

Jesus Speaks through Ordinary Men

Luke 10:1-20(ESV)

When I was 3 or 4 **Jesus** spoke to me. He said, "I will bless you and keep you safe with me. I will make my face light up with smiles at you all week. I will give you forgiveness you don't deserve i.e. I'll be gracious to you, and because of that gift you will be at peace." As a young child I didn't know what all those words meant when Pastor Koester in that black robe raised his hands, smiled at us and made the sign of the cross, I knew God was doing something good!

When I was 8 or 9 **Jesus** spoke to me. The last song we sang after Sunday worship was: "Abide Oh Dear Redeemer among us with thy grace, that **Satan** may not harm us nor **we** to sin give place." Pastor Krueger was chosen by Jesus to remind us members of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church that He would not let Satan or sin get control over us. Pastor Krueger had a great smile when he shook my hand at the door after service. (He wasn't perfect. My dad said he broke the rules of our district leaders when he took the call to our church.)

When I was 10 **Jesus** spoke to me. He told me that he liked hearing my prayers. This is how he did it. It was Vacation Bible School and I was having trouble sawing around the outline of praying hands, Pastor Nauman said, "Here, let me help you!" There in the basement of Zion Lutheran Church, He made that coping saw follow the lines! (He wasn't perfect, my dad said that Pastor Nauman drove by him so fast, he thought our car was in reverse.)

When I was 12, **Jesus** spoke to me. He said, "I want you to go with me to look at the campus where I'd like you to begin preparing to let me speak through **you**." So one day Pastor Lederer picked me up and drove me to see the campus of Concordia High School and Jr. College, in Milwaukee. The brick buildings and the tree-lined sidewalks were beautiful, but it was the swimming pool that really convinced me. There was a drawback though. It didn't have a football team, so I said, "I'll go after I finish High School."

When I was 18, **Jesus** spoke to me. He said, "Now that you have begun learning to speak for me, I want you to read **my Word** for the people when you come home for your Christmas vacation. I was really nervous about standing up in front of everyone at Triune Lutheran Church, but Pastor Schultz treated me like a professional who had been doing it all my life, so I did it, and my Dad and Mom were pleased!

In the next 10 years **Jesus** spoke to me through many pastors in chapel services, and in classes, and in private meetings in their offices. He **kept me going** when I thought I wasn't smart enough, and **forgave me** when I wasn't good enough. I finally graduated from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, and went home to Triune Lutheran Church at Sharon, Wisconsin to be **ordained**. Two members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of

Holtville, CA represented their congregation which **God had lead to call me** as their pastor by presenting me with the Pastor's stole. These stoles symbolize the towel **Jesus** used to **serve** his disciples by washing their feet. Then through Pastor Schultz, **Jesus** said to me, "Wilfred William Glade, I ordain and consecrate you to the Office of the Holy Ministry of the Word and Sacraments..."

Jesus spoke through me there for five years, then He Called me here to speak **His** Word for the past 39 years. This week as I listened to Jesus speak through a pastor by means of an Issues Etc. podcast, I learned a wonderful question to ask as you read from one of the four Gospels. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all tell what Jesus said, and did 2000 years ago. So after you have read a section of their writings, **don't** apply it to your life by saying, "What would Jesus do if he were me." That's a phrase that was popular among Christians a few years ago, and I still hear it said sometimes. That question focuses your attention on **yourself** and makes **Jesus** nothing more than a demanding coach pushing you to do better. No. The right question to ask after reading a text like this one about Jesus sending out 72 disciples is: **What did Jesus give me here?**

What Jesus gave you in this text is **His promise to speak to you all your life through men He calls to be your pastors.** Verse 16 leaves no doubts! Jesus told his pastors in training, "The one who hears you hears **me**, and the one who rejects you rejects **me**, and the one who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

You know those people Jesus sent his disciples to speak to were **ordinary people like you.** They had their ups and their downs. They had their strengths and their weaknesses. None of them were perfect. They all had faults and failings. They were people **just like you.**

And God in those days was just like he is today. He is holy! Three times holy! Pure, Pure, Pure. Perfect, Perfect, Perfect. No one who is less than that can **live** in His presence. His holiness on the day of judgment would **condemn them to Hades** Jesus says in this text. And Jesus says that the people of Capernaum who had more opportunities to hear Jesus, and follow Him but put Him off, would suffer worse in **Hell** than the people of Tyre and Sidon where Jesus had never been.

