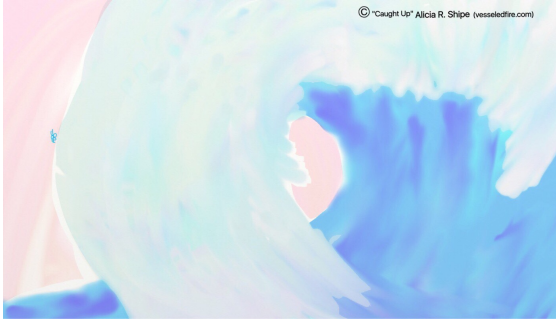


Water, Water, Everywhere

Wednesday Word: July 27, 2016



One of my greatest hobbies is watching people surf. Very few people know and understand my love for the ocean and even fewer know my fear of the ocean. To me there is nothing on the face of this planet that is so peaceful and exhilarating yet dangerous and overwhelming as the ocean. When I watch people surf, whether it be

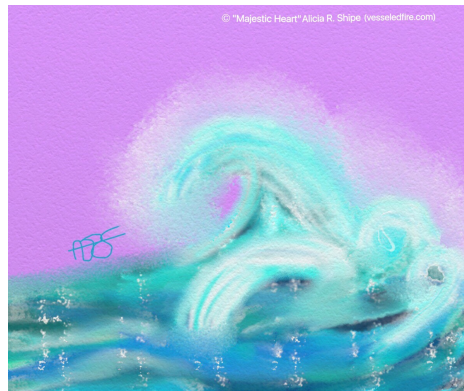
long board, short board, boogie board, or body surfing, I forget about my fear and want to be out there learning how to do the same. When I go in the ocean and I feel like I am too deep I tend to panic. This post is not only for you but a reminder to myself to go forth and know who my protector is. However, going forth means having wisdom and being prepared. I can't just get on a long board and try to catch a wave; that would be foolish. I need practice and training.

The most beautiful part to me about surfing is when a surfer is inside the barrel of a wave and they caress the face of the wave while riding it. How awesome it would be to be in that position. How awesome it would be to be alone with just you and the wave. When I watch surfers riding in the barrel, the only words that come to my mind are glorious and majestic. Those words are also words that come to me when I think of being in the arms of Jesus.

Another majestic part of waves besides being caught up in the barrel is the many factors that come into play to create the perfect wave. What we see when a wave begins to barrel and break is only on the surface. I am not a surfing expert or an oceanography expert but there are a few things I do know. The temperature, the phase of the moon, and things of the like play a part in when and how a wave breaks. There is something else that many of us that dwell inland do not consider. The condition of the ocean floor (the foundation) also plays a part in how a wave is formed. Is anyone getting this picture? To have the perfect wave or even the perfect set of waves for continuous opportunities to ride in the barrel, things must be in alignment.

Why the analogy of surfing and ocean waves? Well, for starters, it is yet another passion of mine. The other reason is because people either have a deep love of the ocean or a deep fear of the ocean (unless you are an anomaly like me). The sound of a wave crashing can either be extremely peaceful or bring terror (like a thunderstorm).

When we apply this analogy to our Lord we can begin to assess our hearts. It is wise to fear the Lord. Actually, the Bible says doing so is the beginning of wisdom and having knowledge of the Holy One is understanding (Proverbs 9:10). The analogy of surfing is one way to understand this. Fearing the massiveness of the ocean is wise to avoid being foolish. Knowing the massiveness of the ocean and understanding how being foolish can bring harm ensures learning basic techniques to remain safe even during and after a wipe out. Having knowledge of how the ocean works and how waves form and move helps in understanding how to use the momentum of the wave to propel one forward as well as to enjoy the experience of riding a wave. The more practice and knowledge one has in riding the waves, the more one can start and learn how to get inside the wave. Once inside the wave one can be completely overwhelmed by the absolute joy of being in the deepest part of a wave. The more we work on our relationship with our Lord, the more we learn who our Lord is and how He moves. The more we learn about how our Lord moves and operates, the more we can enjoy being in the deepest part of Him which is His heart. Just as a surfer (or one who only watches surfing) knows what it looks like to be deep inside the wave, being there takes practice. It is the ultimate goal of most surfers to be in the barrel of a wave. It should be the ultimate goal of every follower of Jesus to be completely enthralled inside the heart of Jesus and to live there in every way.



Alicia R. Shipe