



Servants of Christ
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A Devotion and GPS for This Week

Jesus' Mission Guidebook

Matthew 10:40 "He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. 41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. 42 And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."

Are you still there? Are you hanging on to something solid? Or even looking for something solid to grasp? You are not alone, my friends. I am ready to throw some candy out the door, smoke a turkey, open some presents, and call it a year.

And yet in our messed-up-ness we are still called to be in mission with others. For us, that mission means loving our neighbor by 'doing no harm.' My 82 year old mother has gone out to eat once and visited my niece whose next door neighbor has Covid-19. That's a little scary.

But Jesus is right: it takes a lot of guidance to be on mission even when the northeastern cities now require citizens of Texas to quarantine if they fly there. I have been on many, many mission trips that were hopefully responsible and mutual and not just North Americans carrying some stuff to another country to

feel good about ourselves. We had lists of things to bring: toilet paper, spray cans of Off, lots and lots of sunscreen 70 or above, and just the clothes you were willing never to see again. I have brought a suitcase full of Tylenol to Cuba (not a good idea by the way), a new keyboard to a church whose keyboard would have been stolen every week if they didn't chain down the church, and flip flops for children without shoes. You learn how to be nice to the Customs people, believe me. I think of Arlo Guthrie in Alice's Restaurant.

Right before Jesus gives his 'packing list for mission' speech, he has just gone viral. He had publically healed demoniacs, a woman who had no other choice than to grab his garment, and others only to have the religious leaders accuse him of being in a league with the devil. Good times. Then he says, 7 "And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' 8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. 9 Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, 10 nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food."

Just the bare essentials. Keep it simple. And if I have learned something from this on-going pandemic it is just that: to keep it simple. Seriously, if we have tortillas and cheese we are good in my household. It was soooo refreshing to donate two 36 foot trucks worth of stuff to Salvation Army before I moved to Texas in a little POD with my t-shirts and a TV. In recent memory, Methodist ministers had to go to Annual Conference completely packed because they found out at the conference if and where they were moving. In 1960 the US Navy had a whole protocol that said to 'Keep It Simple (Stupid)' because they had learned that simplicity needed to be part of design if something was going to be successful.

---What have you been pruning from your life during these past 16 weeks?

---What still needs to go?

---When have you learned that a heavy suitcase is just too heavy?

---When is the last time you experienced freedom?

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." ----Philippians 4:6-7

Prayer:

Jesus, I am tired. My mind is frazzled, my hands are full, and my emotions are reeling with all the things I have to do. Help me to come to you in the middle of the overwhelm. Remind me of your ever-present help in my times of need. Show me how to rest in You. Reveal to me both the beauty in the work and in the rest. Calm my anxious thoughts and encourage my heart with Your nearness. Instruct me in your ways. Bring productivity and contentment out of the peace and comfort I find. Settle me in Your truth and in Your love. Amen.