

Introduction

Can you remember the first time you ever spoke to somebody about Jesus?

What did it feel like?

How did they receive it?

Today's passage talks about God's mission field. We can make the mistake of thinking that it is just for special people 'missionaries'. Who have a special calling from God. This is not true. Jesus calls and equips all his followers to tell the Good News

This passage tells us all Jesus' followers are missionaries.

He started with his disciples and then when he ascended to heaven he passed the commission on for them to teach and send out other disciples to share the Gospel 'to the ends of the earth'.

When I was a nurse one of my jobs was to teach student nurses the practical side of nursing. How things needed to be on the wards and how to care for patients. We used the same method that Jesus used centuries before.:
tell, show, send

Romans 5:1-18

Matthew 9:35-10:8

He spend time teaching them about the kingdom of God and telling them everything they needed to know about God and his plans for the world.

He then demonstrated the power of the kingdom, in his miracles, in healing the sick, the anxious and the troubled. They watched him healing people and he supervised them at work, giving them feedback as on the occasion when they were unable to release a boy from an unclean Spirit. He told them why they hadn't been able to do it and then, when they were ready sent them out to do the same thing

Things we can learn from our Passage:

The harvest is plentiful – we actually often think about it the other way. We don't expect people

- to want to hear
- to be ready to respond
- to listen to us

But I have found during my ministry and particularly during the Pandemic how please people are when I tell them that I am praying for them. People are open and aware that they need God's help especially in these challenging times

Jesus' perspective was that there were more people ready to hear than to tell. Do you think it is still the same today? Why/ why not?

Was it to do with the immanence of the Kingdom – some special power there with Jesus – or should we expect it to be the same today.

We are to be lambs among wolves

Romans 5:1-18

Matthew 9:35-10:8

The world is tough but we are not to heavily defend ourselves. Just go gently and humbly
Don't take provision.

Trust that God will provide

Expect to be welcomed and supported by those
you go to visit

Go bringing God's Blessing

Go in peace and wanting to bless people

Not thinking we know better than them but humbly
offering them what we have and know (Jesus)

Develop relationship

- Stay with the people who welcome you
- Get to know them
- share their lives with them

- Listen to them – people are much more likely to receive what we have to say if they feel they have been listened to first - Tell about Mary and Alpha

When we are welcomed stay with it, Deal with what is there

Heal those who are ill – how do we do that? Do we believe we have power to heal as well?

Tell them "The Kingdom of God has come near to you"
preach the Gospel to them, simply, as we understand it. tell of our own encounters with Jesus and what he has done for us

Don't waste time if there is no welcome

We need to discern where God is working. The devil loves us to waste time where hearts are hardened and people will not listen

In Luke's Gospel it tells us:

¹⁷ When the seventy-two disciples returned, they joyfully reported to him, "Lord, even the demons obey us when we use your name!"

¹⁸ "Yes," he told them, "I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning! ¹⁹ Look, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy, and you can walk among snakes and scorpions and crush them. Nothing will injure you. ²⁰ But don't rejoice because evil spirits obey you; rejoice because your names are registered in heaven."

What are the challenges for us here, today?

We have learned different ways of communicating during the past three years. May more of us use zoom or face time. We still, record our services for people to watch or listen to. An even now when we have two services a week in our churches there are still between 10 and 20 people who log in to our worship. People don't always find it easy to come to church but we have found that being able to log in at a time that suits them means they can worship with us still. We need to find ways of connecting with these people so we can encourage and welcome them

The fact that the past few years have been so tough means that we have even more of a message to share with the people we know and spend time with. We can listen to their concerns and worries and then we can tell people how God has cared for us during this time and what his love has meant to us

Romans 5:1-18**Matthew 9:35-10:8**

We can show God's love to others in the way we listen to them, support them and care for them

We can tell them of God's love and especially show his love to them.

We can pray for them

And in the past year we have begun thinking in our churches of how we can make ourselves more welcoming and accessible to others but also how we can grow as individuals and in our Christian communities.

Jesus chose his followers to be the people who shared his love and his message of healing and forgiveness to their communities. He calls us to do the same. And that means we need to be attractive in our individual lives and in our lives together as God's people. We need to be able to share God's love with other whenever needed and wherever we are, taking courage that it is Jesus who sends us out and who goes with us through his Holy Spirit.