

## **The Daily Dose of The Good (and Not So Good) Words: Keep Going!** **From Bishop Bishop**

Today, for the first time, I break a trail and ask that you journey with me for a spell. Walk with me for a while as I spread The Good (and Not So Good) Words. I ask you to join me on this path; to explore a “long and winding road.” You won’t be disappointed, at least not too much. Your satisfaction is . . . not guaranteed, but you’re bound to have a satisfied mind, sooner or later, if you travel with me long enough. Though you might think you “can’t get no satisfaction” until we reach the next terminus and get off what seems to be a beaten (to death) track, but then again satisfaction is where you find it.

I seem to have lost my way. I will try to get back on track. I will keep going.

Every day I will blaze a new trail using maps made by others for others for other purposes. I will use their maps to find an unmarked way through. I plan to get lost in their directions. Would you like to get lost with me for a while? To find the true north of words worth “woods decaying, never to be decayed?”

All this poetical language strives to be an uplifting allegory for the somewhat Sisyphean task that is The Daily Dose. Everyday I will take a passage of scripture- scripture broadly (i.e., widely and by a broad) defined and use it as a launching point for an investigation. I will offer you the ideas, thoughts, ruminations, pithy remarks, catty comments, incisive wit, woolgathering, confusions, musings, notions, observations, reflections, obfuscations, meditations, deep thoughts, improvisations, *dvars torahs*, etc., that the passage provokes.

This may or may not shed some light on something or the other. I cannot tell you what you may find on this path, and I do not know exactly why I must go this route. All I know is that I am compelled to keep going, to put my shoulder to the boulder. I am “running up that hill.”

I invite you to follow in my footsteps, though I am not going to have a WWJD moment inspired by the allegorical *Footprints in the Sand* and offer to carry you on my back. Overly solicitous offers of long walks on quiet beaches lead to piles of shucked oyster shells.

Come and walk with me!

Let’s keep going.

The Daily Dose is a form of hierographology. Despite Mark Twain’s good advice, I occasionally enjoy spending fifty cent words like hierographology, but I won’t break the bank, and I’ll give you an advance on its meaning. Hierographology is the study of sacred texts. Because I despise sanctimonious suck ups, I can promise you- cross my heart and hope to die, stick a needle in my eye- that my hierographologies will not turn into hagiologies though they are bound to be hyperbolies.

There is a pony in there somewhere. I just know it.

Obviously, I do not follow the straight and narrow. I prefer a crooked path with lots of switchbacks, the kind of trail that makes your inner child just scream, “Are we there yet?”

I must keep going.

At some point in our journey, I think I mentioned that I define scripture broadly. Ditto for “sacred.” Texts, all texts- religious, philosophical, theoretical, psychological, sociological, historical, artistic, scientific, fanatical, fantastic, fictive, faithful, comical, serious, mendacious, truthful- texts are for the taking.

I use texts as maps to explore terrain, or maybe the text is the terrain? Like every tourist, I want a unique experience. And like every overworked tour guide, I just want you to follow the damn itinerary. I sometimes think that searching for the truth means trying to follow two different sets of directions simultaneously. We map virgin territory- the empty spaces and unmarked places- and, in the exact same moment, we follow the traces of other people’s tracks.

For the next four weeks, I will track “truth” following Alain Badiou’s markers- “ethics” and “Evil” and “encounter” and “art” and “fidelity”- as mapped in his *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*. I have a few supplemental charts and guides that I plan to refer to. I must warn you, if you had not figured it out already, that the trails I blaze and the markers I use are idiosyncratic and weird. You may not end up where you think you should. You may not want to get there from here. But then again, maybe you do. Follow my lead. Let’s see where this goes.

I keep going.

So far, I haven’t unfolded my map fully. You may be wondering just what bit of scripture is helping me “ease on down the road” or making me run up that hill again. What keeps this going?

“A crisis of fidelity is always what puts to the test, following the collapse of the image, the sole maxim of consistency (and thus of ethics): ‘Keep going!’ Keep going even when you have lost the thread, when you no longer feel ‘caught up’ in the process, when the event itself has become obscure, when its name is lost, or when it seems that it may have named a mistake, if not a simulacrum!”

Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*.

Keep going!