



LADIES MINISTRY

In the shadow of the Cross

“How Did I Get Here?”

Linda Smith

One of my favorite Christian writers/teachers recently posted this on Instagram:

“Sometimes the thing I long for most is the life I had ten years ago: quiet, private, full of reading (almost no social media), and very little travel. I never asked for this life, never sought it. I have sought only to be faithful and obedient to the Lord in all things. It is good (I pray), even if it isn’t always what I want most. Life is interesting. And an adventure. I’m thankful to the Lord for the life he gave me...” Karen Swallow Prior

That made me think about some of my Biblical favorites: James, the brother of John, for instance. He was called right out of the boat and pushed into a life of ministry that included persecution and untimely death. I wonder—did he ever miss his pre-Jesus life? As he was alone, scared, and confused right after the crucifixion, and later awaiting his own death by beheading, I can’t help but imagine he had to be thinking, “I could be fishing right now.”

And of course, there’s Mary. A nice girl, engaged to be married to a local carpenter, her life set to parallel her mother’s and every other woman she knew. That didn’t last long. And thirty years later, as she lost her son to the world when he entered his ministry, watched the persecution and heard the rumors and gossip, then later as she lost him to death... Surely standing at the foot of that cross she had to be mourning in more ways than one. This was not the life she had envisioned.

But I have no doubt that neither of these two would ever have gone back to the

life they thought they were going to lead. They were directly called out of that life by God.

But so was Karen Swallow Prior. And so is every Christian.

Obedience is the key. "I have sought only to be faithful and obedient to the Lord in all things," Prior wrote. She didn't have to say yes. Neither did James and truly neither did Mary.

Any born-again believer living obediently has been affected by this God Change, in big and/or small ways. Have you "found yourself" married? Single? With children? Without? In an unexpected career or job? In a ministry? With friends you didn't expect to be friends? A mentor? A degree? No degree? Home ownership? A new state? A teacher? A helper? Writing a newsletter column?

I, too, like my life, but Prior made me look at where I am right now and ask: Am I here because I have lived a life of obedience and faith, or have I missed something God wanted for me because I wasn't listening, wasn't doing my part? Especially as women, caught up in our crazy, whackadoodle lives of constant pressure and responsibility, it can be natural to just "keep on keeping on" and easy to miss the nudge of that "still, small voice." Have I missed a calling and, therefore, said no to God by my silence, my lack of response?

I'm committing my ears to Him anew and keeping my "yes" ready — no matter what the call.

Unless in this boat is where He wants me, I'm done fishing.

