

Actually, Christianity does produce also a kind of mixed multitude. There are those who have truly accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour, who come to understand what it means to be a Christian, who follow Him whatever happens. And they'll continue whatever happens to them in this world. There are also those who follow, up to a point, but they'll be half-hearted, and when things get difficult, they may give up. Jesus spoke about the seed that's sown on the stony ground and it grows up for a moment, but it doesn't have a root. Then, when life gets difficult, it withers away.

**A**nd God wants us to be those who are sown on the good ground, so that when the difficulties come, we will continue.

**A**nd they want to go back, these ones want to go back to Egypt. So, they want to go back. Somebody said 'when the going gets tough, the tough get going'. But the non-tough might want to get going in the wrong direction, and these ones want to go back to Egypt. I don't know whether they really thought it through. Were they going to be terribly welcome if they went back to Egypt? One of the things which occurs to me is actually: **'there is no going back'** once you come through.

**T**hey go back to Egypt. What are they going to get? What kind of reception are they going to get? They're going to say: *'okay, well, sorry about that little fiasco at the Red Sea! And all your armies being killed, and all your firstborn being killed at the Passover. Not our fault! It was all Moses's fault! Nothing to do with us, please welcome us back!'* The Egyptians are going to say: *'Nice to see you!'* Probably not.

**A**nd actually, **once you have committed yourself to the Lord in reality there actually is no way back.** You've got to go forward; you can't go back. And there were people who came to Jesus and they began to follow Him, and He said one or two things which upset them, and they turned away from Him, and that's what we don't want to do.

**No Going Back**, 16 MAY 2014 - by hollym1067

*"How do you pick up the threads of an old life? How do you go on, when in your heart you begin to understand there is no going back."* J.R.R. Tolkien, The Return of the King

Two years ago, I attended a Christian camp as a student leader. It was the summer before my first trip to Africa, and I couldn't have been more excited. At this camp, we spent a lot of time outside, doing fun things and enjoying time spent with each other and Jesus. But amidst all the fun and games, there was one night that I was changed, and things have never been the same since. It was the night of a guided prayer, called the prayer labyrinth, in which everyone went through a series of small devotions or prompts of things to pray for. I certainly don't remember all, or even half of what these things said, but there was one that I will remember forever. It was the last one, at the end of the labyrinth and it was talking about what we will leave behind when we leave earth. It spoke of how we could choose to let God use us to reach the nations for His glory. It spoke of us as burning lights. I know you're probably thinking yes I've heard this before, nothing new. And having grown up in church my whole life, I had heard it too. Many times. But sometimes I think God shows us stuff in a special way, and we are never the same after that. But anyway, after reading that, we were challenged to light a candle in significance that we would be God's light in the world and spread His name for all to hear. And this was the night I finally said yes. Yes to His plans over mine. Yes to taking His name to the nations, and following no matter the cost. Yes to striving to be remembered, not for myself, but for the love of Jesus. See, for a long time, God had been dealing with me to give up my plans and my life. But I didn't want to do that. I loved what I did way too much. But that night, I was absolutely convinced that I could do nothing less than give up everything. So, I quit my life. I quit my plans to become a bassoonist, I quit my MANY dreams that didn't line up with His. I quit planning out my whole life. This was a long-needed night, one that could have happened before, had I not refused to give up everything. This was the night I was changed, the night I knew that God had been calling me all along to go to the nations. The night that it finally made sense why I was so drawn to missionaries and their pictures and stories of spreading Jesus to the world. It all made sense, it all clicked together, and I looked back to see how all the things that seemed so small were actually things that God used to give me a burning passion to love the nations.

A few months later, I was on a plane, headed to Johannesburg, South Africa. And I couldn't have been more excited. I got the opportunity to spend ten days loving beautiful people and sharing Jesus with them. I was in love. And again, I knew that there was no going back. Yes, I would go back to the states, but that didn't mean I could just pick up the threads of my old life and be the same. No way. I couldn't and I wouldn't. I was forever changed and forever in love with Jesus, whose name and renown was the desire of my heart.

Fast forward to this past December, and once again I was on a plane, this time with the destination of Lesotho, a small landlocked country inside South Africa. Once again, I couldn't have been more excited. Compared to South Africa, this place was completely different. Here, we saw poverty that you cannot understand until you've witnessed it. We saw people who hadn't heard the Gospel more than once in their life. We got to share Jesus with people who didn't really know exactly who He was. And once again, I knew that there was no going back. Yes, I would go back to the states, but my heart was forever ruined and that's exactly how it was supposed to be. Ruined so it can bleed with compassion upon the people of the world and ruined so there's none of me, but everything of Jesus.

I can't just pick up my old life. Yes, I sin, and yes, I struggle. And no, I'm not as close to Jesus as I should be or would like to be. I still do stupid things and I still forget about Jesus when I want to do what I want. But, no matter how far I stray, I know I've been created to live a life for Him. I know that I've been called to love the nations by going and giving them Jesus, whether that be only for one year or a few years or for my whole life. I don't know. God has some pretty big plans for the nations, and I'm beyond thankful that He who could do it all Himself has chosen to use little people like me. I'm thankful for His love and His constant pursuit of me, the prodigal, and that He would choose to call me out into the unknown, out into His will. I'm scared, thankful, unworthy, excited, and many other things. But most of all, I am changed. I can't just pick up my old life and forget about the lost world out there, in need of a Savior. **There is no going back.**

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