



Day 1

Walk This Way

Mark 10:21b: "Then come, follow me."

My Dad died, suddenly, when I was 28. My brother Steve was 34, and Dad died three days before my sister Julie's 15th birthday.

One of the many tasks in that dark void after an early death was going to the Social Security Administration to set up Mom's survivor benefits. The office then was in that large white building on Route 59 between Kent and Ravenna. Steve and I registered and took seats in a row of blue plastic chairs. One by one, the other people waiting got called back, and after a bit, a voice behind us said "Mister Scours?" We looked at each other, and since we were the only people there, we got up and turned toward the voice.

There was a sort of a human snowman, a very large man whose only exercise, it seemed to me, must have been chewing and walking the length of the hall to his office. Down the front of his broad white shirt were parallel trails where bits of breakfast and lunch had slalomed down the slope. Were they all from today's meals, or had he worn the shirt before? Either answer was alarming.

He turned and said, "Walk this way" as he led us to his desk. With every step, he vibrated like a living Jell-o mold. Death has a way of removing inhibitions – and good sense – so I said "I don't know if I can, but I'll try!" I don't think he heard me, but Steve did, and retelling this story helped us through our collective grief.

What he was lacking in hygiene he made up for in ability, and Mom's benefits began promptly and continued for her life. Many in Congress call these entitlements and threaten to take them away, but they are not; they are earnings, repaid, and the fruits of a sacred contract with our national government.

Jesus never asked us to worship him, or praise him, or deify him. He only asked that we follow him. My sincere prayer, one day at a time, is "I don't know if I can, but I'll try."

Prayer: Loving and living God, help me to follow Jesus in everything I think, say, and do. Amen.

– Jon Secaur