Follow me
In your footprints I walk
On the way

My grandfather was a farmer. He had 150 acres in Shackelford County; part pasture and part cultivated field. I loved to go to the field with him. We'd follow the cow path until we reached the field, and then walk to where he left the tractor. Sometimes we went to check the crops to see if it was time to harvest the grain, other times, we'd check the cattle.

I remember that Grandpa walked fast. At times, he was too fast for my little legs to follow and I would fall behind. I remember having to hurry to catch up. I also remember trying to walk directly in his footprints. I couldn't do it with a normal stride; I would have to extend my legs way out to get into the next footprint. He took long strides over the freshly plowed ground. I used to call the steps he took "fieldsteps."

In his weekly devotional, Brain McLaren used the imagery of walking in Jesus' footsteps as an illustration for following Jesus. Jesus entered our world to show us the way of being alive in God. His path went down the way of love and service. He not only talked the talk; he walked the walk. He broke the trail that we follow. In his footsteps, we walk.

Like my grandfather, the strides Jesus takes can be long ones. It can be difficult for us to get our feet from one to the next. His path leads to loving our enemies. His footsteps show the way of forgiving those who wrong us. He broke trail when he welcomed strangers and outcasts. Those long strides can be challenging for us.

When the footsteps seem too big, it is important for us to do one thing. Keep walking. Maybe, it takes us a couple of extra steps to make it to the next footprint, but stopping isn't an option. If we stop, we get stuck. We get stuck by hatred or prejudice or revenge. Stopping can also clog the pathway for those who come after us. The call is to take the next step.

The next time you think that it's too far to the next foot print, just do it. Take the next step. Put one foot in front of the next and follow Jesus.

Pastor Parnell