

Bethel Christian Church - Sunday Sermon (June 14, 2020)

Being a Disciple in Ordinary Time (Matthew 9:35-10:8) by Baek Hee Kim

- **Church Calendar and Ordinary Time**
 - Church observes the liturgical year, also known as the Church Calendar or the Church Year. The Church Year consists of the cycle of liturgical seasons, including festivals and seasons such as Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost. While the first half of the Church Year includes special seasons, which listed above, the second half of the Year, the period between Pentecost and Advent, we do not have special seasons. These Sundays called First Sunday after Pentecost, Second Sunday after Pentecost, and so on. This second period is also called Ordinary Time.
 - The word “ordinary” implies something normal and not special. Yet, this most extended season of the Church Year is very special. Ordinary Time focuses on the mission to the world while the first half of the Church Year focuses on the beginning of Jesus movement and the early church. Thus, some say the central message of Ordinary Time is the mission to the world.
 - Today is the second week of Ordinary Time. We will contemplate the theme being a disciple in Ordinary Time.
- **Mission to the ordinary lives**
 - Matthew, chapter 10 is a narrative about sending out the disciples. The twelve disciples were to be sent by Jesus, in the same sense, to be sent as Jesus. In the same way, we are sent by Jesus and as Jesus. Where and for what purpose?
 - Where? In 10:5, Jesus says, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” This verse makes the reader wonder since this verse is the exact opposite of what the Bible says and what Jesus teaches. The fundamental theology of the New Testament is the mission to the world beyond Judean territory. Yet again, this verse is the exact opposite of the notion. Where do we go for the mission?
 - Eugene Peterson interprets/translates this verse, “Don’t begin by traveling to some far-off place to convert unbelievers. And don’t try to be dramatic by tackling some public enemy. Go to the lost, confused people right here in the neighborhood.”
 - So, Jesus sends us out to right here in the neighborhood. Matthew 9:36 and 37 says, “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. He said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.” In Jesus’ time, there were many religious leaders and synagogues, but they fail to function for the ordinary people; instead, the religious leaders only focused on strengthening and maintaining their privileges and social status. Ordinary people were like the lost and the confused. Jesus does not want us to do a sort of grand mission in a dramatic way. Instead, God wants each of us to be a true church for a small number of people but real people we can reach and touch, and we can walk by. Do not miss that the global mission must first begin in our own neighbors.
- **Proclamation and Healing**
 - What, then, we need to do as a disciple for ordinary lives? According to 9:35 and 10:6-7, our mission is to proclaim the gospel message and to serve and heal our neighbors.
 - Proclamation. We try to tell others in word and deed what God has done and is doing for them, that God has come into the world and is inviting people to unite in the task of redeeming and renewing. True happiness and a meaningful life are to live in response to God’s call/invitation through love and sacrifice. We try to testify this truth through our word and deed.
 - Healing. Healing means to bring health to the sick, raise the dead (in various ways), touch the untouchable, and king out the demons. Many people find themselves bout by behavior, patterns, or structures they cannot escape. In one dimension, healing means making people free from powers that constrain us and prevent us from living full human lives. And one of the most important ways to make people free is to be with them and to love them as ourselves.
- **Ordinary Time**
 - From now on, we will live in Ordinary Time until Advent. I pray that we will remember that each of us is a disciple sent to the people right here next to me in our daily lives and that we will proclaim the kingdom of God is here in our love, sacrifice, compassion, and solidarity.