



13B EPIPHANY 5B - ONLINE LITURGY

Discipleship, the first 100 days

Abstract

He cured many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him.

Mark 1:34-36 (NRSV)

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2021 | EPIPHANY | FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY | YEAR B

Old Testament Isaiah 40:21–31
 Psalm Psalm 147:1–11, 20c
 New Testament 1 Corinthians 9:16–23
 Gospel Mark 1:29–39

Mark 1.29-39

Jesus shows us his priorities – he knows what he must do and demonstrates this by healing and proclaiming the good news. However, Jesus also takes time out to get away from the crowds and be alone in prayer – he knows what he must do to care for himself and stay true to his mission.

Do we find or make enough time to rest with God? What difference does it make?

This week we explore: demonstrating priorities through action.

	Pre-Service
	Introit
	<p style="text-align: center;">Greeting</p> <p>May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ The Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">We Gather</p> <p>Lift your eyes to gaze on God. Hear God’s Word and receive God’s peace. With all that you have been, all that you are, and all that you hope to be, offer yourself now to God in worship and praise.</p> <p><i>Let us Pray</i> O God, we come to you out of the week just gone – with its successes and disappointments, its joys and its struggles. By your Holy Spirit, help us to focus on you now, to listen as you speak to our hearts, so that we may be better prepared to serve you in the week to come. Amen.</p>

	<p>Hymn/song P&W 114 Be still and know anon</p>
	<p>Welcome</p> <p><i>Let us Pray</i> We gather to sing praises to our God. How pleasant and fitting to praise him. Let us sing to the Lord with thanksgiving and make music to our God. Let our worship rise high on the wings of praise. Amen.</p>
	<p>Readings Mark 1:29–39</p> <p><i>respond</i> For the word of the Lord Thanks be to God</p>
	<p>Hymn/song/video</p>
	<p>We say Sorry</p> <p>People. People. Everywhere! Day in. Day out. Seeking you, Lord. Hunting you. Following you. Hungry for your presence. Wanting your attention. Yet not once did you complain.</p> <p>We're sorry, Lord, that the weight of life's demands causes us to stumble, to lose our temper and at times to buckle under the pressure. Help us to be more like you, Lord.</p> <p>We're sorry for not getting our priorities right. Help us to know, as you did, the importance of spending time with and drawing refreshment from the Father. We're sorry for allowing other people and things to take over and squeeze out our time with you. Help us to draw daily on your refreshing strength in order to cope with whatever our day holds. Lord, hear our prayer. Amen.</p>
	<p>Words of Assurance</p> <p>The Son of God loves us. And because of his love, healing us and setting us free from sin's guilt and power, we are forgiven. Amen.</p>
	<p>Hymn/Song P&W 657/SCE/SOF 475 Refiner's fire Doerksen</p>

Response

The apostle Jesus designed you to be.

Mark 1:29–39

In this time of COVID-19,
 we all hope and pray that we will avoid the virus
 that has killed to date more than 2.2 million people.
 We feel an urgency to protect ourselves
 and from even mildly infecting ourselves and others
 with an illness that seems to have no bounds as to wreak havoc
 upon our bodies, minds, and community both now and in years to come.

Still, despite our desire for change,
 for us, relief can't come fast enough.
 Hospitals around the world remain filled to the brim with patients, both ill and dying.
 Testing Centres continue to try to keep up with cases.
 We continue to wear masks and to socially distance,
 but we are growing weary.
 We are in urgent need of a reprieve.
 Vaccines are being delivered in record time,
 hoping to slow the spread and put a stop to the pandemic.

Like a ghost, the pandemic continues to haunt us,
 threatening to derail our lives.
 We are, as an entire world, locked in a perpetual level of stress
 that we in our generation have never before experienced.
 And it's taking its toll on our psyches and our bodies.

We watch the news. We are tired. We are burnt out. We want a break.
 How many of us try to escape the realities of the virus
 in the solace of tv or Netflix?
 How many of you are missing your children, grandchildren and family?

The urgency scares us, it challenges us, and depletes us.
 But urgency can also be a good thing.

In our scriptures for today,
 we see Jesus near the beginning of his ministry
 on a "feverish" mission to spread the news
 of God's future plan for humanity throughout the entire region.

