

## **FOLLOW ME**

**LET US PRAY:** May the words or my mouth and the meditations of all our hearts be for your glory, O Lord, Our Savior and Redeemer.

**Amen**

Imagine that you are at work or doing what you do in a normal day and you notice a man approaching you. You have never seen him before. He looks a little scraggly, as though he's been on a long journey. He interrupts what you're doing and says to you, "Follow Me." I want to give you a new job that will make people's lives better. You will have to give up everything, your job, your family, your friends, your whole life to do something strange and new. Would you say yes or no thank you? It amazes me that the men that Jesus called never hesitated. They dropped what they were doing and followed. It wasn't for an easier or a safer life. They really didn't know what was going to happen.

In the First Lesson today and the beginning of the Gospel we listened to the prophecy that was foretold, A. Light will come so that people will no longer live in darkness. In Isaiah it was a proclamation of Immanuel- God with us. A child born in the City of David, Bethlehem. A birth heralded by a great star and angels singing. A light to take away the darkness. Now almost 30 years later the ministry of that baby had begun. His baptism was heralded, by John the Baptist, as God announced. " This is my Son, with whom I am well pleased. Jesus faced 40 days of temptation with the devil and now his cousin John is in prison. To fulfill the rest of the prophecy he has gone to Galilee, to the land of Zebulun and Naphtalia. Jesus proceeded declaring, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near."

Jesus was teaching, proclaiming the good news, and healing people throughout the countryside, not just in synagogues. Jesus was meeting the people where they were and it did not matter if they were rich or whether they held any status in society. Jesus knew that the LOVE of God was for everyone. He was there to change beliefs that God's love must be earned

by following laws and making sacrifices to God's love is freely given. He could have continued on his own, yet if he had, how would the word of God continue? He did not pick special people to work with him. His first four disciples were fishermen. One was even a tax collector, a person not trusted by many common people. And yet.... He has also chosen you and me.

You may not realize it but, at some point in time you were also chosen to be a fisher of men. Through these words, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." A seed was planted in your heart. That seed has grown.

When I was teaching adult Sunday School we would sometimes have a discussion about people's faith journey. We all have a different one. At some time it would be worth it to have everyone write their story and put that in a book. Some of you started out here at Trinity and have never been to another church. I remember listening to Wanda. She had a faith that would move a mountain. Her faith journey was here. I was Baptized in that baptismal font. That seed grew and I did not even realize it until I came back here in 1992. Oh, I went to church when I was young. Off and on when I was a young adult. When it really mattered to me, was when I became pregnant for my oldest child. I saw children that I taught in school, who had no hope, nothing to believe in beyond what they could see or feel. Although I did not attend church on a regular basis my belief still gave me a hope in a power greater than this world. I came back to Trinity because of an invitation, Best invitation I ever accepted.

It was that seed that grew in me that brought me to Bible studies to hear the good news, and to church every Sunday, and why my children were Baptized. It was why I said yes when asked to be on council for the first time, sing in the choir, join altar guild, and become a congregational deacon.

What have you done without hesitating in the name of our Lord? We are all disciples chosen by Him. Do you remember saying yes without thinking

even a single second like those fishermen who dropped everything to follow Jesus? Maybe we can take a lesson from fishermen if we want to be disciples who are fishers of men. First, we need to be patient. In order to catch fish you can't just sit on the shore. Sometimes you have to throw out a line or a net, wade out into the water or get into the boat and go meet the fish where they are. Fishermen have to have endurance and know that it takes time as well as patience. They also know that the right tool is important. A net or a lure, you need to talk and listen and meet people's needs where they are.

If we remember that God made us all, he loves us all. Jesus met the people in the lowest of places, and he did not judge, he offered teaching, the good news and healing, Most of all he offered love. Through our Baptism and that small seed planted we have been given a gift. A beautiful gift that it is selfish of us not to share. That is a Faith to believe in that man who chose us at our Baptism. He planted a seed in the name of the Father and the son and the Holy spirit that will grow in us all the days of our lives. A Faith so great that we should never hesitate to share it in any way that we can. We are all fisher of men and his disciples.

So please pray with me,

Dear God, We are called to care for all your children especially the vulnerable in society. Open our hearts and minds that your word may be clearer to us. Let that seed grow in us and remember that the message as your disciples is love, peace, and unity so that we can work with everyone to care for your kingdom and be examples of your grace to the world.

Amen