



A Trip Around the Sun
Part 1 – An End to the Doldrums
Pastor Ted Cunningham

We are starting a brand new series today called *A Trip Around the Sun: Turning Your Everyday Life into the Adventure of a Lifetime*. I can't wait to get into this. I've been studying the doldrums this week. Raise your hand if you've never heard the term *doldrums*. You are going to hear it today. We are going to look at the doldrums and how to keep your life free from the doldrums.

This series is based on my wife Amy Cunningham's favorite book, *A Trip Around the Sun*. Usually we don't allow other staff members to pick the series entirely, but when Amy says we're doing this book, we're doing this book. No, I'm just kidding. One of the co-authors is her favorite pastor in the world, Dick Foth. This is a companion guide. I want to encourage all of you. If you're looking for the "what next" to read, it's this book right here.

The reason we're calling a companion guide is we are not going through it chapter by chapter and we're not using the outlines out of the book, but if you want to read stories of adventure, they are in here. If you want to read about how to turn your everyday life into the adventure of a lifetime, pick up this book because it's really more about the stories that are in this book. The content is great, but you will be challenged in your faith to step outside of your comfort zone, so I really encourage you to pick that up. I read it earlier this year. I've been re-reading it this week. We take this series and the idea for this series off of that. What we hope happens in your life is that you'll just step up a notch in your faith and in your walk with Jesus.

I have props today. I've been waiting to use these props all week. I made the Sun and my daughter made the Earth. Let me explain it and then I'm going to tell you how I came about these props. Again, as I share these stats, remember I'm not a scientist. The Earth is on average 92 million miles away from the Sun. Earth's orbit... We go around the sun one complete time in 365 days. Therefore, a trip around the sun. The orbit around the Sun is 584 million miles. We're traveling at a speed of 67 thousand miles per hour. The idea around a trip around the sun is every year you are upon this earth until Jesus returns, you are taking a trip around the sun.

So I go in to buy these props. Corynn made this Earth and I think she did a great job on the Earth. I made the Sun. I went into Michael's this week and I sat the props down at the cash register. Janice said "Oh, this is neat; what's you doing? Are you making a school project?"

I told her it was actually a sermon series we are starting at our church called *A Trip Around the Sun*.

I'm going to put this up here on the screen because I want you to begin to fill in the blanks of this series in your own life. **I have taken _____ trips around the sun.** However old you are, I want you to put that in the blank right there.

I said "Janice, I have taken 41 trips around the sun."

She goes "Well good for you!"

I realized she thinks I'm an astronaut. So I went with it. I'm not a convincing astronaut, I'll tell you that, but I started making up facts and figures and Janice was just amazed. But then I had to say "Janice, do you really think if I worked for NASA, I would be at Michael's buying props? Don't you think I would have my hands on some better props than a Styrofoam ball and a can of yellow spray paint?"

I said, "Janice, I don't know your age, but guess what? You've taken some trips around the sun too."

Janice said "I have?"

I love inviting people to our church off of this. I go "Yeah, and you're not even an astronaut, but you're traveling 67,000 miles per hour around the sun. You will travel 584 million miles around the sun this year."

You could see her amazement as she said "Wait until I tell my kids."

I said, "Guess what, Janice, your kids are traveling around the sun."

We are all traveling around the sun. I want to make sure we all get the big picture of this. At lunch, some of you will go "I think I get it now." You have to because we're doing this for all of September and October. How many trips around the sun have you taken?

What's fascinating is that if you study the doldrums, it's a maritime expression that came about in about the 18th Century when traveling around the globe by sailboats became more and more necessary for trade and for discoverers. So around the Equator in both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, there is what's called the Intertropical Convergent Zone. I didn't say *that* 450 times this week in the mirror.

The Intertropical Convergent Zone is also known to us as the doldrums. It's a place of low pressure. It's a place of little to no wind at all. Sailing vessels would go into this area, the doldrums, and they would be stuck there for days and weeks and run out of supplies. They needed to get the wind in their sails going again to get moving.

If that isn't the perfect expression for us because many of us would call it a rut. For some, it would be the routine of everyday, ordinary life. For others, it would be the grind of life. Words we use to describe the doldrums in our life would be *inactive, quiet, boring, sluggish, and stagnant*. It's also the definition for retirement. Some of you are looking at that thinking it sounds really good right now. But we are calling this the doldrums. This is "Where's my life going?"

