

## How Will They Know

Debie Thomas, who writes in *Journey with Jesus*, a web magazine-

this week included this story from a book by Rowan Williams,  
the former Archbishop of Canterbury.

Etty Hillesum was a young Jewish woman who lived in German occupied Holland-  
she was imprisoned and later died in Auschwitz.

Etty wrote these words

*“There must be someone to live through it all and bear witness to the fact that God lived,  
even in these times. And why should I not be that witness?”*

Williams described her commitment this way:

He says that she decided to occupy a certain place in the world,  
a place where others could somehow connect with God through her.

She took responsibility for making God credible in the world.

She took responsibility for God's believability.<sup>1</sup>

*Making God credible in the world, Taking responsibility for God's believability.*

Debie says she had been thinking about those phrases all week.

They got stuck in my head, too. –

Making God credible-      Is that what we're called to do?      Make God believable?

Think about it-

We're living in a time of unrest-      Where is God?

We're living in a time when centuries old pain is surfacing –

pain some of us were barely aware of-

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas, Debie. I Am Sending You. *Journey With Jesus*. June 7, 2020.

**and which demands healing! .**

**And besides that we're constantly having to defend against a mysterious virus-**

**an enemy about which we know very little-**

**Where is God?      Is God credible-      Believable?**

**What's *my* answer – *your* answer!**

**What are we called to do?**

**I believe that we're called- as Christians-(as growing Christians)**

**to stand at that place where the world's pain is being revealed-**

**Just as Jesus sent those first disciples – we're sent –**

**In the account of that sending in Matthew's gospel**

**it doesn't sound like a trip any of us would want to go on-**

**It couldn't have been any more basic-      or scary**

**Jesus called the disciples to him;    he gave them the authority to heal and to cure-    and he said**

**“Go! Tell people the good news- the Kingdom of heaven has come near-**

**Cure the sick- cleanse lepers- raise the dead- cast out demons-    and do it for free!**

**And by the way-      Stay wherever they'll let you-      Eat whatever they feed you-**

**Don't take a change of clothes! –and Don't take any money!**

**You'll be like sheep in the midst of wolves-      You'll be arrested- rejected-**

**Know that the Spirit of God will tell you what to say.**

**If they throw you out of one place- just go on to the next.**

**If you endure you'll be saved.**

**Is this what discipleship looks like?      Well, for some people it has looked exactly like that.**

**To be a disciple is costly.      It means we seek out the poor and the needy-      those who hurt.**

**It means that we work for justice for all people-    and we know that- at times-**

**we may be misunderstood.**

**And we know also- that we are loved with an everlasting love- as are all people everywhere.**

**So- are we willing to stand in places of pain- hurt-**

**to make God credible to the world- believable to the world?**

**A Franciscan Prayer**

**May God bless you with discomfort  
at easy answers, half truths and superficial relationships  
so that you may live deep within your heart.**

**May God bless you with anger  
at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people,  
so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.**

**May God bless you with tears  
to shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war,  
so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them  
and to turn their pain into joy.**

**And may God bless you with enough foolishness  
to believe that you can make a difference in the world,  
So that you can do what others claim cannot be done  
to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.**

**Amen.**

**I challenge us all to pray for that kind of foolishness.**