

Finding our Reset Button

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I got a call from my dear friend Nicole yesterday. A few weeks ago it seems that she had had a bad case of pneumonia, so bad that for 3 days she actually felt like she was going to die. Luckily, blessedly, she got better, but it seems the experience has changed her life.

You see, for the several years that I have known her and then add another 10 years to that Nicole has been dangling over a precipice of to marry or not to marry her (I must say fabulous) boyfriend, and now she has finally decided to go ahead. They are ready to set a date.

As Nicole was telling me about the impact of this brush with her own mortality, she lingered a bit, describing how it has been like a “reset button” for her soul. This is what she mused: “I finally realized I need to give up my stubborn insistence that I am the one in charge, and lean into the fact that God can’t use me like he wants to use me unless I’m willing to let him help me get my priorities straight.”

In another way Nicole’s story also reminds me of what our friends in Hawaii went through a couple of Saturdays ago. There they were, just going about their business, carrying on their day to day when suddenly a message comes their way that a nuclear warhead missile is headed their way. “THIS IS NOT A DRILL” underscored the horror of the moment.

I try to imagine what that experience must have been like. Maybe a young father was driving home from work, still far away from being able to pick up his kids when he heard the news. Maybe a tourist was suddenly aware she would die with no family around. Maybe an elderly woman was still holding some salad fixings in her hands, ready to prepare her grandchild’s dinner. Maybe another woman was giving birth, with the doctors and nurses around her wondering suddenly panicking about their own priorities. Maybe teens on the beach gazing into the gently lapping waves were suddenly glued to their cell phones.

Whatever the people of Hawaii were doing, suddenly, life as they knew it was over. There was an *urgency* to those 38 minutes. They could panic. They could pray. They could curse. They could simply freak out. I have no idea how I would have handled it.

This whole tragic blip of an episode would be lost on us all if it wasn’t a wake-up call to the precarious, life-threatening position we all face at this moment in human history.

The question is, how do we respond to this crisis? How do we use the time we have been given to step into a different, more focused, more deliberate way to live? How do we lean into the fact that God can't use us like he wants to unless we are willing to let him help us get our priorities straight?

Today's gospel is just a few sentences long, but it holds so much. It's all intricately connected.

The prophet John the Baptist is in prison. I think it is safe to say he knows he will be brutally killed. He too has a choice how to respond.

In another gospel, we hear he sends out word to Jesus, are you the one we have been waiting for, or should we wait for another? In other words, don't let my life's work be for nothing. It's your turn.

And without missing a beat Jesus picks up John's baton to run the good race, to proclaim the same message his cousin intoned: "repent, the kingdom of God". . . the way that God has always intended us live. . . is unfolding right here in front of you.

And IMMEDIATELY, Jesus goes about choosing his disciples. First, he goes to Simon Peter, and Andrew. Next, to James and John. He simply says, "Follow me". I'm going to teach you how to harness humanity into a whole new way of being." And here is the most unbelievable, remarkable part of this whole story.

They drop what they are doing! They change direction. They press their own reset buttons. They know, finally, that life is not a drill. AND they decide, their best response is to FOLLOW HIM!

Maybe pressing the reset button is something you've been pondering in your own life these days. If so, you've come to the right place.

Pressing the reset button is what we are up to this coming year at Resurrection. Last week at the Annual meeting we found out some good news. Thanks to your generosity we are able to keep going yet another year. The physical church building is in reasonably good shape so we can finally get serious about the real reason we are here, *to follow Jesus*. To follow him more nearly, more clearly, more dearly. Like Nicole, like the people of Hawaii, like his first disciples, we are reminded, this is not a test. This is not a drill. This is the real deal. Today we are also blessed. We even have the gift of time to realign our decisions, to decide what is important. And how might we know what that is?

Just sayin. God's vision is anything BUT some crazy drill that scares us to death. Rather, it is a reset button we can all press. It includes an invitation to the best wedding feast ever. Guests from everywhere and every time. The best wine flowing. Laughing with those we once thought of as our enemies. All because Jesus, the ultimate host, showed us a better way to fish.