Some of you have followed Jesus for a very long time, but when you look at your faith, you're thinking there has to be more to this adventure of the Christian life. That's what we want you to see in this series. We want you to begin seeing your faith as an expression of adventure.

I want to show you some people who have taken some trips around the Sun. Look at this cute couple. This picture is from 68 years ago. This couple has now taken 68 trips around the Sun together. You know them better probably in this picture. This is the Huestads. Are they here today? They may be in the second service. I think they go to the Baptist church for the first service and our church for the second service. Get the hymns at 9:00... I love this couple because they are a fiery couple. Their adventures are far from over.

I visited another couple that has taken 60 trips around the sun. I went to the hospital Sunday to visit. She is a sweet lady that is approaching 90. She's there with her husband. She has a feeding tube and nothing sounds good to eat. She can't eat anymore so she's being fed by I.V.

You know my opinion on this. When you are at that point, you can eat whatever you want. I don't care what the doctors say. "I'm here now and I'm in charge just for this brief moment." If you are ever in this place, you know this is going to come from me. Pat, you have this to look forward to. I'm going to come and say "What sounds good to you right now?" I'm excited because I'm going to go out and get you whatever you want. I've had people say chicken or just a sandwich. Somebody said "I would love a corned beef and provolone on pita." I get some good requests. "You're getting that and a Dairy Queen cone."

I talk a lot about food in my everyday, ordinary life and now I'm asking her what sounds good to her. "If I could get you anything, what would it be?" When you are at that point, when you're sick and nothing sounds good, but maybe one thing sounds good...

Do you know what she said? I've never had this answer before? She said "Do you know what really sounds good? Lobster." With that, we are going to pass the buckets one more time because ministry around this place is getting very expensive. Lobster?! So her husband got her the lobster... But they've had 60 trips around the Sun and I'm really more and more leaning into those who have taken a lot of trips around the sun. We have much to learn from them.

In August, I met Ellen Blackwell. They wheeled her into a room where I was sitting in Orlando. She's a sweet lady. She reminded me of my grandma, Mary Jane. They wheeled her wheelchair right by the chair I was sitting in and I introduced myself. I found out she had just turned 100 years old. She has taken 100 trips around the Sun. Again, I kind of have a rule. When you are in the presence of someone who has taken 100 trips around the Sun, you shut up, you be quiet, and you listen. You listen to their story. She has so many stories to share. I could spend a week with her and not fully grasp all the trips, all the adventures she has had as she has traveled around the Sun.

She has ministered for years in the Assemblies of God. At 92 years old, she felt the call of God upon her life. Let me repeat that. At 92 years old, she felt the call of God upon her life to start a retreat center on the Sea of Galilee in Israel. I don't know about you, but *traveling* to Israel sounds like a lot of work to me

right now, let alone starting a ministry. For the last eight years, she has gone there multiple times a year to teach the Bible on the Sea of Galilee. Now this is always something fun. If you ever get around somebody who is 100 years old, it's always a blast to ask them what their ten year plan is. I asked Ellen and do you know what? She had one. She's in a wheelchair and her sister travels with her because every 100 year old needs a 90 year old to be their traveling companion, right? This is great. I'm exhausted sitting in this room with 41 trips around the Sun, but she took 92 trips and then God calls her to another eight trips to start a brand new ministry.

Why are these trips important? Why are we going to spend two months looking at your trips around the sun?

When I was eight years old, my brother, Andy, and I were in this daredevil phase. My eighth trip around the Sun was totally about adventure. We would tie ourselves up to a stool on one end of the yard... Do you remember when those daredevil shows were on television and guys would lay down on a rollercoaster track and be tied to it. It was on *That's Incredible* and shows like that. Then they would escape right before the thing took them out. My brother always wanted to have me practice that with him. He would tie me up on the stool at the corner of the yard and he would put on his football outfit. He was about 12. He would take off at a full sprint. He was a fast and fiery little guy. I had to get untied and off the stool before he plowed into me. This was my trip around the Sun. All I would do... Again, you wonder why I live in fear for most of my life. It's called an older brother. All I would do is right before he would get there, I would just fall over and make him sail past me. He never caught on to that.

