

6.14.20 Pastor Jordan Gades Sermon Matthew 9:35-10:8 [9-23]

We have a strange dilemma that we are called into as Christians. We have to live in 2 worlds at the same time. WE are always holding them both up for everyone else to see. We live in this world where we are blessed. Where we are loved beyond time and measure. Where we always have something to hold onto and something that is holding onto us. We have this world where we are safe and protected. This world where we know that we are precious, that we are treasured possession. We live and breathe and sleep in this world where our faith has led us into grace upon grace. Where we are a holy people, set apart. Our world is the Kingdom of God. Our God reigns supreme. All things are ordered for the good. This world is the soil beneath our toes, the water that rains down on us. The work that we do and the beds where we lay our heads. It is not hard to see the kingdom of God when looking out over the fresh pristine lakes and rivers that dot our backyards and surrounding countryside. It's easy to see God at work in our friends and family who work to love and support us right here. We live in a land of plenty and we see God's blessings raining down. This kingdom lives and runs on love and hope and it is beautiful. This is the kingdom that Jesus talks about with his disciples but Jesus doesn't just talk about that kingdom. He speaks about another kingdom in rebellion with the ruler and creator of all.

That is the other world in which we live. We live in this world where we fight amongst each other and somehow think that is how God created and ordered this world. We breathe in this air that becomes more and more toxic to us and our children because our dominion of this planet somehow means that radical exploitation of limited resources and radical exploitation of other human beings is completely justified. We live in this world and proclaim our own justice day and night rather than following in our God's footsteps.

That could be a tricky thing to understand, following in God's footsteps, don't get me wrong. Culture and other denominations blur understandings and so knowing the ways of our God and our faith can be incredibly difficult. Of Course, the bible is a fantastic resource to eliminate so much confusion. And we as Lutherans, when we are trying to figure out what God would have us do in our daily lives always go first to Jesus and how he lived his day to day life. We go to Jesus because Jesus is God made known. Jesus, is for a lack of another way to put it, the most practical way for us to know what God wants us to do because it's what God actually did.

And so, in our gospel today, we have Jesus sending out his disciples into the world, out into the kingdom of God and out into this world that is still in open rebellion against God. Into this world, God sends his disciples and God sends us.

This is an apt reading for today because we are also starting the season of Pentecost, the season of being sent into the world, the season of growing and working in and with our faith. This season which won't end until November, this long season which marks for us the day to day of our lives of faith as the people of God living in the Kingdom of God.

So how are we supposed to live out our dual citizenship. How are we to move through the choices of our day to day life. Jesus says it pretty well.

As you go, proclaim the good news, "The kingdom of heaven has come near." Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment.

Pretty straight forward really. Heal this world, heal the kingdom, make it whole. Not a lot of wiggle room there. Go and heal the world in the Name of Jesus the Christ, the Son of God. And do not get paid. This ending here

You received without payment; give without payment.

That is what Paul is talking about in Romans

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God.

Go and give to this world because you have been given so much. Go and heal this world. And Jesus even goes so far and to tell what to do when we encounter those who would fight that message.

“shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town”

You have been given grace now act with grace towards all you meet. Be persistent in your grace of others.

As I was thinking through this sermon and reading these lessons I couldn't help but think of the story that Carter Dox shared a month ago on high school recognition Sunday. About what he learned by just helping pay for someone's groceries and how that act of grace could be an act of healing, how it could change a person's day or life through one small moment. When he shared that story about how you can never know what a person is going through and how you should always give them the time of day, I saw a young man who had grappled with his faith and heard God speaking to him.

It's through giving that grow. It's through listening that we learn. It's through showing love that we quench hate. Our world needs that of us right now. We were given new life as beloved children of God for this very purpose. We are to bring the 2 kingdoms together so that none will fear, so that all will be full, and we can all join in the unending song of creation together in peace. Amen.