

# Going Down, but Heading Up

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*A teacher of the law came to him.*

*“Teacher,” he said, “I am ready to go with you wherever you go.”  
(Matthew 8:19)*

I remembered the first time my family and I went up to Mount Seymour with our closest family friends to go snow tubing a few years ago.

At first, my heart was pounding as I rode the tire tube and was so scared that I might overshoot and fall off the mountain never to be heard of again. Eventually the fear turned into whoops of laughter, bubbling out of me as I went down the mountain like a bullet. We were all laughing out loud and felt exhilarated that we have survived the ordeal, and then we trekked up the mountain to start all over again.

As I reflected on this experience, I started to correlate that snow tubing is almost like our trek to follow the Lord. At first, you feel scared as you are unsure what will happen to your life if you decide to follow Jesus' teachings. Will my friends and love ones laugh at me or even reject me if I choose to attend prayer meetings and Sunday masses rather than “hang-out” with them? Will people think that I am faking it, a hypocrite and not worthy since I have often been a jerk in the past? Will my friends think that I'm weird since I choose to sing Christian songs (out loud & with raised hands mind you...) and be active in the church rather than go to the pub to drink liquor with them? To some people, following in the foot steps of our Lord is not “cool” since the path towards holiness is often frowned



upon; it is a path not a lot of people take as it curtails selfish pleasures.

Let me tell you that following God entails tough decision making, since being His disciple is a difficult and uncomfortable undertaking. It necessitates curtailing reckless and hurtful behaviors, loving people even if they are unlovable, understanding even if you yourself is misunderstood and criticized, turning down invitations to pleasurable parties because it is in conflict with the mass or prayer meeting. You will need a sacrificial and loving heart, a willingness and determination to trust God even in times of trials and hardships. It always been said that there is love where there is sacrifice and that Jesus will be with you and in you in times of joy and pain.

After all that is said and done, we must decide to follow Him as it is His will, our destiny and purpose in life is to be His. Once you made the leap and decide in faith to be His disciple, your heart will be at peace because you know that at last you are home, it is in His embrace that you belong.

Yes, following God sometimes feels like sliding down a steep mountain and falling off a cliff. It is scary, but it is equally, if not more, rewarding. The sacrifices are great, but the reward is peace, joy, love and most of all, everlasting life with Him.

