

The Laity Minute by Kelly Price

I am the Director for the graduate Masters of Digital Marketing program at East Tennessee State University. Basically, I am in charge of all the students in the program and I make sure they are successful while they are with us. Another one of my duties is to talk to potential students who are thinking about applying and enrolling in the program. Most of the time, I talk to them on the phone to discuss the program and answer any questions they may have about it. As I speak to potential students on the phone, I field all kinds of questions. I will give you one guess the #1 question I receive from them.

No, it is not about the class content. It isn't about the online format, the faculty, how to pay for the program, or even about job placement after program completion. The #1 question I receive is, **"How long will it take me to finish?"**

Granted, this is a fair question. Our students are digital marketing practitioners and professionals with full time jobs, families, and other obligations. However, too often I hear they want to finish as fast as they can and graduate. Yes, they are talking about graduating before they even begin.

Our students take some very exciting courses such as social media, consumer behavior, and analytics. Each course is rich with current information, classmates who are excellent sources of learning, and an experience of knowledge that is unmatched. But, some students don't think of that. They skip past it all and look right at the finish line. I understand the desire to finish. I also understand having goals and completing goals you have set for yourself. However, what about the journey?

Think about journeys taken in the Bible. Mary. Abraham. Moses. Ruth. Can you imagine their experiences as they took these journeys? What did they learn? Who did they meet along the way and what were they thinking as they went? The journey was as important as the finish and in some cases, more important.

Our journeys with God are just as valuable as the end goal, whatever that goal is for you. Sometimes that goal is to simply get to make it though the night. Sometimes it is to pray each day. Whatever it is, keep the goal in mind, but remember the journey is the thing where the learning and growth occurs. So, it doesn't matter how long it takes you to finish. It's the fact that you took the journey.

Trust in God with all your heart and do not rely on your own understanding. Acknowledge God in all your ways and God will make your path straight. ~ Proverbs 3:5-6

Peace.

Kelly