

Pentecost 6C 2010
Luke 10:1-11, 16-20
Sermon for Advent LC
July 4th, 2010

Discipleship Week 2: "Going"

Dear sisters and brothers, grace to you and peace from God the father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who calls us to go! Amen.

Today is the second week in our five week sermon theme for this summer. Just a quick recap of what is going on with the messages for the next four weeks. Last week, we kicked off a themed sermon series focusing on Discipleship. We talked about how we define it, what it means to us to be a disciple, and how we are all called to live out our life in a way that follows Christ. You said discipleship is things like following Christ, serving, loving, living in a way that honors God, and everything we do after we say "I believe". If anyone that was here last week could help me- what was the theme last week? Right...trusting- discipleship begins and ends with Christ's call to trust him wherever he leads us- this means often giving ourselves over to his control even when we don't like it- trusting in him above the other things which give us hope- everything begins and ends with Jesus. As a reminder- if you happen to have missed last week, or any of the future weeks- don't fret- each message will stand on its own...but you can always review the message online as well! Now, as we begin to dig further into this life of discipleship today our text takes us right to the heart of what some of you said last week-- the idea of going wherever God calls us. Today we will look at how discipleship is about going- going to places, people, ways of being that further God's kingdom. God's call hits us right square in the middle of our face today when Jesus sends the seventy to go out reminding them of the plentiful harvest- those early disciples heard the call and went- not without hardship and sacrifice and certainly not without God by their side. Today, the call remains the same for you- Go, God says to you, the harvest is still plentiful and you, you are my laborers.

Jesus, in the Gospel today, gives marching orders to those seventy he commissioned- he instructs them on what they need to take- and what they don't need. He also points out the agenda they are after, as well as strict instructions on how they are to act. Remain focused he says- and beware for the work ahead of you is hard and it is like I am sending you as a lamb among wolves. Be alert- some may not be open to your message- if they are not, move on- but know that there are people who need you, who need your word, and who will welcome you. But be aware your work, that I give you is hard yet I promise to be with you- and furthermore the work that I give you is my work and now my Father works through you. So rejoice and give thanks that you are part of this kingdom making. Now I don't know about you- but if I was told that I was like a lamb among wolves I would be a bit nervous yet those early followers went-boldly- not asking any questions, not wrestling with the alternatives- but they just went. This brings us back to last week- this idea of trusting now leads to a going- a going with a newfound confidence and a going with a new found hope and mission. Without the trust in God the going cannot happen- so friends think for a minute again of your God- your trust- is it founded, is it secure, is it real- because once you have that established- yes it may wane-- but once you have a handle around it and truly put God above everything else, and have a confidence in God- your going must start. So...God comes to you today and says I need you- you are my laborers and there is a harvest that needs harvesting- will you go?

Where are we to go? That's a question that maybe you are wondering- if discipleship that begins with trust and now evolves into a going action where is it that we are needed? Where is the harvest and what does our response look like? I am constantly touched by your stories of God working in your lives- how you have "went" deeper in your faith, how you have taken risks only to be fulfilled by them. That is God working- that is you going that is discipleship in action. Quick story- I don't like to talk too much about myself or my family but this text brought me back about five years ago. I just had received the word that the ELCA had approved me for mission development and our family would be moving to the Traverse City area of Michigan. Now initially, when the bishop invited us to consider this call my instinct was no- too scary, too unknown, too something- but through prayer and conversation

with people I trusted it became clear that this was where God was calling. So Anna, Logan and myself packed up our belongings in a rental truck , grabbed her folks to help us move and we went. We drove all night and headed to this unknown place for us. I was scared, excited, weary, anxious and thrilled all at the same time. The harvest was plentiful and we were being blessed to be part of it. So we went- with God by our side. Now, I don't tell you that story in a "look at us" type of way but rather because I believe that all of us have our own callings to hear, all of us have a God that comes to us, speaks to us, calls us to go to those places that are scary, are hard, are anxious but are part of the harvest. Now, I don't think we are all called to move physically to new places to do ministry but I do believe that God calls us all to move spiritually to new places all the time.

Dear friends, here's what I know- God has marked you with the cross of Christ- has promised to never abandon you, and now comes to you speaking these words- "The harvest is plentiful- you have gifts, go with me by your side into that harvest to labor for me." I ask friends that you pray this week intentionally about where God needs you to go- where are you stuck, what's hindering you- what holds you back- what's tugging at you? Take notice of those things, allow God to speak to you- be open to the Spirit leading and allow God to pull, push, and maybe even drag you- for the harvest is plentiful and you, you my friends are the laborer- so Go! Go to new places, go to new challenges, go boldly with God by your side.

God loves you and so do I. Amen.