Then he talked me into... We lived on a hill. We were kind of at the bottom of the hill. On the top of the hill... He was the type that would ride bikes down the hill and when we had snowbanks, he loved to hit the snowbanks and go flying over the handlebars. That was his favorite thing to do. Or he loved to jump ditches and grab a tree in mid-air and let the bike go flying. That he is still with us in his 40s is kind of shocking to the whole family. He was an adventurer; it just came naturally to him.

Once, we went to the top of the street. I don't know what I was thinking; it was only my eighth trip. He talked me into tying my wrist to my handle bars on my bicycle. I was smarter than this; I have no idea what I was thinking. So I tied my wrist to the handlebars and he said "When you get to the bottom, just slam on the brakes." I sure did, but then you have nothing to break your fall when you go up and over. And I went up and over and I still... I have a scar from my eighth trip around the Sun. Some of you have scars on your body right now and you can point to that trip. You know when that was.

On my tenth trip around the Sun, I placed faith in Jesus. On my 21st trip around the Sun, I met Amy Freitag. We got married on my 22nd trip. On my 27th trip around the Sun, together we went through a painful church split. We look back over that 27th trip around the Sun and we praise our Father in heaven for it. I'm hoping this begins happening for some of you. I hope you'll look back on past trips and remember that it was not easy, but it's kind of like camping. No one likes camping. But you do the week after you are back at home and everything is put away and you're eating normal meals again. That's kind of what trips do for us. They're adventures that we look back on and go "Man! Do you remember when that happened?" "Do you remember how bad that was?"

We were on the lake yesterday and there was no rain in the forecast; not on my app. But sometimes you have to put the apps down and look up. That's a Ron Cunningham one. That's my dad. "Put your dang phones down and look at the sky. It's going to rain." I kept saying it's not going to rain. It poured and we had somebody who gets their hair done once a week with us and she was getting soaked. I go "We're going to laugh about this in October." This is going to be fun in October, but right now, this is miserable, but in a little while it will be okay.

Some of you are facing trips this year. You are headed into a trip around the Sun that's going to be full of challenges, but you'll have the trip to look back on.

On my 29th trip, we had Corynn Mae Cunningham. On my 31st trip, we had Carson. Why are these trips important? I hope you begin processing your life like trips. It's important in this introduction to this whole series that you begin saying "My trips are unique to no one else out here. No one else understands this."

One of the quote from the book that I want to share with you is by Mark Batterson. He's one of the co-authors. He says "*You may be the only Bible some people every read.*" We can open the Bible and we can share with them the Romans road, we can explain to them the plan of salvation, but most people are looking at your life and their looking at your trips. "*Are you a good translation?*" Are you able to take your trips and process them and to see the good work that God is doing in your life, to see that he is turning this into something with a mission, something with a purpose? "*Your life is your sermon.*"

Let me give you one more fill-in-the-blank as we begin this series. **I am the ___ version.** I am the TMC version. AKC is Amy's version. Take your initials and put them right in there. Your trips around the sun, your story, your adventures may be the only Bible someone reads.

Now be very careful how you answer this next question. Have you ever sat through a boring sermon? Be very, very careful. Have you ever sat through a bad sermon? You can be honest. Either at this church or a church you previously attended, you sat through it or you said "Man, that guy is dry. That guy is dusty." Some of you... I'm sorry, there may be people looking at your life and seeing the doldrums. They are looking at your life going "Man, you're just inactive, quiet, boring. You say you know Jesus and you love Jesus and you're a follower of Jesus, but where's the activity? Doesn't following Jesus come with activity? Doesn't come with a purpose? Doesn't come with a mission? Shouldn't you be doing something?"

Mark Batterson shared this about pastors. This is one of my favorite quotes. He says "*If your sermons are boring, it's probably because your life is boring.*" If there is something boring as you're sharing your faith in Jesus, people are going to be confused. So again, we looking at your everyday, ordinary life. How do I turn that into the adventure of a lifetime?

