

MARK 6:7-13

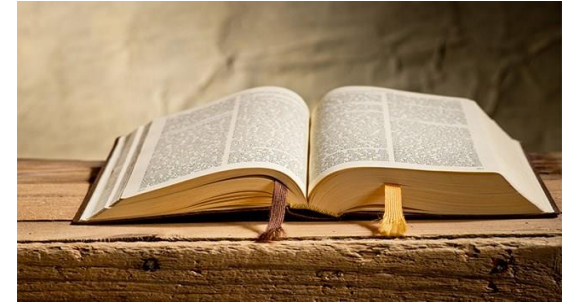
Jesus made a tour round the villages, teaching. Then he summoned the Twelve and began to send them out in pairs giving them authority over the unclean spirits. And he instructed them to take nothing for the journey except a staff – no bread, no haversack, no coppers for their purses. They were to wear sandals but, he added, ‘Do not take a spare tunic.’ And he said to them, ‘If you enter a house anywhere, stay there until you leave the district. And if any place does not welcome you and people refuse to listen to you, as you walk away shake off the dust from under your feet as a sign to them.’ So they set off to preach repentance; and they cast out many devils, and anointed many sick people with oil and cured them.

COMMENTARY: How do the instructions Jesus gives to the Twelve apply to our setting here in New Zealand? How do we preach the gospel today? After all, most of our congregation have no need of repentance when we consider what low standards society tolerates today? What in your view does the Church need to do to bring about a new evangelisation period?

Liturgy of The Word

14.7.24

15th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



**Lord, show us your mercy and love,
and grant us your salvation.**

I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace,
peace for his people.
His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land.

Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven.

The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps.

AMOS 7:12-15

Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, said to Amos, ‘Go away, seer;’ get back to the land of Judah; earn your bread there, do your prophesying there. We want no more prophesying in Bethel; this is the royal sanctuary, the national temple.’ ‘I was no prophet, neither did I belong to any of the brotherhoods of prophets,’ Amos replied to Amaziah ‘I was a shepherd, and looked after sycamores: but it was the Lord who took me from herding the flock, and the Lord who said, “Go, prophesy to my people Israel.”’

COMMENTARY: The prophet Amos lived at least 500 years before Christ. He believes strongly in God’s absolute sovereignty over humanity and therefore social justice for all, rich and poor alike. Not even God’s chosen people were exempt from this rule, and even they had to pay the penalty for breaking it; hence, Amos also believed in a moral order, transcending nationalistic interests.

The text above reveals his humble beginnings. and a priest of Bethel (Temple), sends him away to the southern kingdom of Israel because of his prophesying. We never like to hear the truth! Human beings haven’t changed!

The prophets who forecast destruction simply knew that living outside the laws of God will bring its own destruction. How might we apply this today? Take that question for your discussion.

EPHESIANS 1:3-14

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all the spiritual blessings of heaven in Christ. Before the world was made, he chose us, chose us in Christ, to be holy and spotless, and to live through love in his presence, determining that we should become his adopted sons and daughters, through Jesus Christ for his own kind purposes, to make us praise the glory of his grace, his free gift to us in the Beloved, in whom, through his blood, we gain our freedom, the forgiveness of our sins. Such is the richness of the grace which he has showered on us in all wisdom and insight. He has let us know the mystery of his purpose, the hidden plan he so kindly made in Christ from the beginning to act upon when the times had run their course to the end: that he would bring everything together under Christ, as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth. And it is in him that we were claimed as God’s own, chosen from the beginning, under the predetermined plan of the one who guides all things as he decides by his own will; chosen to be, for his greater glory, the people who would put their hopes in Christ before he came. Now you too, in him, have heard the message of the truth and the good news of your salvation, and have believed it; and you too have been stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit of the Promise, the pledge of our inheritance which brings freedom for those whom God has taken for his own, to make his glory praised.

COMMENTARY: I would challenge anyone to pray this text each morning and night for a week and remain unaffected. It is surely the perfect morning and evening prayer. In the last section, change the phrase “now you too...” to ‘now I too ... have heard the message ...

DISCUSSION: what is faith when it is just intellectual belief?