People who haven't had Jesus speak to them, and people who have **but have not listened** are people who are **not at peace with God.** No matter what they do in this life, they are never really at peace. No matter how good they have been in this life, in the next life they will **never know God's peace.** They will only know God's **holy condemnation and eternal suffering of His rejection.**

They were people **just like you.** People who **needed** to know **peace with God.** People who needed to know that in the **worst** of times God is **with them**, and God is **for them.**

People who needed to know that Satan, their sinful natures, and the worlds' pressures **can't take away their peace with God.**

So Jesus **out of love for those people who are just like you** sent them **His Word** through those 72 men - His **Word** that in Him alone **there is everlasting peace.** Out of **love** Jesus sent **me** to speak His Word that in Him **you too will have peace without end.** It beyond understanding but it is true that In Jesus there is **peace** with a Holy Holy Holy God. Loved ones may leave you, **but Jesus never will.** Demons may attack you, **but Jesus is your sure defense.** You may get tired and give up on yourself, **but Jesus never will.** The leaders of this 240 year old nation may let us down, but Jesus will hold us up!

Jesus never will forsake you because it was **you** and every other sinner of this world that **he became** on that cross and suffered not just physically by men, but spiritually by His Father! For you He took the full force of God's Holy Justice, and **he took it away from you forever!** With St. Paul in the second lesson today, you can say, "far be it from me to boast **except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.** Because of Jesus substituting himself for you, the world's power to rob you of peace with God **has be crucified.** Put to death once and for all time!

You needed to hear that today! **Jesus** knew you needed to hear that. So **he** spoke that assurance through **me.** And He will keep on giving you that peace through the pastors after me.

God is so unlike us. We would try to use the best most powerful ways of bringing the news of Jesus peace to damned sinners, but God uses the weakest, most sinful men to do it. Noah had a drinking problem; Jacob was a thief and liar, David was an adulterer and murderer, and Paul was a murderer and persecutor. I'm a sinner, and your next pastor will be too.

God takes ordinary stuff and performs extraordinary works: Trevor Sutton in his excellent book called Being Lutheran wrote:

"Out of all the infinite ways God could have made Adam, He chose the dust of the earth. The crowning accomplishment of creation was formed out of mud."

God could have cobbled Adam together out of gold and diamonds and rubies and marble. ... Instead, God used mud. God took something ordinary and made it extraordinary.

"Dust and the breath of God brought about human life. Soil and spit healed a blind man. Bread and wine delivered forgiveness. Wood and nails brought eternal salvation. God uses ordinary things for His extraordinary works."

"God's Word, though spoken by ordinary people, accomplishes extraordinary work."

"Words of forgiveness spoken by an ordinary person have the same power as if Jesus Himself had said them."

"Being Lutheran is receiving God's extraordinary grace through ordinary means:"

Remember what the 72 said when they returned from taking Jesus' Word of how the people could be assured of peace with God? --- "Lord, even **the demons are subject to us in your name!**" Satan and his demons are no match for the Word of Jesus that I'm speaking to you, and that your next pastor will speak to you!

When those ordinary sinful men spoke to those ordinary sinful people, Jesus said His word works like fireworks in reverse! Satan tries to light up the skies with his power and glory, but God uses a little old pastor like me to preach an ordinary sermon and Satan gets thrown to the ground in defeat like a skyrocket in reverse!

When your next pastor comes and preaches and teaches the peace with God that Jesus gives you, and Satan tempts you to compare him to me, just remember that he may be very different, but one thing will be the same. "Jesus has given him authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt him." The devil and his demons are the serpents and scorpions. The devil is the enemy, but Jesus speaking through a pastor overpowers them all!

Do you wonder why the first lesson for today says rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her? It is because you believers in Jesus are the new Jerusalem! You believers have the promise of Jesus that he will keep speaking his peace through the pastors he sends to you. "Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river!" (v.12) As you come every Sunday to listen to Jesus speak peace to you, you will be nursed. You will be carried on mother church's hip, and bounced on her knees. You shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

Trust in the power of Jesus' name over all your problems, and enemies, but don't boast about all the good things you have been able to do for this church, or for people in need. Boast about the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by which the world has been crucified to you, and by which your names have been written in heaven!"