If you have your Bibles, I want you to turn to Matthew 4. We're going to look at Jesus calling his first disciples. We're going to look at an adventure. He's going to take these guys on. They say yes to an adventure where they don't have a clue what's about to happen. If they knew what would follow in the

next three trips around the sun after they say yes to Jesus, I think their minds would not only be blown, but I'm wondering if they would have even said yes.

If you've ever planned just a one week vacation, you know how much goes into that. You know how much planning and how much preparing and how much organizing and how much gathering of stuff that is involved in that. I wonder what the disciples would have said had they known everything they were going to experience when they said yes to following Jesus.

18 As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he (Jesus) saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. In that day, you typically did the trade of your family. If your parents were farmers, you're more than likely going to turn out to be a farmer. This is true for most of history up until the 20th Century. If your parents were fishermen, you were going to be a fisherman. If your parents were plumbers, you were going to be a plumber. It was just typical throughout all of history. But these guys were fishermen and we are going to see that for the next disciples called it's not just a profession, but it's a family profession, a family business.

19 "Come, follow me, "Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." Now what's neat about this... I always love this. Jesus takes the experience and skills and turns that in to a purpose. He says "I'm not going to ask you to abandon all of your experience and all of your skills. I'm not going to ask you to forget about all the trips around the Sun that you have taken, but I'm going to take all of those and I'm going to teach you how to use them to have a greater mission, to have a greater purpose. I'm going to teach you how to be fishers of men."

20 At once they left their nets and followed him. Now here's what's important and we are going to see it in just a second in John 1. This isn't the first time that Jesus met them. This isn't their first encounter, but when Jesus calls them to follow him, their response is immediate. We like being the recipient of the word *immediately*. Imagine calling customer service this week and going "Hey, can I get the phone hooked up today?"

"Immediately, sir, we're right on it." You don't ever get that. You'll get "How's next Friday for you?" Imagine telling your kids to go clean their room. "Immediately, Dad." What? That's a great word. Do you know what immediately means and it may be in your translation. It just means to act at once. They acted at once. They put down their nets. Leaving their nets was not just being done for the day. Leaving their nets meant they were done with this profession. They were walking away from everything they know. They were walking away from what had fed them these past years on these past trips. They were walking away from their future. You have to understand this has to be going through their minds. Leaving their nets has so much meaning behind it.

In a church, I don't believe you can share this passage from Matthew without clearly making a call for missions. You hear me pick on my church a lot and I joke about growing up independent, fundamental, pre-millennial, King James Version only Baptist, but today I'm going to give props to a man named Roy Chestnut.

My pastor was passionate about missions. My pastor would stand up regularly and call people in our little congregation of 150 – 200 people to leave their nets. We didn't have a lot of fishermen in Oswego, Illinois. I don't think we had one that made their living casting nets. We had engineers, secretaries, school teachers, plumbers, carpenters; we had a lot of different professions. And there would be this thing at our church called an altar call, an invitation. He would call people. If God's been working on you for some time, if you've made a profession of faith in Jesus, maybe Jesus is saying "Put down what you're doing and take a greater step, take another step." It doesn't mean you can't be a fisher for men in the job you are in right now, but we can't neglect the fact that God may be calling some of you away from what you're doing.

Part of the heaviness of this week was me meeting with multiple people who there is a major change in their job right now. They are being asked to drop their nets. It was fun meeting with some of them because they're like "I'm kind of being forced to drop my net." There is a term for it and it's called early retirement. I just kind of brought it around. I asked how we could maybe look at it in another way. Maybe your boss brought you in and said there is no longer a need for your position, however, you look at it and go "Okay Jesus, I'm 50, I'm 60, I'm 65, I am dropping my nets of a profession I've known my entire life. It's provided for my family. It's put my kids through college and it's gone. What next?"

When you begin to process these trips around the Sun, maybe for you this series is about "Okay I'm not going to fall into the doldrums, I'm not going to start drinking and sit at home. I'm going to take this as an opportunity." Jesus said "follow me" and immediately they left their nets and they followed him.

