

“I was meeting with my counselor recently and somewhere in the course of our time together we were discussing some issue in my life and I asked him, ‘Is it normal for people to...’ and he immediately interrupts me. And he says, ‘Is it normal for who?’ And I said, ‘Well, is it normal for people to...’ and he interrupts me again. And he says, ‘Wait, wait, we’re not here to talk about other people, are we? We’re here to talk about you and who you are and what the next right thing is for you to do. So the better question is: is it normal for you?’”

Why do you think we so often worry about what everyone else is doing, saying, or thinking?
Should it matter to us what’s “normal” for everyone else?

That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maidservants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob’s hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” The man asked him, “What is your name?” “Jacob,” he answered.

[Genesis 32:22-27 \(NIV\)](#)

“In the ancient Near East your name was more than just words. Name was identity. Your name was reflective of your character, your substance, I mean the very fiber that made you, you. Your name told who you are.”

What is your name?
Have you ever thought of your name as a reflection of who you are?

“We each have this unique path, a calling, a life that God has given us; and Jesus invites us to be our true selves and yet we get sidetracked, we get distracted, we get hung up on how we’re different from her or we aren’t like him and we end up asking the wrong questions.”

Do you have the sense of a unique path in your life? If so, what is it?
Are there ways in which you tend to get distracted from “your path” because of what others do, say, or think?

After breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?”
“Yes, Master, you know I love you.”
Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”
He then asked a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?”
“Yes, Master, you know I love you.”
Jesus said, “Shepherd my sheep.”
Peter was upset that he asked for the third time, “Do you love me?”
so he answered, “Master, you know everything there is to know.
You’ve got to know that I love you.”
Jesus said, “Feed my sheep. I’m telling you the very truth now:
When you were young you dressed yourself and went wherever you wished,

but when you get old you'll have to stretch out your hands while someone else dresses you and takes you where you don't want to go." He said this to hint at the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. And then he commanded, "Follow me." Turning his head, Peter noticed the disciple Jesus loved following right behind. When Peter noticed him, he asked Jesus, "Master, what's going to happen to him?" Jesus said, "If I want him to live until I come again, what's that to you? You — follow me."

[John 21:15-22 \(MSG\)](#)

"You and I have pasts, families we come from, things we've done, mistakes we've made, and where we've been and what we've done has shaped us into who we are today. So we have to embrace our story, our history. You don't have to be proud of it, but you must claim it because it's yours."

What do you think it means for people to claim their own history?
Have you claimed yours?

"We have limits. There are all sorts of things we aren't. There are all kinds of people that we aren't. Maybe this is why Jesus says to love your neighbor as yourself. How could I ever love and embrace someone else when I've never come to terms with who I am and then who I'm not?"

What are some of your limits?
Are you okay with your limitations or do you still sometimes wish you had the abilities and circumstances of others?

A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.

[Proverbs 14:30 \(TNIV\)](#)

"Some people live their whole lives according to the expectations of others. Whether it's authority figures or family members, it's as if there's this script that has already been written by someone else and all they're essentially doing is just acting it out."

Are there things in your life that you do because it's "expected" of you?
If so, do these things get in the way of you doing what you really feel you should be doing?

"There's this moment by the side of the river as the sun rises and Jacob faces this man who has asked him the question, 'What is your name?' and Jacob answers him, 'I'm Jacob.' He's struggled and he's been broken and he's done pretending. He isn't trying to be Esau or anyone else; Jacob has wrestled and overcome. Jacob is ready to be Jacob."

Do you think you could live in a way where you're not comparing yourself to people who have more than you, who look different than you, or who can do things you can't? Do you think you can ever fully be you if you don't?

Resentment kills a fool, and envy slays the simple.

[Job 5:2 \(TNIV\)](#)

“We need to be saved from all the times we haven't been our true selves.
All the times we've tried to be someone else.
All of the lies we've believed about who God made when God made us.
All the times we've asked the wrong questions:
'What about him? What about her? What about them?'
And we've missed the voice of Jesus saying, 'You, follow me.'”

What would it look like for you to completely trust Jesus when he says, “You, follow me”?

May you do the hard work of the soul to discover your true self.
May you find your unique path, the one God has for you.
And in the process, may you find yourself comfortable in your own skin.

The set for this NOOMA was so newly constructed, the paint was still drying on the walls as we filmed.

NOOMA

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