

You are constantly making decisions in life.

When to wake up. What to wear. Which food to eat. What to work on. Who to speak to. Where to go.

These small decisions compound into moments, and then these moments lead us to what seems like big decisions, but the small moments have compounded into a big one. And with each decision it propels us in a direction. Sometimes we are ready for it and sometimes we are not. But still we move...forward.

And it is the transition time between these small decisions to the big moments that are of the utmost importance.

In Luke's gospel reading today we are in a transitional story. This chapter is in between moments. In between those big stories that we think of when we think of Luke. This is the transition that doesn't seem to be very memorable.

But it is in this transition time, this seemingly ordinary time in Jesus's life- him just walking along a road, that we find what it takes to be a follower of Christ.

And what it takes is moving forward.

You see Jesus isn't being the nicest, or the most understanding friend right now. He is quick to respond to his people, quick to tell them how they can't go back to do their duty of burying parents, or saying goodbye.

He's not letting them take the time to get their affairs in order like in our first reading with Elisha.....He bluntly says that if they look back they are unfit for the kingdom of God!

"No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

When plowing a field you have to push and be focused, make sure you're staying on your path. And when you're plowing, if you take the time to look back to check out how you've done, before you know it your lines will no longer be straight as you move forward.

And I think this is what Jesus means when he says *"No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."*

Jesus wants his disciples to be All in.
 Jesus wants us to be all in, and being all in means moving forward.
 Taking a step and not looking back and not holding onto the things that keep us from moving at all.

During my college years I was in a Choir at Penn State. And my professor Dr. Leach taught me very valuable life lessons. But he never explained himself. It was infuriating. He would just say these phrases and you had to understand what it would mean.

And if you'd ask him a question, you'd hope to get a clear, definitive answer. but he would have this phrase that he'd respond with... "Forward March".

And i'd say, but what does that mean. And he'd say. You know what to do. Forward March.

He was frustrating, not giving me an answer to my questions. Or lending me advice when I was asking for it, he was ambiguous...He just would say Forward March.

(pause)

Forward March

It means moving forward with purpose.**Forward March**

It's not dragging yourself there like you don't want to go or dawdling on your own time. It's seeing God's purpose for your life and going for it with energy and joy!! **Forward March**

It's about hearing Gods voice and moving towards it with conviction and confidence.

And so today, I hear Jesus saying to his disciples. **Forward March.**

Don't look back on what you think you need to be doing, look at me, Forward March look towards me and where I'm going, what im doing, what i've been teaching you, look at where im heading ...Move forward and be fit for the kingdom of God.

Which brings us back to those moments. Those little decisions we make to bring us to big moments.

And right now in this moment, people **are** marching. Parading, celebrating. Gathering together to stand up for LGBTQIA rights. To bring awareness to the injustices, and discrimination to people who just want to be themselves, and be comfortable and love who they wanna love, dress how they wanna dress. Fighting to be equals. It has been a

long journey of small moments that have changed lives and our church and nations history. And so, here's a moment. And people are marching, peacefully as Gods beloved children.

This isn't the first time God's people have marched.

Gods people marched out of Israel to stand up against Pharaoh and slavery

Gods people Marched to stand for Equal rights for black and brown bodies.

Gods people marched for women's rights and the right to choose for their own bodies

Gods people Marched to protest guns, marched for anti-nuclear weapons, for our earth, for poor people, for voting rights, for immigrants...

We've marched out of despair and sadness for our Muslim and Jewish siblings. We've marched in the face of fire hoses and attack dogs. Racial slurs and bricks thrown.

We forward march one by one because the cross is ahead of us.

The Cross redeems us

The Cross is our forward and our march

Leading us into those difficult places where we think we are alone but we are not.

We are in a moment where the cross indicts us, reminding us that God's greatest power often comes immediately following the greatest darkness and suffering we've experienced, and God's greatest power manifests in those whom the **world** would shun, forget, or oppress.

And with the cross ahead of us, we march.

There is urgency in which God is calling us to be disciples.

The urgency in which the kingdom of God is being ushered in with.

The urgency in which God is working through us to love others more, to help people more, to listen to their stories and to be a community of love and welcoming.

To not take for granted the small ordinary moments of everyday life, for when compiled together make up the big moments that change our world.

Jesus barely even gives us the time in this lesson to explain himself. He just says. Forward March.

so we get a glimpse of, a small transitional moment for Jesus. Where his gaze is set on the cross....

What we see all throughout the Gospels is that Jesus from the very beginning -- took a step. and a step, and then another and another. And he did it out of sheer obedience. And he did it all the way to the cross.

His gaze is on the cross - this gospel writer doesn't just write this lightly in our text for - It dictates all of Jesus's decisions both little and small which compound to the final moment that will change our world

He is on the forward March - A march to the cross.

A march defined by love.

And so if Jesus can take a step, we too can take a step, one by one together with Jesus by our sides.

We can march together and change our world--for Jesus did it out of love....God knew that's the way the world gets changed. Through love.

Love. is the pulse to our march that drives us to think not of ourselves, but of another.

Love, for our earth to save that which we have destroyed

Love, which pushes us to stand up for one another.

Love, that which has no nationality, no state or country lines

Love, that in which God gave up Gods only son for us.love.

So We Forward March -

when our feet are tired

when we are tempted to look back or stop in our tracks

We remember that we are loved.

We remember, that the Spirit will support our work - our March, and give us everything to enable us to follow the One who calls us to the cross.

This is **Gods** moment. Forward March.

Amen.