of the King. She lives in the beautiful mountains of South Carolina, where she works as a Child and Family Therapist. She has been a single mother for 18 years and loves to watch God take her most difficult struggles and transform them into passionate purpose. Today, Michelle has joyfully embraced her passion for speaking truth into the lives of others and assisting them in finding and living out their true identity in Christ. She believes we must uncover the lies and labels, identify the root, and replace it with God's truth.