



February 2014

Dear friends,

Our Father longs for us to go to the deep places with Him, to the hard places, the uncharted places, to the uncomfortable places. To the places where we can't see the end and can barely see the step we are on. So let's go there.

Do you not know?
Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.
He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.
Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;
but those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

-Isaiah 40:28-31

Let's run with all our hearts, with our hearts beating out of our chests and gasping for air. Let's cling to the cross and crawl with every ounce of strength we have left. Let's get in His arms and admit we can't do this and we need Him. Let's go all the way in our broken mess.

Why? Because this is life. It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. We don't have to be weighed down anymore by this world. We can lose everything that entangles us. And let Jesus set us free. Not just free from all our nasty sin, but free every day to follow Him.

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

– Galatians 5:1

Free means faith. We lose control and He has all control. Everything becomes His and we are His workmanship, His tools, created to do His work that He planned before we even knew. We can risk everything if we trust Him, listen to Him and do what He says.

Free means adventure. We don't know what's next, but we know Who has the next step planned for us. So we trust with full abandon and hope in expectation for what's around the bend. In adventure with Jesus there is always hope and hope will never disappoint us.

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

– Galatians 2:20

Absolutely, this relentless pursuit will cost us. Yes, everything. But the deeper we go, the more we understand the cost is worth it. The more we know Him, the more we realize it cost Him everything too.

Will it hurt? Maybe. But, doesn't becoming an Olympic athlete, a surgeon, a farmer, an advocate for the poor hurt too. Everything costs. If we want a lot of possessions, it costs us to accumulate them. If we want to really know our family and friends, it costs us our time.

Who do we love? When do we feel most alive? Why do we get up in the morning?

Where do we go? How do we spend our tangible and intangible resources?

What do we value? Our affections drive us, motivate us and control us.

May our affections be all for Jesus. Let's let Him direct every step, conversation and work project. Let's ask Him for His plan for our lives and do His will if our plans don't match His plans for us. Let's stay straight unless He tells us to turn. But when He says turn, let's turn, no questions asked, no doubting, no anxiety, no fear. Recklessly abandon ourselves to Jesus.

Let's be crazy and live in relentless pursuit of the One who pursues us, rescues us from the miry pit, forgets our sins as far as the east is from the west, forgives us, embraces us, changes us and loves us unconditionally and constant in a way we will never fully understand.

He is worthy of our devotion, our hearts, our possessions, our work, our homes, our time, our lives.

The choice is ours. Are we all in?

Because of Jesus,

And do not forget to do good and to share with others,
for with such sacrifices God is pleased. Hebrews 13:16