21 Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. They are getting the nets ready for another day of fishing, but they are not just working alone; they are working with their dad. Now I've never worked in a family business, but I have a lot of friends who have worked in family businesses. What I have learned... I don't have study or research to back this up; it's just observational, but family businesses are tough. Why is that? It's because it's not just family relationships; it's family responsibility. "Son, we built this business. You're the one that's going to take it over. You're not taking it over like I want you to take it over." Have you ever had that family business conversation with someone? "Dad gave me the business and then took it over about six months later and said I was running it into the ground and he wanted his equity back." So you have to see this play out

Jesus called them, 22 and immediately they left the boat... They left their livelihood, they left their nets, they left their profession ***...and their father and followed him.*** They left the family business.

We saw this last week. This is the cost of discipleship, this is the cost of following Jesus: "Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." Those are the direct words of Jesus Christ. "Anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me." And Jesus says "Follow me" and they leave their livelihood, they leave their nets, they leave their future, they leave their father, they leave the family business and immediately they follow after Jesus.

The One we follow is more important than what follows.

You're here and you say "I have not placed faith in Jesus. I need some things figured out. I need to know what the five year plan for the Christian is before I say yes to Jesus." The one you follow is more important than what follows. If you say yes to Jesus, you follow Jesus... this is a word we don't use enough, but it's a word of urgency: *immediately*.

For some of you, you are going to have to leave your nets because your nets are a corrupt business. For some of you the only reason you are able to bring money home at the end of the month is because you're holding it back from the government and not paying your share. Or you have a business partner that doesn't want to follow the rules or generally accepted accounting principles. Your thinking following Jesus is going to have consequences, but we say following Jesus leads us to the next adventure. Following Jesus takes us on another trip around the Sun and what will this trip have in store?

When Jesus is the One you follow, every trip around the Sun comes with a mission.

Every trip comes with a purpose. Your job is the doldrums. "Ted, you want to talk about boring, stagnant, and suffocating? It is my place of work." But when you say yes to Jesus, you go into the salon tomorrow, you go into the theater tomorrow, you step on stage tomorrow with a completely different attitude.

As Colossians 3 says, Jesus is your ultimate boss. Do your work as unto the Lord. I am stepping out, I am immediately saying yes to Jesus and what that means for me tomorrow, I don't know, but I do know it's going to be an adventure.

Dick Foth, one of the co-authors of the book says it this way and I love it and I love to see this in the calling of the disciples, but he says "*Adventure begs for company.*" Jesus calls these guys to follow him.

I want to take you to another text. This is where Jesus first meets these guys. Watch how this unfolds. There are multiple implications in this text in John 1: 35. **35 The next day John** (John the Baptist) **was there again with two of his disciples. 36 When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"**

37 When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. So John the Baptist is doing what he is supposed to be doing. He's saying "Behold, there is the Lamb of God, there's the one who takes away the sins of the world. The Messiah has come. Guys, follow him. All of us turn our eyes to him." This is physically and literally. These guys start following Jesus along the way.

38 Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" I think this implies two things. One is like "What do you want from me right now?" Jesus was great at asking that question. "What can I do for you?" The broader implication of this text is "What are you seeking in life? Why are you following me? Why do you want to know about me? Why do you listen to John and now walk along behind me? What's the purpose?"

I think we understand this because there are really three ways in which we live in life, and really only three ways. It's alliterated so you know this came from a Baptist years ago. Some of you are in survival mode. Every trip around the Sun is about surviving. You're just trying to make it. We have terms for this: paycheck to paycheck, barely getting by. For others, it's success. Every trip around the Sun is about being more and more successful. Every trip around the sun... Next trip your P & L needs to be better than the last trip. But Jesus is going to ask these guys a much deeper question because this is where we all want to live: with significance. It's not about survival or success; it's about significance. "Does my life matter?" "Does my life count?" Jesus is asking the question "What are you seeking?"

They said, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?"

39 "Come," he replied, "and you will see."

This is my brother. I'd say "Andy, where are we going today?"

"Come, you'll find out."

"Do I need to bring the first aid kit?"

Have you ever had anybody that says "Hey, watch this"? Nothing good ever follows from "Watch this." Nothing good ever comes from "Why don't we try..."

Have you ever sat in an emergency room? I have a lot. I've been in an emergency room. It's great to ask people "So, what brings you in today?" When you hear the stories about the stupidity of mankind... I have a friend... I hope he's not in here, but I have to laugh. He shot himself in the lip with a nail gun. He went to the emergency room and the waiting room was pretty full so he decided to go get a quick workout. He does a workout with a nail sticking out of his lip. For some of you, it's more like a piercing I know. But ask people what brings them to the emergency room. There is always intrigue. How did this happen?

