



Sorry, I am a bit late to share my thoughts for today with you but an intended blessing is never late?

<https://www.wevideo.com/view/1640245445>

The Bible is filled with stories of people who settled down somewhere along the road and made a home out of what was supposed to be only a pause, to give a glimpse of what is to come, along the way. This stopping happens for many reasons, but perhaps the most common reason people end their journey of discovery, of growing and of experiencing the fullness of God's promise too soon, where a pause becomes a stop and settle before arriving is that of wrong expectations.

It's important that we see the journey of life we call discipleship for what it really is. Following Jesus and growing on the way is not a vacation, not a therapy session, and not a movement toward self-actualization. This journey, which takes place in the midst of this fallen world, will challenge us to the core, and the sooner we realize that, the better we'll be able to accept the reality of how things unfold in our part of life as we seek to live out our calling.

On this journey we're given next steps, perhaps the big picture but not a final destination or a detail road map. Just like God said to Abraham, "Go forth...to the land which I will show you" (*Genesis 12:1*), or to Moses, "Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt" (*Exodus 3:10*) That's all God supplies, a big picture. No map, no agenda, no timetable. Simply this: Get up, leave what you know and go! Jesus' calling of the disciples was pretty much the same way, "Follow me" We can't be sure that it was his first encounter with some fishermen when he asked them, "Get up, stop what you know (washing, mending your nets) and do something new (go where the water is deep)." "Follow Me, and I'll make you fishers of men" (Luke

5:10). What is that supposed to mean? How does that look like? Little did Peter and the others know that it meant that they would become part of a core group for a new movement called the church, the people of God. They did not know that their role would lead them to places they had never heard of before, would place them in the public eye, and leading eventually to their imprisonment and death. They didn't know any of that when they followed, didn't know that "fishers of men" would include all this.

In a culture that values money and comfort such as our own, we are likely to do a cost-benefit analysis before getting up and stop doing what we know. The problem we instantly face is that Jesus doesn't let us in on what the cost will be. Unless of course we evaluate the journey described to us in Scripture from hindsight only. But, the letter to the Hebrews tells us that those who've taken the journey of discovery, of growing and of experiencing the fullness of God's promise have had all kinds of experiences: some seemingly easy, some immensely difficult (*Hebrew 11:30-40*).

And that perhaps leads us well in some reflection from Debbie Smeaton;

When we go to church, we usually are looking for a peaceful, sacred space. We hope for a space where we can share our sorrows, learn more about how to live out our Christian calling, and worship our King. The day after the high drama of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus went to the centre of worship, the Temple, the place where God resides. What He found there was chaos and a profound disrespect for God's house. So what did He do? He cleaned up. And after that – some were healed, some praised, some were indignant.

[Matthew 21:12-17](#) The parallel to our current situation is not hard to miss. We are living in a time of chaos (even though our chaos is far less than other regions in the world). We are dealing with the implications of COVID-19, sometimes we miss the mark in our personal Christian walk, our church family fails us from time to time, and we know that we do not always follow Christ's teachings. What are we to do with this?

[Give Us Clean Hands](#)

Let's pray: Lord, we know that we fail You, and for this, together, we say we are sorry and ask for your forgiveness for our disobedience.

<Silent prayer of repentance>.

Help us in our weakness to look to You for strength and to start each day with You in our minds and hearts.

<Silent prayer of request for His presence in our lives>.

We praise You because You hear our prayers, and You love us in spite of our failings.

<Silent prayer of praise.>

Thank You Lord. Lead us in your path today, and throughout this sacred week. While we contemplate the dark days ahead of your crucifixion, help us to cling to the knowledge that Easter came centuries ago, and You are our King. Amen. Amen.

Thanks Debbie!

As we contemplate, speak, and listen to God may His peace saturate every thought and word of our lives.

Your friend

Manfred

(I am again indebted to what my friend Richard Dahlstrom shared with me through his books as well as teachings.)