

2nd Sunday after Pentecost June 14, 2020

1st Sunday after Trinity Proper 6 (11)*
Lectionary Year A – the Gospel of Matthew

Living the Lutheran Lectionary

A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.

An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.

Available on line at:

- ✦ www.bethlehemlutheranchurchparma.com/biblestudies
- ✦ Through www.Facebook.com at “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”, “Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma”, or “Harold Weseloh”
- ✦ All links in this on-line copy are active and can be reached using Ctrl+Click

Gather and be blessed:

- ✦ **Thursdays at 10 AM(5pm Kenya/Uganda):** At Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44134 and on line through <https://zoom.us/j/815200301>
- ✦ **Fridays at 7 PM in a house church setting:** For details, contact Harold Weseloh at puritaspastor@hotmail.com
- ✦ **Tuesdays at 1:00 PM (8pm Kenya time)** via Zoom to the Lutheran School of Theology - Nyamira , Kenya
- ✦ **On Facebook through Messenger** in a discussion group shared by people throughout the United States, Kenya and Uganda. Contact Harold Weseloh on Facebook Messenger.



<https://newlifennarrabri.wordpress.com/2017/06/15/reflection-on-matthew-935-108/>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 571 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 245

“God loved the world so that He gave”

“Little is known about the origins of this beloved hymn. Recent research suggests that the hymn was published in a 1778 Pomeranian hymnal. Whoever wrote it has enabled Christians to sing of the Gospel and the implications of the Gospel for the believer’s life.

Text **Stanza 1** is a paraphrase of John 3:16. The stanza puts the verse in poetic form. **Stanzas 2** and following begin explaining the implications of having faith resting on John 3:16... In **stanza 3**, God’s good and gracious will is proclaimed. The Holy Spirit’s work is highlighted in stanza 3... **Stanzas 4 and 5** calm fearful and anxious hearts. Sickness and death make us anxious, worried and fearful of life’s end. Questioning whether or not God forgives also creates fearful and anxious hearts. **Stanza 6** concludes the hymn with a trinitarian reference. As with all stanzas marked with a triangle in our hymnal, we stand in reverence as we sing this trinitarian doxology...” study by Scott R. Schilbe.

- <https://www.lcms.org/worship/hymn-of-the-day-studies>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYKVPJE1D2U> Piano with page from TLH, [Andrew Remillard](#)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJr6b1RMigA> Gr. 8 - God Loved the World So That He Gave · One in Christ: Hymns of the Season, Concordia Publishing House

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001
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***The Proper to be used on each of the Sundays after Pentecost (except for Trinity Sunday) is determined by the calendar date of that Sunday. Thus, in any year, the Proper for the Sunday after Trinity Sunday (the Second Sunday after Pentecost) is the numbered Proper (number 3 through number 8), the calendar date of which falls on that Sunday, or is closest to it, whether before or after. Thereafter, the Propers are used consecutively...”** <https://www.bcponline.org/Collects/proper.html> **Book of Common Prayer**

(In other words, count backwards from the last Sunday of the church year which will always be Proper29 (34). The number in parentheses is for the Proper according to the Eastern Orthodox calendar which begins counting before Pentecost. Read the following Wikipedia article, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox_liturgical_calendar, for a primer on the liturgical year in the Eastern Orthodox Church.)

During the season of Trinity/Pentecost, the Revised Common Lectionary offers two tracks. One has OT readings that are semi-continuous, following major stories/themes beginning in Year A with Genesis and ending in Year C with the later prophets. The second follows the complementary historical tradition of thematically pairing the OT reading with the Gospel reading. <https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/>

O. T. - “All that the LORD has spoken we will do.”

Psalm – “For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever”

Epistle – “since we have been justified by faith, we^a have peace with God...”

Gospel – “*the laborers are few; ³⁸ therefore pray earnestly to the Lord*”

Exodus 19:2-8; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7) or Exodus 19:2-8a
(Next week: Jeremiah 20:7-13; RCL, Genesis 21:8-21 or Jeremiah 20:7-13)

During the four years that I was a student at Luther Seminary I can recall only one assignment which involved memorization of Scripture. In his course on the Pentateuch, Professor John Milton required us to memorize Exodus 19:4-6.

