

Nearly thirty years ago, on a muggy Friday in February, two large moving vans sat parked outside my childhood home. Since early that morning, I had watched as the movers packed up our belongings and loaded them up for the drive from Dallas/Fort Worth to Houston. Up until that point, I had never experienced anything so heartbreaking. Two months earlier, when—with tears in his eyes—my dad shared with us that Exxon was transferring him to their company headquarters in Houston, I never could have predicted how lonely, sad, and frightening it would be for my 10 year-old self to say good-bye to my family and friends. I didn't understand why my dad couldn't just tell Exxon and his boss why we couldn't just stay put. It was not until the movers loaded the final box on the truck that I began to understand. All that remained of the first house my parents owned were the vertical blinds and the blue carpet. In one last attempt at trying to stop the move, I retreated to a corner of my bedroom willing my parents to find me. A few minutes later my dad walked into my room to tell me that we had to leave. My attempts at trying to mimic the creative antics of Beverly Cleary's *Ramona* were a lost cause. We were moving. With tears streaming down my face, I looked at my dad, and asked him, "Why couldn't you just tell them no? Why didn't you try harder?" Nothing will ever be as good as playing on Spring Lake Drive," I thought. This is as good as it gets.

This is the very idea that Peter assumes this morning as he stands with James and John, overcome by Jesus' dazzling radiance. If there were Instagram or Facebook back then, you can best believe that it would have been posted so that everyone could be so impressed. #YOLO #WishYouWereHere #Blessed

Seriously though: How could they not freeze frame this moment? The only other times anything remotely like has happened was centuries prior when Moses and Elijah were taken up to the skies in a similar display of glory. So, Peter suggests what anyone in the 1st century would do: "Let's build a shrine," he says. It's what their ancestors did to capture God's presence before they had built the temple. They thought that God could only be in one place at one time. Since Peter doesn't know what else to do, he suggests to what worked in the past—the way they've always done things. That'll give

them the chance to hold on to the moment until they figure out what to do next. Besides—what could ever top coming face to face with the transformation of Jesus as more than just a man, but the fullness of God’s majesty and glory, right? Certainly, this is as good as it will ever get. *Right?*

And if Peter can just build a tent and hold on to that amazing experience of brilliance and glory then he can ensure that that cross business that Jesus had mentioned earlier would not come to pass. You see, 6 days earlier—before this moment—Jesus has predicted the hatred and distrust that people would project onto him, the hatred that would turn to violence and his own death. Peter of course did not know this. All he knew was that at every turn he kept finding himself surprised at who Jesus was and what that meant for him as his disciple, and boy who among us actually likes change? I mean we like to dream about it and talk about it and plan for it. But to actually have change happen, it’s often too much.

It was perfectly natural for Peter to be afraid for who could say what laid ahead. And it’s natural for us to be afraid. We want a plan. We want a clear roadmap. What we get instead is a promise. God reveals God’s self in amazing and unexpected ways because God loves and God still speaks. **God still speaks.**

Peter thought he had been following Jesus, a great leader, teacher, and preacher, but perhaps there was more. And if there was more to Jesus, there was more to Peter’s story. And there is more for us, too. And no matter what, Jesus goes with us every step of the way.

The story of our lives that begins at our baptism is not one that can be reduced to our comfort, our habit, and our routines—at least not all the time. Trust me, I know it is not easy. Faith is a journey of letting go and beginning again. It is one of the hardest things to live—especially when it seems a change in circumstances is just within our reach if we just tweak something here or there or, the struggle seems too weighty. But like Peter, James and John, we’ll have to come down the mountain and see what’s on the other side. And when we go, we never go alone.

More importantly, as people grafted into an ever evolving love-story we know what the final end holds—oneness with God; healing; unity; and Christ's once and final reign over evil, despair, and death. That is why we carry on—not because we can see the way ahead, but because we trust that in Christ all things are being made new.

After I pleaded my case to my dad, my dad—who I had only seen cry two other times—when my grandmother died and when Jerry Jones bought the Cowboys and subsequently fired Tom Landry—sat down next to me and began to cry, too. I don't remember what all we talked about in those final few minutes, but all I know was that as I prepared to leave the only home I had ever known, my dad put his arm around me and promised that I would love our new house, I would make new friends, and we would always come back to visit. I am not sure I believed him, but I knew we had to go. Somehow, I said goodbye. I left home.

Sure enough, I eventually made great friends, I loved our new house, and we came back to D/FW several times a year. If there is one thing I know, when I left my home on Spring Lake Drive he was there, reminding me I was loved, reminding me it would be okay: he would go with me, and I would not be alone.

Friends, you may be stuck at the bottom of the mountain in the routine and monotony of your life. Or you may be trying to hold on to that mountaintop experience, wanting more, thinking nothing good will ever happen again. But there's more to the story. There's more to **your** story and the world's story when we walk this rugged road of discipleship because all roads in faith lead us home. And if you doubt the possibility of this truth this week, I want you to recall the men women who mourned as Jesus was placed in the tomb that Saturday morning. They were certain that the last 3 years with Jesus were as good as it would get and that that what they were now facing was the future for ever. But then Sunday morning came, y'all, and the tomb was empty. Their story is our story.

So, let's get moving.

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