One thing I have discovered about Western New York in winter is that there isn’t much sun. Most days we go through our lives – get up, eat breakfast, workout, go to work or chores, eat dinner, watch TV, spend time with family – with clouds or rain or snow. We have a routine. Our life is good, or at least mostly good. But moments of sunlight (or even bright moonlight) are relatively rare.

We do get sunlight, as we did one day this week. But those are special days in the winter. If we are looking for them and plan for them, we can do activities that keep us basking in the light. They bring us cheer and hope in the middle of winter. But if we miss those days of light or are otherwise unprepared for them, we continue with our old routines. In continuing with those routines, we miss out on the hope and cheer that they bring us.

Jesus is the light of the world, the light in the darkness. Into the routine of Peter, Andrew, James and John that light appeared. They were doing the ordinary things that fishermen do – casting their nets into the sea and mending their nets. Very likely, these disciples had some acquaintance with Jesus – they knew something of who he was. They were ready to make a life-changing decision to follow Jesus, the light of the world.

Jesus’s invitation to the disciples was one of those special moments when light broke into the routine of a rather gray life. It was also a unique moment, a special opportunity in time that was rare and might not be repeated again for some time. The ancient Greeks had two words for time: chronos, which was ordinary, routine time and kairos (pronounce KI-raus), which referred to an urgent event that interrupts the routine and demands a life altering decision. Jesus’s calling of these four disciples was God’s kairos of coming to them. They were ready for this moment; they recognized it and they acted upon it.

That moment that they abandoned everything for that call was one of healing. Those who realize their deep need for this healing and are willing to give up their old routines to step into this call find light in the midst of darkness and grayness of life, forgiveness of their sins and hope in time of distress.

Rabbi and spiritual writer David A Cooper writes in Parabola magazine:

“The sacred call is transformative. It

is an invitation to our souls, a mysterious

voice reverberating within, a tug on

our hearts that can neither be ignored

nor denied. It contains, by definition,

the purest message and promise of

essential freedom. It touches us at the

center of our awareness. When such a

call occurs and we hear it—*really* hear

it—our shift to a higher consciousness

is assured.”[[1]](#endnote-1)

We all receive this call. All of us have moments of kairos -- moments when Jesus interrupts our routines and calls us to make a decision. We have times when we are at work, or driving our kids around, or visiting a sick friend, or working at fish fry or when we ourselves are sad or lonely when God comes to us with an urgent call. If we are attuned to God, we hear the call. If we are attuned to God, we answer that call. We are willing to stop what we are doing and move in the direction that call takes us, even if it is a direction that is counter cultural. The disciples left behind their nets and their livelihood jobs to follow Jesus. That was counter cultural, especially for men who had wives and families. We also are called to go against culture, to leave behind whatever gets in the way of us following the call. We leave behind love of money or position, fear of failure, fear of the unknown, past hurts to answer the call.

We have moments when the light bursts into the routines of life and calls to us to take notice and to follow that light. These moments of call are God’s kairos. They interrupt our chronos. They have an urgency about them that demands that we make a decision. My prayer is that we decide to drop whatever holds us back and follow Jesus.

Amen

1. David A. Cooper, “The Call” in *Parabola Magazine* (Spring 1994), quoted in Synthesis: A Weekly Resource for Preaching and Worship Following the Revised Common Lectionary, January 2020, Year A [↑](#endnote-ref-1)