



"When Christ calls a man," says Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "he bids him come and die." There are different kinds of dying, it is true; but the essence of discipleship is contained in those words.

"When the Bible speaks of following Jesus, it is proclaiming a discipleship which will liberate mankind from all man-made dogmas, from every burden and oppression, from every anxiety and torture which afflicts the conscience. If they follow Jesus, men escape from the hard yoke of their own laws, and submit to the kindly yoke of Jesus Christ."

Bonhoeffer, D. (1959). *The Cost of Discipleship*.

God has been wrecking our lives. Wrecking us in an amazingly beautiful way that only He can do. Taking select foundational doctrinal structures that we previously thought were sound and secure and shaking them to the very core of their existence. By seeking Jesus with all our hearts, He's giving us a beautiful revelation that's leading us to abandon what we thought was a true path of discipleship, but only turned out to be one of our own creation.

That's the thing about truly following Jesus. It's a stripping away of everything you thought was right and pure in your life to counting the world you knew as loss and actually finding abundant life in Him. It's nothing else but bondage to Jesus Christ alone. No other significance is possible, since Jesus is the only significance. He alone matters.



Teresa and I have been single-mindedly seeking and finding what it truly means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. What it truly means to burn our boats and leave our old lives behind. What it means to completely surrender and be dragged from the relative security of a lukewarm spiritual path, into a life of absolute insecurity – that is, in truth, into the absolute security and safety of the fellowship of Jesus.

Matthew 6:33 is the call and Matthew 28:19 is the command. Seek Him first (6:33) and then make disciples of all nations (28:19) – in that order. Seeking Jesus comes before anything.

Eat some turkey, drink some egg nog, and enjoy time spent with family and friends.

*Merry Christmas everyone.*

We love you.

Pat + Teresa

Patrick and Teresa Houghteling