Milton's pedagogical and theological instincts were correct. These words about Exodus, Covenant and People of God express what is central to the faith of the Old Testament and in fact set the stage for the Good News announced in the New Testament...

The text for today consists of a word from God (4-6) set in a narrative framework (19:2-3; 7-8)...

Central to this text is the message from God in vv. 4-6. The introductory formula, "Thus you shall say" is reminiscent of the "Thus says the LORD" formula used by the prophets.

This word from God in 4-6 recognizes that there is already an established relationship between God and the ones addressed. These words are not aimed at just any people, but at the "house of Jacob," the "Israelites." (3). These are not words which God speaks **about** these people, but this is I-you language, where God addresses the people directly: "**You** have seen what **I** did...how **I** bore **you**...and brought **you** to **myself**..." etc..."

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=89 James Limburg Professor Emeritus of Old Testament, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn.

Israel at Mount Sinai

19 On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. ² They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain, ³ while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: ⁴ You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵ Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be

my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; ⁶and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”

⁷ So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. ⁸ All the people answered together and said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do.” And Moses reported the words of the people to the LORD...

“In Exodus 19, the children of Israel arrive at the beginning place, Mount Sinai.

Their arrival marks the fulfillment of the promise God made to Moses at the burning bush: “I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain” (Exodus 3:12). The promise has come full circle, and, yet, the true journey is just beginning: the covenant relationship between Israel and God.

The first eighteen chapters of Exodus create the setting for the covenant. From the desperate situation of the Israelite slaves in Egypt to their miraculous rescue at the Sea and their terrible hardships in the wilderness, God has met their needs every step of the way. A point God makes in this reading: “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself” (19:4). This is a point that will be driven home time and again throughout the Pentateuch. It is the basis for the Decalogue: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery...” (20:2). God has proven to be powerful and dedicated to the well-being of the children of Israel as they’ve journeyed to the foot of this holy mountain. The covenant made at Sinai is thus born and nurtured in a matrix of trust and steadfast love.

The content of the covenant unfolds in the chapters that follow. In 19:5-6, the specifics of the covenant are only alluded to: “if you obey my voice and keep my covenant” and “you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.” These statements make clear that the people will be required to adopt particular behaviors and to follow certain laws as part of the covenant relationship... Obedience to the covenant promises to change the people from helpless slaves to “a people holy to the Lord your God.”...

This reading from Exodus empowers a preacher to call people to Christian community by casting a vision of the life that is possible when we devote ourselves to the relationships we share with God and with each other. Such a devotion will involve immersing ourselves in the communal practices of the church. It will require us to examine the habits of our lives in order to discern which of these habits help and which ones hinder us as we seek to grow as a people dedicated to God and each other. Both of these disciplines will lead to nothing less than the deep fulfillment and healing that are characteristic of abundant life. It is to this vision of abundant life that the people of Israel respond enthusiastically in verse 8: “Everything that the Lord has spoken, we will do!”

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3308
[Callie Plunket-Brewton](#) Campus Minister, University of North Alabama, Florence, Ala.

Psalm 100; RCL, Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19 or Psalm 100 (Psalm 91:1-10 (11-16); RCL, Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17 or Psalm 69:7-10, (11-15), 16-18)

One can almost hear the outbreak of jubilation described in this summons to praise in Psalm 100. This psalm calls the entire community to lift praises to God. This psalm is the last of a group of what are known as enthronement psalms (93, and 95-99). These psalms celebrate with an understanding that the LORD (Yahweh) is God.

When LORD is spelled in all caps it signifies the personal name of God (compared to the title Lord in which capital and small letters are used). (A reference to the format used in NRSV and several other translations) LORD is the name God used during the story of “Moses and the Bush That Did Not Burn” in Exodus 3. God’s response is a wordplay on Moses’ reaction to God’s call to deliver the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. Moses conveys his reluctance to answer God’s call in Exodus 3:11 when he asks “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” God, who does not answer Moses’ question, responds by assuring Moses of his presence (Exodus 3:12). Moses, still not satisfied, asks God’s name (Exodus 3:13). God answers, “I Am Who I Am” (Exodus 3:14). The four references to LORD in Psalm 100 in verses 1, 2, 3, and 5 are a reference to God’s deliverance of and covenant with the Israelites through Moses.

