



SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Year B
January 14, 2018

1 Samuel 3:3b-10, 19
Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10
1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20
John 1:35-42

Assembly

(An unlit candle, a Bible opened to this week's gospel and an umbrella rest on a cloth-covered table in the meeting place.)

Beginning Prayer

(The candle is lit. Members are invited to silently focus on God's presence. After a short time of reflection, members alternate reading the following prayer aloud.)

All: Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.

I: I have waited, waited for the LORD,
and he stooped toward me and heard my cry.
And he put a new song into my mouth,
a hymn to our God.

All: Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.

II: Sacrifice or offering you wished not,

but ears open to obedience you gave me.
Holocausts or sin-offerings you sought not;
then said I, "Behold I come."

All: Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.

I: "In the written scroll it is prescribed for me,
to do your will, O my God, is my delight,
and your law is within my heart!"

All: Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.

II: I announced your justice in the vast assembly;
I did not restrain my lips, as you, O LORD, know.

All: Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.

Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10

LISTEN TO THE LORD

(The leader passes out copies of the scriptures. The scriptures are read aloud with a pause after each reading. After the gospel is read, the leader invites members to choose a few words from the gospel that touch them.)

The leader asks these two questions with a pause between them: "What does this gospel say to you?", "How does this gospel affect you in your life?" The community silently reflects on these questions. The leader invites members to share their thoughts about the Insights and Reflection Questions for the week in a single group or within smaller groups.)

Insights

John stands with two of his disciples as Jesus walks by and said, "Behold, the lamb of God". Upon hearing what John said, the disciples leave John to follow Jesus. Jesus then turns to them and asks, "What are you looking for?"

As followers of Christ, this question is an interesting one. Having a relationship with Jesus is not like the relationships we have with family and friends. If we are honest, sometimes we might not choose to have a relationship with a family member if we were not related to them. Relationships

with friends can come and go throughout our lives because of changes in geographic distances, economic disparity, changes in social status or lack of shared, common interests or goals. The term fair-weather friend is one many of us can relate to. We may have ignored a friend in their time of need or may have been abandoned in our time of need by someone. When life is going well, relationships with friends are fun and easy but when we have debilitating tribulations, some friends disappear from our lives as if our difficulties are a contagious disease. Often, if a relationship is a disadvantage to us, we may not be interested in maintaining the relationship.

Our relationship with Jesus is different. It can be as strong or as weak as we choose. It all comes down to the question, “What are you looking for?” It may be hard to understand what we really would like from Jesus if we can’t fully comprehend what Jesus is offering. Dr. Eben Alexander tried to describe his near-death experience in his book *Proof of Heaven* but felt his experience could not be described by any words he knew. Our human minds may not be capable of comprehending what happens to us after our physical life ends. But we put our faith in Jesus, and in God the Father, that the promise of eternal life to those who have Jesus in their hearts will be fulfilled. Jesus is not a fair-weather friend. He is always there for us and will not desert us during our dark hours. We should treat our relationship with Jesus as the most important relationship we have. Whatever we are looking for, Jesus can help us find it if we are not fair-weather friends.

Reflection Questions

- ◆ What part of your relationship with Jesus is strong? What part is weak?
- ◆ What are you looking for in your relationship with God? What are you willing to contribute?
- ◆ Have you ever had a fair-weather friend? Have you ever been one?
- ◆ Can you think of a time when you were a fair-weather friend to Jesus?

Suggestions for Action

- ◆ Be a foul-weather friend to someone you know who has been abandoned by their friends and/or family.
- ◆ Go to see someone you are not on good terms with while they are in the hospital. Let them know you are praying for them and keeping them in your thoughts.

- ◆ Spend time with your parents on a weekly basis if you can. Call, write or stop by their house for no specific reason. Tell them how you feel about them, whether good or bad. Talk about your lives together.

HEAR THE LORD

(After about fifteen minutes of sharing, the leader poses these questions: “How has the sharing from this session affected you?”, “How will it change you this week?” The leader allows a moment for members to reflect before inviting them to share their thoughts. The leader reads a selection from the readings aloud. Following the reading, the leader poses these questions to the members: “What is Jesus saying to you?”, “What is your response?” The community pauses to reflect on these questions. A brief instrumental selection may be played during this time. After a time of reflection, the leader invites members to share what they hear Christ saying to them.)

Closing Prayer

(The leader plays the song "I Want To Follow Jesus Like Him" found at www.insightsbooks.com. Click on the Music link and select the appropriate week. After the song is complete, the leader and a member pray as follows.)

What Are You Looking For?

Leader: Jesus asks, “What are you looking for?”

I: I am looking for eternal life in heaven,
An everlasting place of peace and love.
A safe and secure world free from war and strife.
An environment filled with like-minded souls,
who don't hate because of differences.
A joyous world filled with song praising God, the Father,
the Son and the Holy Spirit.
A sanctuary that wipes away worry
and soothes my soul with God's grace.
Help me to find my way with Jesus' guidance.

All: Amen.

(Members exchange a sign of peace. The candle is extinguished.)