Jesus doesn't give them an address. He doesn't say "This is where we are going and this is what we'll do." He just says "Come, you're going to find out." That's a great adventure. "Come on guys, I'll show you."

Isn't that sad today. I tell my kids "Google has ruined your life. You don't live in wonder anymore." Instead of looking at the bird that's flying right... I can't tell you the number of times I'm coming down Highway 76, going to the Taney Como Bridge. I don't know how many times an eagle has been parallel to us over Taney Como, flying over us. I'm just like "Is anybody seeing this?"

"Seeing what?"

"The eagle."

"Let me find out the eagles natural flight plan..."

“You just missed the eagle because you’re Googling.”

Knock off the Googling and live in wonder. I tell my kids one of the best things about life is to not have all the answers. It’s to look at something God did... I studied how the Earth travels around the Sun just enough this week. I’m not an astronomer or an astronaut. I don’t need to become one. I can look at that and go “that’s amazing” and leave it at that. I can live in wonder.

The students are going “I hope the teachers are hearing all this. We don’t need all the answers.” I can see somebody tell their geometry teacher “I choose to live in wonder. I will not answer your question.” “I do not know when Mark Twain lived upon this Earth.”

Jesus says “Come and you will see.” Jesus invites these guys on an adventure and this adventure is going to have highs and lows and oh, the things they will see. If you want to know what they see, I encourage you to read the first four books of the New Testament, read the Gospels. You’re going to see three trips around the Sun in those four gospels that will blow your mind.

So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. This is throughout the whole Gospel of John. You see this whole idea of abiding in the presence of Jesus. ***It was about four in the afternoon.*** These guys are invited by Jesus on to a great adventure. I want to remind you when Jesus prayed before he went to the cross, he prayed for these guys. He prayed they would be one and then – this is the tie in for the whole morning – he prayed for all of us, the followers that would come after them. He said “Would you make them one?” Adventure begs for company. He prayed for each one of us. He prayed that we would be one and that we would go on this adventure together.

I get to travel quite a bit, but I have to be honest with you: I hate traveling alone because I hate experiencing stuff alone. This is why if I ever am traveling alone, I include other people in my adventure whether they want to be there or not. “I don’t have anybody to share this with; look at that right there. Look at this. Let’s go experience this.” Adventure begs for company.

Here’s what I want you to do for the rest of this series. This is my challenge to you as you hear from a lot of the teaching team. Joe White is going to do A Trip Around the Sun message and he’s preparing it and he actually knows how all of this works. He gave me a lot of it at lunch a couple of weeks ago. You want to talk about a guy who gets adventure? On the teaching team, I’m like the least adventurous one. They are all crazy adventurers and I’m like “Hey if there’s any amount of risk, let’s just take it easy. Let’s just sit back and relax.”

Here is the question I want you to wake up with every single morning of this series: “Jesus, what do you have planned for me today?” “I’m following you. I’m following your word. I have a lot of agendas and a lot of plans in my life, but, Jesus, what do you have planned for me today?”

I love not knowing how the day is going to unfold. Sure you have work hours and sure you know where you’re driving and how you’re getting to it, but all along the way, there are adventures popping up everywhere. Does anybody know what I’m talking about? And they are fast; they’re quick little moments.

Last spring break was one of my favorite adventures. We ended up going to this water park and it had a lazy river. It was the most adventurous lazy river I've ever been on. It had waterfalls that you fell off down into and went through a cave and then it had the wave part that threw you around.

My wife enjoys water parks, she just doesn't really like to get wet. And the kids were begging her to come on the lazy river. She doesn't like water necessarily and she doesn't like cold water. So she gets on this inner tube with us and I thought it was going to be the most fun we were ever going to have in our life experiencing this with Amy. With Amy, this is going to be awesome. She gets on the inner tube and she is super comfortable. She says "Just keep me away from any of the water falls and all that."