The psalm begins with a notation (a superscription) that this is a Psalm of Thanksgiving. In ancient Israel, the thanks offering was a voluntary offering given as a sign of gratitude to God. Worshippers are admonished not just to praise God, but to offer praise in a spirit of thanksgiving. (continued after the reading)

His Steadfast Love Endures Forever A Psalm for giving thanks.

100 **Make** a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth!

² **Serve** the LORD with gladness!

Come into his presence with singing!

³ Know that the LORD, he is God!

It is he who made us, and we are his;^[a]

we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

⁴ **Enter** his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise!

Give thanks to him; **bless** his name!

⁵ For the LORD is good;

his steadfast love endures forever,

and his faithfulness to all generations.

a. [Psalm 100:3](#) Or *and not we ourselves*

“The psalmist uses seven different verbs to call to the community to worship: make, serve, come, know, enter, give thanks, and bless. Although there are moments when we need to be still and quiet in the presence of the LORD, this is not one of them. Surely the psalmist was imagining what it might sound like when all the earth is praising the LORD at the same time. What a joyful sound, indeed, that would be! This is the kind of praise that so frightened an attacking army it began attacking itself instead of attacking Israel during the reign of King Jehoshaphat. (See 2 Chronicles 20.) On this occasion, the choir was in front of the army. What an awesome reminder of the power of praise. What an awesome reminder of the responsibility of the music ministry of the Church.

The sound of joy that arises from deep within cannot be stifled. This is the sound that conveys the wonder of simply being alive. Affirming this sense of joy, the psalmist admonishes those assembled to worship and serve God with gladness. (In Hebrew, “worship” and “serve” are the same verb.) This is the gladness that breaks forth fully aware of the realities of life. This is the gladness that enables one to come into God’s presence with a voice raised to sing praises to our Creator.

Just as there is time for silence before God, there is also time for lament, but this is not it. The praise of this psalm reminds us of a familiar spiritual which says, “If I don’t praise him the rock’s gonna cry out glory and honor, ain’t got time to die!”

This **threefold call to praise (make, serve, come)** is followed by an explanation of the **reason behind this outburst of praise.** The community is to give praise to God simply because God exists, simply because God is. With this admonition, the psalmist acknowledges that life begins with God. God created us. God is to be worshipped because God is the Creator who calls Israel into covenant. In other words, God is to be worshipped for who God is, not just for what God has done. **God is a powerful God! The psalmist is glad to be counted among God’s people.** The reference to sheep conveys an assurance that not only is God present, but God provides for His sheep, including the psalmist.

The psalmist does not stop with this explanatory interlude. **The psalmist again gives a threefold summons to praise (enter, give thanks, bless).** Worshippers are to enter with thanksgiving, praise and blessing for the LORD. This is praise of participation, there are no spectators here. Everyone is to be engaged in the particulars of praising the LORD. The second reason for praise is given in verse 5. God is to be worshipped because of God’s goodness, steadfast love, and faithfulness to all generations. In other words, God is to be worshipped not just for what God has done, but for what God will do for humanity in the future.

- <http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org/PopupLectionaryReading.asp?LRID=98> Alfie Wines, Guest Lectionary Commentator, Pastor, Grace United Methodist Church, Fort Worth Texas

Romans 5:6-15; RCL, Romans 5:1-8 (Romans 6:12-23; RCL, Romans 6:1b-11)

The continuous reading of Paul’s letter to the Romans for sixteen Sundays (14 this year), which the ecumenical lectionary prescribes, offers the preacher and the congregation an occasion for exploring a spiritual and theological classic. “This epistle,” wrote Martin Luther, “is really the chief part of the New Testament, and is truly the purest gospel.” Luther advised persons to learn it by heart and declared:

“In this epistle we thus find most abundantly the things that a Christian ought to know, namely, what is law, gospel, sin, punishment, grace, faith, righteousness, Christ, God, good works, love, hope, and the cross; and also how we are to conduct ourselves toward everyone, be he righteous or sinner, strong or weak, friend or foe—and even toward our own selves....It appears that [Paul] wanted in this one epistle to sum up briefly the whole Christian and evangelical doctrine.”

