

Small Talk – May 21 2021
By Michael Small

Sometimes we forget. Lives become too routine, shaped by habitual activity. We might have the same breakfast, lunch, and variety only comes during the dinner hour. Routine feels comfortable and it is predictable. I had a favorite shirt growing up, I wore it day after day. It was comfortable. It felt good. Why change – it was functional, and I liked it. (And yes, my Mom would occasionally wash it, I suspect at night after I had gone to bed)

But predictable routine does not prepare one for the volatilities of life, the unexpected surprise, the deep and dark valleys where one wanders in the shadows. Nor does predictable routine allow us to soar to the heights of ecstasy.

Sometimes we forget that to be alive is to know that at the very moment one awakens in the morning – from a night of rest and sleep – the first thought to come to mind can be, “I am awake! I awaken for this brand-new morning, this moment, this time, this very day that has never been before. I awaken, I am awakening to all that is new, and wonder filled. May this be a day of engagement, discovery, and delight!” And then we take the first step into the new day. It is as if one is opening a door that has never been opened before. The journey continues, the journey begins anew.

There are seasons to the church year. One of the seasons I especially appreciate is Pentecost. (The day of Pentecost is always about seven weeks after Easter Sunday, or 50 days after Easter, including Easter Day.) It was on Pentecost that the Spirit fractured the safe routines, broke through locked doors, appeared like wind and flame. It blew out all the old cobwebs, cleared the minds, altered the patterns that felt safe. It caused those who had the experience to speak new languages, explore possibilities that had not been imagined, break through foreign boundaries, and dream dreams. It was the birth of new possibilities, yes it was an awakening with power and possibility.

May we awaken to Pentecost mornings – knowing the day to come is filled with possibilities. I want to close this piece with a familiar poem, but one that speaks to this new day.

The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,*

*Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,*

*And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

Today, may we take the road that is less traveled – it will make a difference!

In the spirit and agape love of Jesus, Michael

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