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“Mom, this is boring.” There it was. The sentence I’ve dreaded hearing since Sierra learned to talk. I’m not even sure what was boring – a TV show, a ride in the car, or a sermon given by one of her parents. That word got to me. I grew up in a family where that “B word” was pretty much forbidden. If my parents heard my sisters or me saying that we were bored, we were quickly given jobs and chores to do, to alleviate our boredom, and to change our attitudes. We learned that if you’re not getting anything out of something, it’s often because you’re not putting anything into it. It’s only when you invest in something that you get meaningful returns.

As a pastor, this isn’t the first time I’ve heard that something is boring. I’ve heard that worship is boring, meetings are boring, confirmation is boring, sermons are boring. But while one person says something is boring, another person is captivated by it. What’s the difference? Sometimes it’s about our expectations, sometimes it’s about what’s going on in our lives, but more often it’s about being invested and involved.

To me, watching golf on TV is boring. I don’t golf, so I don’t know the game well, and I’m not invested in it. But when I start to follow one player, to understand the complexities of the sport, suddenly, it becomes much more interesting. And if I started playing golf, I’m sure I’d become even more interested in watching it.

I learned early on that church is not a spectator sport. You don’t go to worship to watch others pray or sing. You don’t get involved in church to watch other people build relationships with God. Watching other people “do church” is definitely boring. Jesus gave us the Church so we could participate – worship, serve, and grow. Being a part of the Church means being invested in it, in giving what you have to share, and in receiving the blessings and rewards that come from being invested. And as is the case with so many things in life, you get out of it what you put into it.

When church stuff seems boring, it’s usually because we’re treating our faith as a spectator sport – expecting others to entertain us, to feed us, and to do church for us. But when we start to think, to ask questions, to understand, and to help, the very thing that seemed boring may suddenly become interesting. No, not every sermon will bowl you over. Not every ministry opportunity will change your life. But when you become invested, thinking about the words you’re hearing and singing, sharing your time and talents, taking interest in the people around you, you may grow and find God in very unexpected ways.

In Christ, Pastor Jennifer