According to this passage, Luther looked upon Romans primarily as a scriptural repository of doctrinal concepts. (Martin Luther, “Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans,” Luther’s Works...)

The sixteen lectionary readings begin at Romans 3:21 and end at 14:9. The loss at the beginning and end of the letter is unfortunate, but the readings assigned are powerful and deserve a hearing in the church...

- http://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/content/pdfs/13-2_Literature/13-2_Hultgren.pdf
Arland J Hultgren, Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota

5 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we^[a] have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ²Through him we have also obtained access by faith^[b] into this grace in which we stand, and we^[c] rejoice^[d] in hope of the glory of God. ³Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Death in Adam, Life in Christ

¹²Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men^[e] because all sinned— ¹³for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. ¹⁴Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was

not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.

¹⁶ And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. ¹⁷ For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ Therefore, as one trespass^[i] led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness^[g] leads to justification and life for all men.

¹⁹ For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. ²⁰ Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, ²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- a. [Romans 5:1](#) Some manuscripts *let us*
- b. [Romans 5:2](#) Some manuscripts omit *by faith*
- c. [Romans 5:2](#) Or *let us*; also verse [3](#)
- d. [Romans 5:2](#) Or *boast*; also verses [3](#), [11](#)
- e. [Romans 5:12](#) The Greek word *anthropoi* refers here to both men and women; also twice in verse [18](#)
- f. [Romans 5:18](#) Or *the trespass of one*
- g. [Romans 5:18](#) Or *the act of righteousness of one*

“In **chapter 5**, St. Paul comes to the fruits and works of faith, namely: joy, peace, love for God and for all people; in addition: assurance, steadfastness, confidence, courage, and hope in sorrow and suffering. All of these follow where faith is genuine, because of the overflowing good will that God has shown In Christ: he had him die for us before we could ask him for it, yes, even while we were still his enemies. Thus we have established that faith, without any good works, makes just. It does not follow from that, however, that we should not do good works; rather it means that morally upright works do not remain lacking. About such works the "works-holy" people know nothing; they invent for themselves their own works in which are neither peace nor joy nor assurance nor love nor hope nor steadfastness nor any kind of genuine Christian works or faith.

Next St. Paul makes a digression, a pleasant little side-trip, and relates where both sin and justice, death and life come from. He opposes these two: Adam and Christ. What he wants to say is that Christ, a second Adam, had to come in order to make us heirs of his justice

through a new spiritual birth in faith, just as the old Adam made us heirs of sin through the old fleshy birth.

St. Paul proves, by this reasoning, that a person cannot help himself by his works to get from sin to justice any more than he can prevent his own physical birth. St. Paul also proves that the divine law, which should have been well-suited, if anything was, for helping people to obtain justice, not only was no help at all when it did come, but it even increased sin. Evil human nature, consequently, becomes more hostile to it; the more the law forbids it to indulge its own desires, the more it wants to. Thus the law makes Christ all the more necessary and demands more grace to help human nature.”

➤ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/luther/romans/5.html> Martin Luther

Matthew 9:35-10:8(9-20); RCL, Matthew 9:35-10:8(9-23) (Matthew 10:5a, 21-33; RCL, Matthew 10:4-39)

“The parallel pattern of behavior between Jesus and his apostles is nowhere more striking than in Matthew's Gospel.¹

In this passage the narration zooms in, first on Jesus himself (9:35-36), then on the disciples in general (9:37-38), then the twelve apostles by name and vocation (10:1-8). With the movement from Jesus' own ministry of teaching, preaching, and healing (9:35) to that of his followers we might expect a thick line to be drawn between him and his "apostles" (the only occurrence of this word in Matthew). There is only one Jesus, after all, and even his closest followers are but a pale reflection..." (continued after the reading)

