

PENTECOST (DISCIPLESHIP BEGINNINGS)

JUNE 14, 2020

MATTHEW 9:35-10:8

The first half of the Christian year is about Jesus. Advent begins with the Old Testament prophecies of Jesus' birth. Then we move to stories that connect the birth (Christmas), the Resurrection (Easter) and the sending of Jesus' spirit (Pentecost).

Now we move into the second half of the Church Year, the Sundays after Pentecost. These Sundays are not a chronological remembrance of Jesus. They are meant to be inspirational, lessons on life, Godly experiences, ethical considerations, historical understandings, early Church views. As congregations, we are to consider what is happening in our world and nation, such as the corona virus and racism. We are to bring the Word to the world.

For example, as I read the Matthew text for today (Pentecost 2), here are my thoughts. I title them Discipleship Beginnings.

1. The work of Jesus is now to be put to work by all of us, his disciples: to preach and heal (come on quickly, you epidemiologists and scientists), to have compassion, to be a shepherd.
2. Jesus keeps calling. He gives his disciples authority. He names the twelve. Can he name number 13 and 14, that is, you and me? Are we ready for the present world?
3. Jesus sends out his disciples at first to the Israelites (not now specifically for the Gentiles or Samaritans). What does that mean for us today? Perhaps He means for us to bring back the *nones* (those who were once Christian or at least raised Christian, perhaps our very children) Perhaps also it means changing some of our lifestyles which could include racism and white supremacy and anti-science and conspiracy theories. In other words, we need to find new ways to bring the Word to our individual worlds.

What I have done is to read through the gospel, let my imagination rise, then go to the depths, see where it leads and then try to express it in words. I invite you to do the same.

Welcome to Pentecost, a time of spiritual renewal, vivid imagination, creativity and a willingness to share where God is leading you.

Prayer: (ancient) Almighty God, your only son was taken into the heavens, that He might fill all things. We are like empty sacks. Lord, fill us Amen.