

All We Need is Right Here  
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**John 14:5-9 NRSV**

**5** Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?”  
**6** Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. **7** If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

**8** Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” **9** Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”

Okay, let me get this out of the way right now: I totally stole this sermon. Well, I didn't actually steal it but I cribbed off of Nadia Bolz-Weber so much she really deserves the credit for it. Her short piece “I Can't Get No – An Essay on Satisfaction” hit me right where I'm living this week. The six and half minute investment is well worth it.

NBW begins with a story about her once-broke friend Phil, who needed a car but could only spend \$500. Phil says that he found a car on Craig's List, called the owner up and asked about it. The owner told him that it was a blue Toyota that was pretty banged up but in working condition. Phil then joked, “Oh it's blue? I really wanted a red one.”

Lord if you will provide me with a RED one then I will be satisfied.

This is essential what Philip says to Jesus here. Jesus says that he is Way, the Truth, and the Life. If a person wanted come to Jesus in hopes of connecting to God, then that person has come to the right place. Jesus is everything they need. Philip of all people should know. And yet Philip says, “Just show us the Father, Jesus, and THEN we'll be satisfied.”

Will we though? Will we really be satisfied?

When we're 12, we think we'll be satisfied when we finally turn 13. Our thirteenth birthday comes and goes. Then we're sure it will come when we get our driver's license, or graduate, or move out on our own, or land that good job, or get married, or get to be a parent, or finally buy a house, or finally get to retire, or... you can see where this goes, right?

We can live - and lose - our entire lives believing our satisfaction is somewhere else, doing something else, with someone else.

I've been thinking a lot about this for myself, of course. Since I sold my house in last June, I'm in my third temporary housing situation. Over the last month I've lived out of a suitcase, driven about 5000 miles and exercised not at all. I stepped on the scale for the first time in I-don't know-how-long and confirmed that yes, I get to start all over again.

I live in the tension of being super grateful that I've never had to sleep in my car while also longing for the stability I believe will come... soon? Over the last year I've lived in some really beautiful neighborhoods. Just last week I walked down the block from my current place and saw the whole of Oakland, SF, both bridges – everything right out in front of me! And yet, there I was taking in this amazing view, all the while longing to get to my next destination, to start my next chapter and to get to my new normal, whatever and wherever that is.

I was missing out on what Nadia Bolz-Weber calls The Sacrament of the Present Moment.

The present moment is sacred because it is the ONLY place we can find God. This is at least part of what Jesus is saying with his I AM statements. God, the great I AM, is right here in front of you. I AM here, and I will never leave you orphaned. I AM all you need.

In the Sacrament of the Present Moment,

*I can experience God in my body, just as it is.* My desire to be healthier doesn't have to come at the expense of the self-acceptance that is available when I know God isn't waiting for me to be a certain weight before I can be loved. God's love and presence isn't waiting for us on the other side of Covid or cancer or rehab. It's here right now.

*I can experience God in my relationships, just as they are.* I can let go of any fantasy about life being better if only I could get other people to treat me differently. In fact, I can release the need to EVER see them change because – let's face it – it's not going to happen. Instead, I can learn to accept them and myself just as we are, and let our imperfections be our teachers. Doing this doesn't mean I give up on growth or stay in unhealthy situations. But it does mean I can give myself to the work in a non-anxious way, without making my gratitude for the people in my life dependent on how the relationships turn out, or even if they turn out.

*I can experience God in my circumstances, just as they are.* I can do my best right now, and stop telling myself pretty stories about how I'll be *more* – more productive, more focused, more effective – when the future is clearer and things are more stable.

As Bolz-Weber observes, we can't reasonably expect to be satisfied when we get "there" if we aren't satisfied with being "here." God isn't waiting for us in some preferred future. Instead she reminds us that:

God is to be found in actual reality.

THIS is the day that the Lord hath made.

THIS is the body that the Lord hath made.

THESE are the people that the Lord hath made.

*Let us rejoice and be as glad as is realistically possible in all of it.*

Because now, right now, is when God is saying be still and know that I AM God.

All we need is right here. That's a lot to rejoice about!

Let us pray.