“The Holy Gospel beginning in the 9th Chapter of St. Matthew”

Jesus Heals a Paralytic Verses 1-8

Jesus Calls Matthew Verses 9-13

A Question About Fasting Verses 14-17

A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed Verses 18-26

Jesus Heals Two Blind Men Verses 27-31

Jesus Heals a Man Unable to Speak Verses 32-34

The Harvest Is Plentiful, the Laborers Few Verses 35-38

³⁵ And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed

and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, ***“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸ therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”***

The Twelve Apostles Verses 1-4

10 And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. ² The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;^[a] ⁴ Simon the Zealot,^[b] and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve Apostles Verses 5-15

⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, ***“Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, ⁶ but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷ And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’^[c] ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers,^[d] cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay. ⁹ Acquire no gold or silver or copper for your belts, ¹⁰ no bag for your journey, or two tunics^[e] or sandals or a staff, for the laborer deserves his food. ¹¹ And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it and stay there until you depart. ¹² As you enter the house, greet it. ¹³ And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴ And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. ¹⁵ Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.***

Persecution Will Come Verses 16-25

¹⁶ ***“Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. ¹⁷ Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, ¹⁸ and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. ¹⁹ When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to***

*say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour.
²⁰ For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you...*

Have No Fear Verses 26-33

Rewards Verses 40-42

“This is the Gospel of the Lord” “Praise to You, O Christ”

- a. [Matthew 10:3](#) Some manuscripts *Lebbaeus*, or *Lebbaeus called Thaddaeus*
- b. [Matthew 10:4](#) Greek *kananaios*, meaning *zealot*
- c. [Matthew 10:7](#) Or *The kingdom of heaven has come near*
- d. [Matthew 10:8](#) *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see [Leviticus 13](#)
- e. [Matthew 10:10](#) Greek *chiton*, a long garment worn under the cloak next to the skin

“Just look at the makeup of the twelve: the “first” apostle Peter will deny the Lord three times and the last apostle Judas will betray him to death, while two apostles in between held opposite positions on the Roman occupation (tax collector Matthew worked for them, while Simon the Cananaean or “zealot” worked against them). And yet the passage ends where it begins, but this time with these assorted apostles now entrusted with Jesus’ work of proclamation (10:7) and healing (10:8).

The litany of powers designating the apostles in 10:8 could double for Jesus’ own resume: “cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons.” Jesus not only sends them out with power to authenticate the kingdom’s nearness but to announce it by using the very same words as their teacher: “The kingdom of heaven has come near” (10:7; Jesus in 4:17; John in 3:2). In Matthew, Jesus’ followers include the original audience as well as us. We are expected to resemble him in word and deed. To be sent *by* Jesus is, in some sense, to be sent *as* Jesus...

Sometimes lost in the comparisons and contrasts between the lists of apostles (see Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13) is the fact that the naming scenes occur in quite different settings. After receiving their apostolic commission in Mark’s Gospel, it says quite unremarkably that “Jesus went home” (3:20). Luke’s appointment of the apostles has a bit more detail. Jesus spends a whole night in prayer (6:12-13), yet immediately after they are named Jesus accompanies them down the mountain to begin his “sermon on the plain” (6:20-49). The actual sending of the “twelve” in Luke comes later (9:1-6; cf. 10:1-24). The anticipation with which we may have looked upon their prayerful selection goes unfulfilled, or it is at least postponed.

With Matthew, we encounter something altogether different. Jesus seems to be in the thick of fulfilling his Father’s mission—preaching, teaching, healing—when he inducts his disciples into the same vocation. While the narrator’s word about Jesus’ compassion for his sheep (9:36) reminds us of the foundation of Jesus’ mission, his commission introduces a different image: “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (9:37-38). Paired with Jesus’ compassion is a sense of urgency.

The time is ripe for their mission, so he summons them and gives them "authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness" (10:1).

