It has been said, “It takes courage to grow up and turn out to be who you really are.”

– Henry van Dyke

Life is BIGGER than we can imagine! Life is waiting for us to take that first step.

Already a celebrated polar explorer, Sir Ernest Shackleton coordinated the British Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition with the goal of accomplishing the first crossing of the Antarctic continent, a feat he considered to be the last great … polar journey of the "Heroic Age of Exploration."

In December 1914, Shackleton set sail with his 27-man crew, many of whom, it is said, had responded to the following recruitment notice:


Likewise, following God is not a task for the fainthearted. At the start of some adventure (e.g., a mountain climb), the leader gives some instructions. He points out things we need to hear but maybe don't particularly want to hear. We are impatient, and just want to get on with it.

Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.

On that road, people were joining him. Now Jesus knew that suffering, rejection and death awaited him at the end of that journey. But it seems that some of these would-be followers regarded … it as a victory march of the Messiah.

Jesus dispelled any romantic view they might have of discipleship. He told them in no uncertain terms that it wouldn't be that easy. So, they could not complain later on, 'Oh, we never thought it was going to be like this.' He bluntly suggested that a serious calculation should have a role to play … in their decision to follow him.
He said that no one could come after without 'hating his father, mother, wife, children'. Hang on now, he didn't literally mean hating one's father and mother. The word 'hate' is a Semitic expression. 'Love less' is nearer to what Jesus had in mind. He was telling his disciples that they must be ready, if needs be, to sacrifice the dearest things in life. And in certain (rare) circumstances they might have to choose between him

... and their closest relatives. That’s not easy under any condition.

Next, in two short parables, he pointed out that discipleship is a serious calling. Persecution and even death are real possibilities. In this, as in any other sphere of life, we should not walk into it blindly. We should calculate

... the cost before committing to it, and see if we have what it takes.

2 The first step in any important undertaking, Jesus was saying, is not action, but reflection. Too often, we act first and reflect later (if we reflect at all). Consider these questions: Am I excited that Jesus chooses me to help in transforming the world? Do I believe that salvation does involve my personal participation?

But, really transform the entire world?

Jesus never asks us to fight against impossible odds. He does not want us to build with inadequate resources. That is why Jesus assures us that God will provide us with what we need to live as his faithful disciples. If we trust in the power which God alone can give us, then we can build with confidence.

We can embrace seemingly impossible odds. The goal Jesus sets before us is immensely worthwhile. We are working with him to create a better world, a world of peace and justice, a world of acceptance and inclusion where everyone is valued. And, the result of following Jesus, in working for his goal, is nothing less than, everlasting life. Our lives are perishable. We return to dust, but God has promised to restore and perfect the life we originally received. Jesus came to show us that our earthly lifespan does not have to be all we know.

In this Jesus does “conceive what the Lord intends”, heaven on earth.

Do you want in, do you want “to partner with” Jesus?

Think, consider, and take action. I ran across this bit of advice called,
the 3 C’s in life: *Choice, Chance, Change.*

You must make a choice, to take a chance,

if you want anything in your life to change.

*At this Liturgy of the Heroic Age of the Kingdom,* we gather around the tables of Word and Sacrament. Here we receive *the Power* that can do for us, what we can never do for ourselves. This power is not something impersonal, a kind of spiritual electricity, as if we were here to get our batteries charged for another week.

**The Power that is offered to us here is a Person.**

*His name is Jesus of Nazareth and he is building the Kingdom of God.*

It’s time for us to be … who we really are.

*Are you up His challenge?*