



Blair Smith

Following Jesus



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Metaphors as Bridges

"A metaphor is a word that carries us across the abyss separating the invisible from the visible. Metaphor is our lexical witness to transcendence - to the more, the beyond, the within - to all that cannot be accounted for by our microscopes and telescopes, by our algebra and geometry, by pulse rate and blood pressure, by weights and measures...a witness to all the operations of the Trinity."

~Eugene Peterson

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Outline

- ❖ *Following*

- ❖ *Following Jesus*

- ❖ *"Follow me as I follow Christ"*

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The Call

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." So Abram went, as the LORD had told him...

~Genesis 12:1-4



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Pilgrim → Journey

1. Our particular journey
2. Different stages for different people



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Jesus is the Way to the Father

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

~John 14:2-6

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Culmination of Jesus' Teaching

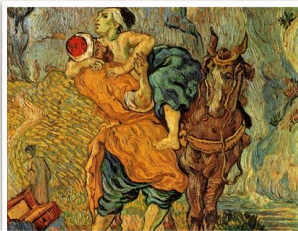
"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, **for he was teaching them as one who had authority**, and not as their scribes.

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ex-ousia

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Means of Transformation

- ❖ “Just as God led the people of Israel out of captivity in Egypt into the Promised Land, so the Christian life can be seen as a slow process of deliverance from bondage to sin before being let triumphantly into the heavenly city.” ~Alister McGrath
- ❖ Listening: Reading & Studying the Word
- ❖ Speaking: Prayer
- ❖ Participating: Involvement in Christ’s body

David

I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not cover my iniquity;
I said, “I will confess my transgressions to
the LORD,”
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.



- ❖ Acknowledgement & Exposure
- ❖ “Shut up” to God
- ❖ His delivering love

‘Works in Progress’

“Take the case of a sour old made, who is a Christian, but cantankerous. On the other hand, take some pleasant and popular fellow, but who has never been to Church. Who knows how much more cantankerous the old maid might be if she were not a Christian, and how much more likable the nice fellow might be if he were a Christian? You can’t judge Christianity simply by comparing the product in these two people; you would need to know what kind of raw material Christ was working on in both cases.” ~CS Lewis



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By Design: For Each Other's Growth

But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.... And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. ~Ephesians 4:1-6



“Therefore, encourage one another...”

“The Christian needs another Christian who speaks God’s Word to him. He needs him again and again when he becomes uncertain and discouraged, for by himself he cannot help himself without belying the truth. He needs his brother man as a bearer and proclaimer of the divine word of salvation. He needs his brother solely because of Jesus Christ. The Christ in his own heart is weaker than the Christ in the word of his brother; his own heart is uncertain, his brothers is sure.”

~Dietrich Bonhoeffer in *Life Together*



Fathers & Mothers in Faith

“For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me. That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church.” ~1 Corinthians 4:15-17

Sacrifice & Joy

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me. ~Philippians 2:12-18
