

What I heard in that statement is to let go of your ways of fooling yourself about what you are doing and what you are not doing with your life. Instead, make an honest deep inventory of your behavior and your motives and think and pray about the kind of person you want to be and the kind of life you want to live and the kind of country you want to live in. Then think of one action you can make to move yourself towards that.

I write this meditation to remind myself. Because what often happens with me is that I throw myself into a cause but in time my passion runs out, and I follow some diversion. What I've learned is that, in the long run, what matters is less my emotional passion and more my habitual actions over time. To lessen the deaths of COVID-19 or to diminish the racism that infects our country demands a cultural shift, which is a long-term project.

I would suggest reading Donna Schaper's work *Living Well While Doing Good*. She sets forth many suggestions of how to be intentional over a lifetime in order to make change through our own daily behavior. She writes, "The balance comes from lighting simpler fires. It means doing small things well," because what matters is the deep change that can take a lifetime.

Let me be clear. Sometimes we need large public demonstrations. Where would we be without the march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge? However, if we are dedicated to being agents of God's will being done on earth as in heaven, then change becomes a lifetime proposition. Thus, we must ask, "What will sustain our intentions once the public fervor quiets down?" As Donna Schaper writes, "We need to light small fires that we can keep burning over a lifetime instead of trying to set the whole forest ablaze."

When my director said, "just go straight," he meant to live a more intentional life. What actions are worth doing every day and what must I let go of in order for those to become a habit which becomes a disposition which becomes part of one's character and enables one to be an agent of long-term change?

My concern is that the endemic racism of this country is so embedded that, in time, I will go back to my daily life and get stuck in what Thoreau called "quiet lives of desperation." Therefore, I am seeking repeatable actions I can take to maintain my commitment to be an agent of transformation for my sake and the world's sake and Christ's sake.