

Auto Pilot

A reflection by Lisa Hunt

What a beautiful day! I admit, there are plenty days, however, I do not see the Grace of God.

Yesterday another mom stopped me as I headed out to the soccer field. She first said what beautiful children I have and then commented that they are so well behaved! Wow! Words every parent works and wishes to hear. I am so thankful for that moment of rest, peeling the worry off my shoulders-just for a brief moment.

Imagine, I'm in my kitchen cooking dinner in the middle of the week...hold on, let me get my apron...

“Jesus loves me this I know....., Just a minute, I'll help with your homework in a minute! dum de dum dum, dum dum dum..What's that hun? Turn on the light? OK, just a sec... Yes, Jesus hum hum, hum hum hum hum hum...Read a story? You want me to read a story. OK, Hold on-let me get my book...and my glasses to see clearer...”

(PUT ON GLASSES)

The first time I put on these glasses, my five year old daughter Olivia said, “You look like an old lady.”

(PAUSE)

After much serious consideration I said, “I'll take that as a compliment!” and began to read the bedtime story for the evening.

But, I am sad to report, I am one year older and none the wiser.

In Hebrews 4 we read,

“For the word of God is living and active,
sharper than any two edged sword,
piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow,
and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
And before him no creature is hidden,
but all are open and laid bare to the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”

Every fall, when returning to a school year, I disengage and turn on autopilot. In my mind, the focal point of my life is scripted. It becomes

**GET TO WORK ON TIME,
COMPLETE ALL WORK ACTIVITIES IN A TIMELY MANNER
KEEP MY BOSS HAPPY AND
GET THE JOB DONE.**

Second to that, get the kids to daycare. Oh yes, feed them, make sure their homework is done, get them cleaned and in bed on time so they won't be tired, oh yes, give them a kiss, and throw them an "I love you." Husband-What husband?

And, there are soccer and cub scouts and piano lessons....

And search committee, and pie table and Sunday school...

What did I miss?

The problem is, every fall and other especially busy times of the year, I experience a quiet depression. I get teary quickly over little things like a hymn or children singing.

And, I get frustrated quickly when I have to repeat instructions to my kids or trip over the shoes left all over our blessed house. I panic when I can't seem to stay on top of it all, when no matter how organized, planned or patient I am it's not quite enough?

I am routinely missing something...

I had a dream several weeks ago. I was driving and couldn't see a thing. It was pitch black. The anxiety was pulsing in my throat, the car was going fast and though I had control of it, I couldn't slow it down.

One of those dreams!

The steering wheel felt loose in my hands though my grip was tight. The interior of the car was lit up and I could hear my boss's voice telling me what to do... **(uh oh!)**

But I couldn't understand a thing she was saying!

(PAUSE)

You don't need a psychoanalyst to figure that one out!

In our Mark passage today, we have a wealthy young man asking of Jesus, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"What must I do?" He asked.

What must I do? I ask.

I am Rich. Rich with things to do. And the things to do get in the way of seeing clearly of being connected with what is important....

In response to the wealthy young man, Jesus first says, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone." Jesus helps us focus the lenses.

Then Jesus checks to see if the wealthy young man is behaving himself. And the wealthy young man claims that he has, since his youth, followed all the commandments.

You too? (REACH OUT TO EVERYONE WITH BOTH HANDS) You're behaving yourselves?

Then the story tells us, "And Jesus, looking upon him loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

Notice, before the young man gets his instructions, the passage says "Jesus loved him."

Then Jesus said, "Go and sell everything, then give to the poor....**And come, follow me.**"

Imagine, a wealthy young man, perhaps one could say this was a person of very good fortune. Maybe a Bill Gates type (the wealthiest man in the country), though I have no clear sense of Mr. Gates' moral standing. But certainly rich beyond belief, who, at least, already gives some portion of his 90 some-odd-billion dollars a year to charity...Imagine Jesus telling Bill Gates to **sell everything and give to the poor**???

Back to reality, Jesus cuts right to the chase. *Jesus loved him and then tells the rich young man exactly what he needs to do to inherit eternal life.* He gets down to business and strikes a major chord. Unfortunately for the wealthy young man, as we know, he chooses not to sell everything, give to the poor and follow Jesus.

OK, I've got it! I've got an idea? Although I can't sell my things to do, how about if I share my wealth and give it to you guys? What would you like? I'll give pie table to Bill, teaching Sunday school to Jim? Who wants Pastor Search!

Just kidding...

In a discussion for today's sermon, William H. Willimon writes that this passage is about two key concepts: Love and calling. He writes, "Christianity is about loving Jesus, but it is about loving Jesus in the manner that Jesus loves us." He admits in his commentary that Mark's story is somewhat confusing. I know I am still confused by it, despite having studied and prayed for this talk...*Is the calling really to just to love Jesus?*

I am one year older and none the wiser. I must need new glasses to see more clearly.

(INSPECT GLASSESS)

In "Sabbath Keeping", the author Donna Schaper writes, "Sabbath keeping is so easy that it is terribly hard. We are all doing too much, and we know it is not enough; we cannot do more, but we know we must. Our gaze is unfocused, our expressions weary and worn.

Our faces have taken on a wintry, snowed-in look as if we were in the wilderness. Time has become like a blizzard; it is snowing, and then snowing some more, and we do not need reminders to keep our shovels ready. Chipping ice is something most people have to do year round. The idea that we *should* rest is almost cruel.”

What must I do? I ask.

Jesus, I think, wants us to let go, to have faith in him and follow. To love him in the manner he loves us, without reserve or condition.

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sharper than any two edged sword,
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This passage cuts right to the chase. If I want to answer Jesus' call and really accept the totality of His love, I know that I am going to have to simplify my life-I am going to have to be focused, centered and with Jesus in every moment. I am going to have to turn off autopilot. Maybe it is not less to do. It is the Jesus perspective in being, doing and observing the Grace of God.

“Jesus loves you this I know...”

How are you wealthy?