With his newly called disciples by his side,
 he has embarked on a relentless journey through all of Galilee,
 "proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons."
 He would pause briefly in one place,
 and then while still in the early morning hours,
 he would again set out for the next destination.

This must have felt overwhelming for his disciples.
 They were used to a different kind of lifestyle,

a more consistent lifestyle
in which they would root their identity and existence in one place,
creating families and a livelihood,
social connections, and in some cases prestige.

This itinerary of their rabbi Jesus to move from place to place every couple of days
felt exhausting and pointless.

Why wouldn't he just take the time to minister to the people already at hand?

This was the question they posed to him that morning as we read today.

Jesus had gone off by himself to pray
and refuel his spirit for the next part of the journey.

His disciples however hunted him down, and said to him,

"Everyone is looking for you!"

They didn't understand why he couldn't just stay

where he was with the people who already wanted to be with him and learn from him.

Jesus however replied:

"Let's go on to the neighbouring towns,
so that I can proclaim the message there too,
for that is what I came out to do."

And so, the scripture tells us,

he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message
in their synagogues and casting out demons."

Jesus disciples wanted him to do what was expected,
what was usual, what the people wanted, what they preferred.

They wanted a break from the relentless traveling.

They hoped Jesus would put down roots at least for a while

and build up some momentum in the people he had already touched.

But Jesus was determined to keep on walking.

Jesus' urgency comes from the same kind of passion, drive, and initiative
that drives us onward in the face of a pandemic,

even though we desperately want to stop and take a breath.

Deep in his heart,

Jesus must have been aware of the scant time he had to fulfil his mission,

the vast numbers of people he would need to reach,

the urgency of his message,

and the vital importance of his salvation potential as messiah and Son.

In a sense, Jesus was the "vaccine" for his society's sin,

and his mission had to proceed

with an urgency his disciples had never before seen.

For God,

the state of humankind had reached a "feverish state."

Corruption was rampant.

The faith had been corrupted.

Thousands were cast out, had become lost, or were displaced.

People were scared, oppressed, depressed, and hopeless.
They needed hope.
A Jesus kind of hope.

And yet despite the hope Jesus offered,
the human penchant for familiarity, sameness,
resistance of change became a constant challenge even for him.
His own disciples failed again and again to understand the urgency of Jesus' message.

They didn't truly believe,
he only had three years to complete
the ministry of a lifetime that would change the world.
They couldn't imagine that his salvation message to the world would end in death.
They didn't really believe that resurrection was real.
They remained grounded in what they could see and hear,
what they knew and understood,
what made sense to them from within the framework that they knew.

Recognition, familiarity, is a powerful aphrodisiac.

But Jesus did go on.
His disciples,
loyal as they were, resistant as they sometimes could be,
continued to follow him,
as he urgently preached, taught, and healed throughout every region he could.
And he did change the world.

His disciples learned from Jesus not just how to navigate life,
but how to inaugurate a future.
That despite feeling tired and longing for reprieve,
they would need to push through and keep on walking.

Today, Jesus calls the church to do the same.
He continues to offer us hope no matter how much sorrow we experience,
and he continues to push us forward into mission and ministry
when we would rather curl up with our tv and Netflix.
Because Jesus knows that now more than ever,
there is an urgency to the gospel.

People need to hear it.
People everywhere need to see Him.
He needs to heal not just one community,
but an entire world.

When we feel weary,
we all would rather default to the familiar or as Jonah did,
sit under a tree and wait for things to pass.
But Jesus instead tells us, now more than ever,
this is the time for mission.
This is your chance to proclaim a hope and a different future.

Don't let the doldrums
 keep you from being the apostle Jesus designed you to be.
 Don't let the familiar
 keep you from doing the spectacular.
 Amen

	Hymn/song TIS/P&W 477 Spirit Song (O let the Son of God enfold you) Wimber
	Offering
	Notices
	Prayers for all people
	Lord's Prayer
	Hymn/song ATO 411/AOV[1] 153 On Eagle's wings Joncas
	We are sent out Lord Jesus, go with us into the world this week. Help us to remain focused upon you and to make your priorities our priorities in all the places you are sending us. Amen. May the Lord bless us and keep us May His face shine upon us and be gracious to us May he lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace Amen
	Benediction TIS 717/P&W 478/SCE 118/AOV[2] 17/SOF 124 Give thanks Smith
	Thank you

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