We don't know what's coming. We've never been to this place before. Stop looking at maps at theme parks and just go! Theme and wonder. Just wander through the park. Find out what's along the next turn. We're getting closer and closer and people start disappearing in front of us. We start hearing water. We don't know what's coming, but our hearts are racing. My wife is screaming, trying to keep dry and I'm pushing the tube the best way I can. She's was going nuts and I'm thinking it may be over. No, it ain't over. Now we have a wave part that's going to be throwing us in and you're going to go in. We did one full lap and she was done, but guess what? A year and a half later, we are still talking about that trip.

Today, on Sunday, I'm still talking about little adventures I had all last week. I want to get up every day and say "Jesus, what do you have planned for me today?" I'm going to live in wonder. Here's what I think his answer is if you combine these two text today.

"Follow me and you will see. Say yes."

"What am I saying yes to?"

"You'll see."

Raise your hand if you're the planner in the family? You are going to hate every part of this series. You're going to want Proverbs – "Many are the plans in a man's heart..." "but the Lord orders their steps." How about that for our charismatic moment of the morning? "Follow me and you will see. Say yes to me." "Immediately, Lord."

Last Sunday night tragedy hit our town and Lori Sunde, very close to it, calls me and says "Would you please go and visit the family in Springfield." I said sure. I had been preparing for this series and I'm just saying "Lord, what's on the plan for today." I know the family's name, but I've never met them. I don't know what they look like, but I just know what's happened so I drove to Springfield to Cox South.

Late at night, there is only one door open in that hospital so I went in and I walked down the hallways. I'm going to the Neuro Trauma Intensive Care Unit and there are all sorts of waiting rooms. It's just all long hallways. So I walk in the first waiting room and there's nobody. I walked into the next waiting room and there's a man there who is crying and that would be about the age of the gentleman I'm

looking for. I walked in and I said “Hey, is your name Greg?” He jumps up and says yes. I walked over and introduced myself and shared with him. This is not a story of humor at all. But I think you’ll understand. About a minute into the conversation, I realize this is not the Greg that I’m supposed to be meeting. This Greg’s mom has just been brought in after having a stroke. It was great moment because he’s like “I’m losing my mom tonight.”

Immediately I know the Lord spoke to my spirit and said “You want to know what I have planned for you today? It’s right here. How else would I get you into this room? You’ll be able to see that family in just a moment, but why don’t you spend a few minutes ministering to this Greg.”

I’m convinced if we would slow down and get off our technology long enough, we would see those moments around us all day, every day. You can’t do them all. You can’t say yes to everything, but when you say yes to Jesus and ask him what he has planned for you today, he says “Follow me and you will see.”

Well, now every day becomes an adventure, now every trip around the Sun becomes an adventure. And we want to hear about your adventures. Please, we ask for this a lot around here and some are shy to give it, but throughout this series, we want to share your trips around the sun. In doing so, we would love for you say on my fifth trip around the Sun or on my tenth trip around the Sun or on my fifteenth trip around the Sun, or on my 30th trip around the Sun, or on my eightieth trip around the Sun... Share it in that form and just email it to us. By emailing it to us, you are giving us permission to share it, so edit if you need to. We want to hear your stories. We want to hear about your trips. Why is that? It’s because adventure begs for company. What happens in a church that’s saying yes to Jesus if he says “Follow me and you will see”?

Father, we are grateful for a new series. I thank you for the inspiration of this series. I do pray for those who are experiencing heavy times that you would help them see the adventures that are going to come out of the difficulties that they are in right now. There are many families already heading into a great adventure and they just don’t know all the steps and all the details to follow. May they just get up every day with the renewed sense of “Okay, Jesus is the one if follow and that matters more than what follows. We trust you and we believe.”

Father, I also pray during this series for some who may be called to leave their nets, to leave their professions, to leave all that they know to pursue a calling. Maybe it is away from these United States to another part of the world. May this be a church that embraces that. May this be a church that sends missionaries out. You called us and you blessed this church to support missionaries, but Father, maybe it’s this series where the sending of missionaries becomes more prevalent.

We are grateful for what you continue to do here. As we enter into a time of the Lord’s Supper, may it be a time of renewed purpose and renewed vision in our lives, as we declare Jesus is the one we follow

It’s in the name of Jesus that everyone agreed and said... Amen.