

A Follow Up Bible Study

Building on the Messages of the Lessons from the 4th Sunday after Pentecost

Peace Ev. Lutheran Church

July 1, 2020

Warm Up

Share: What's the first thing that comes to your mind when I say "missions"?

1. Sermon for June 28, 2020

Text: **Matthew 9:35-10:8**

Theme: **Do you see what Jesus sees?**

Share your questions or comments regarding Sunday's sermon?

2. Jesus is a *man of action*. In the Greek, *Jesus traveled* is an imperfect active verb. That paints the picture of the Savior on the move. Now look at his itinerary: teaching, proclaiming, and healing every disease and sickness. His mind, eyes, and heart are active, taking the time to observe, evaluate, and have compassion for the individuals in the crowd. Then he acts on this activity, telling the group of followers (no doubt more than the 12) to pray for workers. He doesn't stop there. He acts, appointing the 12 Apostles and sends them out to get busy harvesting.

What are your impressions and takeaways from this observation?

3. The NIV and others translate *harassed and helpless*. The EHV translates *troubled and downcast*. These descriptions speak about how they felt, but also about how they were treated to put them in this state. Which words sound like *results*? Which words sound like *cause*? Also note the implied cause (how they were treated) that would result in these states of mind.

Jesus observed: *they were troubled and downcast, like sheep without a shepherd*. Why are shepherdless sheep *troubled and downcast*?

What awaits (short-term & long-term) people who claim to be Christians, but don't think they need to be shepherded, especially those who openly reject being shepherded in God's kingdom?

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4. Matthew noted: *When [Jesus] saw the crowds, he was moved with compassion for them.*
Jesus' emotional response revealed his orientation or mindset. Where was his focus? Did he identify first with himself or with them?

How would a self-absorbed person feel or react? (The sermon noted 2 extremes.)

We are tempted to say that our circumstances *make me feel* this way or that. As if we have no responsibility or control over our emotional reactions. Some deal with negative or shameful emotional responses by covering them up or trying to bury them. This is very self-destructive.

Realizing that my emotional response to a circumstance flows from my orientation or mindset, I can change my emotional response by changing my perspective. God sets me free by changing my perspective to see things the way God sees them, i.e. practicing repentance.

Here Jesus models *love your neighbor as yourself*. Love is *other-oriented*. Sin is *self-absorbed*. My emotional reaction to a person or a situation is **not** an **unchangeable reality**. My feelings **reveal** my orientation. This calls for the self-examination of my baptismal life of repentance - turning away from making it *all about me*, to making it about Jesus and the new life he's given me. If something annoys me, that's a strong indication that I'm focussed on myself and/or my sense of what is fair (a law orientation). When I shift my focus, trying to understand the experience of others, I can view their circumstance as God does. Seeing their hurts, empathizing with them and their struggles & sins, as I struggle with my sins and blindness.

How does this observation help us...

- a) evaluate our mindset/orientation by reflecting on our emotional reactions to a situation;
- b) change our feelings by changing our mindset/orientation toward our situation;
- c) seek balance between what others may want from us and our physical and/or emotional limitations? Recall how Jesus dealt with this and how he helped his disciples adjust their negative reactions to others.

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5. Discuss Jesus' use of the image *the harvest is plentiful*. Why does Jesus call it a *harvest*? What reality is Jesus revealing, which we might miss.

6. Jesus doesn't want us to mindlessly plead for harvesters because he commanded us to do so. (i.e. Law motivated) What is critical to compel us to properly pester God for workers?

7. *Apostle* means *one sent on behalf of an authority*. What did Jesus authorize these men to do on his behalf and what powers did he give them for their work?

The list of Apostles makes for an interesting **personal** study. They are listed in the same 3 sets of 4 in all accounts, but using different names for some of them. On your own fill in this chart.

	Matthew 10:2-4	Mark 3:1-19	Luke 6:14-16	Acts 1:13
Group 1				
Group 2				
Group 3				

8. Jesus' instructions in 10:5-8 were different than the instructions he gave them after his resurrection. Why these limitations at this time?

Jesus said, *preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near!'* Since 2,000 years have passed and the time of New Heaven and Earth has not begun, we know Jesus didn't mean Judgment Day was about to happen. So what did this message mean?

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9. Jesus said, *Freely you have received; freely give*. What does this mean? Some have misused this to say that *preachers should never be supported or salaried*. Recalling Jesus' instructions (Lk 10:7) when he sent out the 72, what insights do they shed on this question?

First Lesson: Exodus 19:2-8a

10. The heart of this text is: ⁴ *'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself*.

This is chiefly a gospel message. How do you know that?

Explain: *I carried you on eagles' wings*

Explain how, *You have seen what I did to the Egyptians* is chiefly gospel with a little law.

11. So, how did Israel become Yahweh's *special treasure*?

How did *listening to my voice and keeping my covenant* cultivate and preserve their (and our) status as God's *special treasure*? What insight does this offer on Israel's claims today?

12. What does it mean to *be a kingdom of priests and my holy nation*?

13. All of Israel (leaders speaking for them?) responded, *Everything that the LORD has said, we will do*. What inspired this response? Why did they so quickly forget this?

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Second Lesson: Romans 5:6-11

11. People don't like to think of themselves as *helpless* and *ungodly*. That's insulting. To many it seems too harsh and unreasonable. *After all, there's a little good in all of us. - And children are so innocent. - Besides, we have enough problems with guilt. Don't add to it.*

Paul doesn't back away from this reality. Not only because it is true, but also because if we try to make ourselves less helpless and ungodly, we miss God's shocking and totally unexpected undeserved love. And in the process we undermine the absolute certainty over a) our reconciliation with God, and b) that by Jesus' life we are daily saved.

Explain how our *helpless and ungodly* condition confirms our certainty. (Hint: if our daily and eternal rescue relies on us we have good reason to doubt.)

Explore and explain: ¹⁰ *For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, **it is even more certain that, since we have been reconciled, we will be saved by his life.*** ¹¹ *And **not only is this so, but we also go on rejoicing confidently in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received this reconciliation.***