

While practicing the presence of God and listening for his voice in my soul, I not only felt the presence of his hand but saw a theme in our times together. I will call it choosing to be sandal-less. When Moses encountered the burning bush he turned aside, took off his sandals and paid attention to the extraordinary in the ordinary. In my times together with God I frequently hear him say take off your sandals and pay attention. The sandals represent the things he wants me to relinquish to him so he can act on my behalf and refine me by uncovering all that is hidden. When I take off my sandals it exposes the dirt and filth I have collected on my feet. When my feet are exposed to God, he wants to wash them from self-absorption, control, dysfunctional behavior and past wounds that prevent me from walking on the path he has illuminated for me. This can only be done in Solitude where God speaks to the deepest longing of my soul which is to hear from Him. I have found being sandal-less to be painful especially when I purge deep emotions that want to paralyze me or wait on an answer to his calling on my life. Offering my sandals to Him I'm learning is not just for me but for the sake of others. I cannot expect others to walk sandal-less unless they see my blisters. I cannot ask people to wait on God unless I have known the discomfort of waiting and the building of faith when an answer comes that is indisputably from God. Walking sandal-less means together we walk through the desert with the hope of the promise land. Sandals will turn to dust but my feet will always be beautiful as I walk when I allow Jesus to

wash them on the journey. Isaiah 52:7 "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" (NIV)

--Becky Joern, COS 2015-17 Cohort