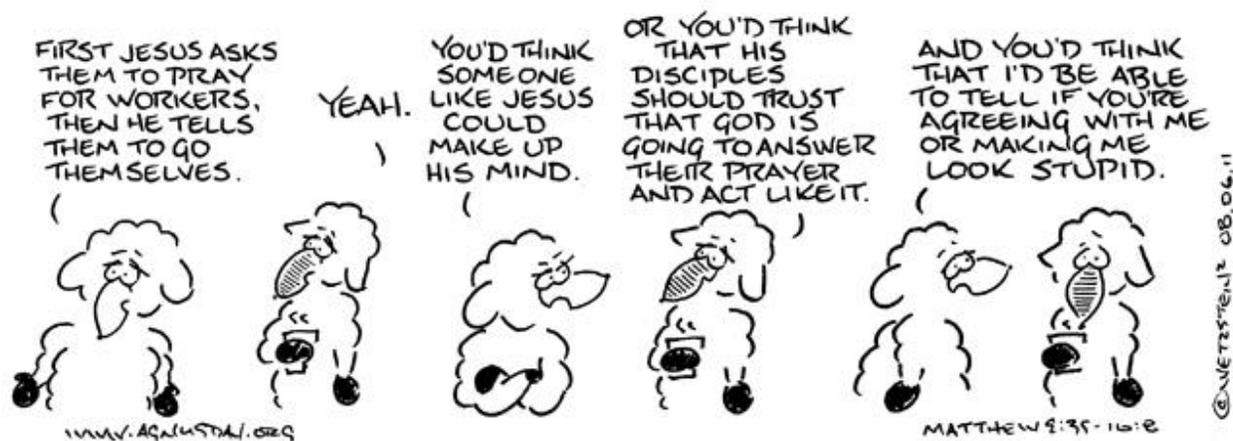
The language is striking because it is a near mirror image of the words used to describe Jesus' own practice in 9:35: "Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching ... and proclaiming ... and curing every disease and every sickness." At this moment the narrator introduces the twelve by name. In other words, the list of names does not stand alone as a mere registry of the twelve but as an introduction to an apostleship "charter." In this way we recognize that part of Jesus' own mission is to train followers to join the purposes for which his Father sent him. And the apostles' very identity is born in the midst of this movement from Father to Son to world. If, at this moment, we remembered Jesus' words in John, "as the father sent me, so I send you" (20:21), we would not be far afield...

And yet, with a promise anticipating the very end of the gospel, Jesus reminds his followers "do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say ... for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you" (10:19-20). In the very midst of persecution those obedient to Jesus' mission will be equipped and empowered with God's own presence. "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (28:20). To participate in the proclamation and healing characteristic of Jesus' own mission is to get caught up in the very life of God's Son given to the world.

If, with this passage, we see Jesus in the midst of training disciples for mission, by Gospel's end the scene will have shifted. The instructions on how to *be* a disciple in mission will, with the backing of the Risen Lord, become instructions on how to *make* disciples in mission (Matthew 28:18-20)."

➤ http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=4480

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➤ Angus Day appears with the permission of <https://www.agnusday.org/>

The Matthew Challenge? The final stretch is starting. Have you?



"We forget it most of the time when we read Romans but the fact is that Paul was writing to a group of Christians for whom hope was no doubt in short supply. They lived in the heart of Roman darkness, right under the nose of the Caesar himself. They lived in an empire in which that same Caesar was declared *Deus et Dominus*, God and Lord, on every coin in their pockets. What's more, the regime was increasingly hostile to the then-new Christian faith and before too much longer would flex its muscle in trying to get rid of this new band of believers, putting to death even the very apostle penning the letter to the Roman Christians.

So if you are going to preach hope to people living under those conditions, you had for sure better know what you are talking about. These people can't afford to have sunny but finally empty promises lobbed their way. They cannot tolerate false hopes because those have a way of making already bad situations much, much worse. What's more, only a sadistically cruel person would give them false hope.

But Paul was not selling false hope—he was proclaiming a hope that could not die because it emerged FROM the death of God's own Son. The hope that was forged in the fires of death cannot itself then die when suffering and persecution come because this is a Gospel hope that transcends all suffering on account of having been born out of hell and death and the worst suffering ever. This hope is ray-shielded against the destructive forces of suffering and death—these things now bounce off true hope. And this is a hope that has given us access to grace—a grace that, Paul colorfully pictures for us, we are standing hip-deep in. Maybe we are neck-deep in it. We stand in hope and this hope, Paul says, cannot disappoint.

