

Two weeks ago I ended the message by talking about the fog...

Along with new beginnings and a sense of being gathered, comes foggy knowings

We like clarity, programs that are well defined, strong sense of what is next

But I find in most new beginnings and when we have a sense of being gathered by God

That there is a lot of fog!—a lot of unknowing

It is like being in the fog—like crossing a bridge on a foggy night

Astoria bridge is 4.1 miles long—weird on a foggy night

We can't see the other side—we have to trust the bridge and the Dept of Transportation

Keep driving and we do come to solid land

But like driving 4.1 miles across a bridge in the fog—I must stay in this present moment

Focused on what is in front of me—watch the white line—drive slowly

In life I focus on Jesus, slow down and hold on—I ask Jesus what is next and Listen

We must trust God—trust that God created this new thing and gathered us to it

Trust that God will lead us step by step and day by day

Ruthless Trust—Manning is correct in that this is the key to living fully in God's love

Don't fight the fog—look for the places where the sun breaks through and pay attention

This week, Patty shared a story with me from *Ragamuffin Gospel* by Brennan Manning

When the brilliant ethicist John Kavanaugh went to work for three months at "the house of the dying" in Calcutta, he was seeking a clear answer as to how best to spend the rest of his life. On the first morning there he met Mother Teresa. She asked, "And what can I do for you?" Kavanaugh asked her to pray for him.

"What do you want me to pray for?" she asked. He voiced the request that he had borne thousands of miles from the United States: "Pray that I have clarity."

She said firmly, "No, I will not do that." When he asked her why, she said, "Clarity is the last thing you are clinging to and must let go of." When Kavanaugh commented that she always seemed to have the clarity he longed for, she laughed and said, "I have never had clarity; what I have always had is trust. So I will pray that you trust God."

Truth is that I have often prayed for clarity

For the fun of it I did a Bible search for clarity and found none in NRSV and The Message Bible Trust – 74 times in 73 verses

trust (as part of a word) – 158 times in 152 verses – trusting, trustworthy, entrusted, etc.

Clarity can be a nicer word for control. If I could just see the future, I could make a good decision about this part of my life. Emily Freeman

Dallas Willard writes, "Many people seek to hear God solely as a device for securing their own safety, comfort, and righteousness" (*Hearing God*, p. 28). When we're obsessing about getting clarity from God on a decision we may be using him as a *device* rather than worshiping him as *Divine*. Trusting God is a risk that throws us on his mercy. It means clinging to him in love and finding that he is enough, *more than enough!* Being with the Lord Jesus Christ in God's kingdom we have every reason to be happy!

Craving clarity, we attempt to eliminate the risk of trusting God. Fear of the unknown path stretching ahead of us destroys childlike trust in the Father's active goodness and unrestricted love. Brennan Manning