How do we know all this for sure? Well, we can't prove it (but then, if we could prove it, we would not call it "hope," would we?). But we can testify that it is true because the love of God has been poured into our hearts. Telling a skeptic that God's love is inside you will ultimately prove to be as fruitless as trying to explain why you are head over heels in love with another person... you know beyond a shadow of a doubt that this love is inside you. And it's no different with God's love by the Holy Spirit: it's undeniably there and it anchors the hope that we will see it all fulfilled one day too.

One can scarcely imagine a more stirring message for the Christians at Rome. But then, politically and globally, hope seems in pretty short supply these days too. Indeed, from the right or from the left folks looking at the political situation in the United States right now again and again post on Facebook and Twitter thoughts that are downright hopeless.

We still need Romans 5."

➤ https://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/trinity-sunday-c/?type=lectionary_epistle Scott Hoezee

Proposed 2020 Living the Lutheran Lectionary teaching trip update.

To: David Ombogo; Christopher Mochere; Nick Seda in Kenya; Micheal Waiswa; James Akuwa in Uganda

“As I indicated on our group page, the (August) trip is on hold indefinitely because of the Corona virus. Many factors have gone into the decision I did not want to make.

Personally I am healthy with no symptoms of the virus... I have not been tested since I don't fit the criteria for immediate testing. I have consulted with two of my doctors who have known me for years and both immediately said not to go at this time. Because of my age, 71, and typical side issues like BP and borderline, but controlled diabetes I am considered to be in the at risk population that needs to be protected...

Stay at Home orders for my state have been changed from required to strongly recommended, especially if you are at risk because of age etc. Several states and large cities expect the lockdown order to continue through the summer and possibly until the end of the year...

Churches in Ohio were never ordered to close because it would have been a violation of the Constitution. However it was strongly recommended that they not have public services, and if they did it was implied that it was uncaring, dangerous to others to the point of causing a potential death and that it was un-Biblical. Bethlehem was one of the few that continued to stay open, meeting all requirements for an "essential service".

In addition to the added concern of a return spike in infections in the fall there are the issues of travel restrictions. The national Center for Disease Control recommends not leaving the country with the added warning that if you do, returning may become an issue. Both American Embassies in Kenya and Uganda are primarily concerned about how to get Americans out of those countries, not in. Air travel is permitted but highly limited, especially overseas. As things stand now, neither country would let me in, and if I did the 14 day quarantine factor would kick in. Fourteen days in Nairobi before leaving the city, another 14 entering Uganda and another 14 returning to Ohio...

Although it may be hard to see, God is in control. My work on producing weekly materials continues as does the Thursday on line class... Let your people know that I will miss seeing them in August, but that I am still looking forward to whatever plan God has in mind for me to visit.”

Response from Christopher Mochere, Kenya

“As a human receiving this cancellation of the trip, is a heavy burden in my heart, following the plans that were in place of the possible projects that were awaiting, but then am aware that God's plan is still in place and that everything works for the Good of God's people... Secondly we are to work on improving our constant online evangelism to a bigger group of people with a targeted focus and with a long time objective that is sustainable even for the coming generation, ...My opinion. I still believe God has a lot in store for us and that there is still a plan for me and you to meet in we have a common purpose and that is evangelism and discipleship. God bless you Dad and all members of your church. I will miss you Dad.”

Response from Nick Seda, Kenya

“Your trip to Africa was one of the most enthusiastically waited for by my parishioners, family and myself. It would have been the moment to meet my dear friend who holds my family heartily in all situations. Just as you've beautifully said it, God is in control though we may not visibly note. But surely God is in control. It's good news that the trip is not cancelled but only postponed. Hopefully, Almighty will intervene in this current situation and all will return to normal. We are still eagerly and praying that the Lord will preserve you by His grace. And normalcy would return and the trip be actualized for His work and Glory.”