

WEEK 8: MISSION at The Table

CONFIRMATION - want to meet with y'all to chat about this - no matter where you're at.

- Not to try to *convince* you, but to help you pay attention to what God is doing in your life right now.
- Confirmation is not a *denial* of the Christian tradition you grew up in.
- Confirmation is also bigger than “local church membership”
 - Bigger geographically - Anglicanism is a global thing
 - Bigger historically - saying YES to something in that has continuity throughout church history - has a connection to historic Christianity.
- It's impossible for a person to commit to The Table and not in some sense commit to Anglicanism - likewise it's impossible for a person to commit to Anglicanism without a commitment to a local gathered body. Anglicanism must be lived out locally, and The Table's local life is connected to Anglicanism, etc... dialectic.

So... Mission at the Table

- What do you think of when you hear the word “mission”?
 - Service projects?
 - Evangelism / outreach?
 - Social justice?
 - Inviting people to church?
 - Overseas, “over there”?
- STORY of “witnessing” in the local park
- Mission is NOT the same thing as “church growth” - this is circular logic: come be part of ... what? An organization that tries to get more people to be part of it? The “going to heaven when you die” club? Lame.
- Our mission connected to God's mission - which is to fill the world with his presence, to become one with humanity... so as we come into union with him in baptism, we are simultaneously commissioned as ambassadors.
- We have to be careful not to simply try to “alleviate missional anxiety” - to “feel like” we're doing something positive...
 - We can actually inoculate ourselves against the “real thing” because we're convinced “it's not our problem - we do service projects...”
- Mission = proclaiming / embodying the good news that Jesus is Lord
 - Encounter / embody / extend the presence of Christ
 - Mt 28: go and make disciples, baptizing them, teaching them
- Holistic mission - this is our whole life - moving toward this goal, “being involved in what God is doing.”
- Connected to discipleship/our life together
 - Discipleship & evangelism = same thing - discernment of bad news, proclamation of good news, invitation to respond.
 - Thus mission can simply be inviting people into what we ourselves are doing (participating in the life of God on earth).

- Our friend Shawn McCain talks about “communal formation” -
 - **Hospitality of the Gospel** (Presence in the neighborhood, culture of hospitality, Table Groups, Story Night, hearing Gospel proclaimed) - hinge point = BAPTISM
 - **Celebration of the Gospel** (Receiving Sacraments, studying Scripture, learning creeds, hearing sermons, learning to pray, Feast days/parties, deepening participation in worship, practicing reconciliation) - hinge point = CONFIRMATION
 - **Maturation in the Gospel** (Ongoing catechesis, DNA groups/discernment, mission & evangelism, Deepened study of scripture, disciple-making, cultivating vocation)
- Discerning mission now as a church - POP
 - Looking for a POP, not “good ideas we hope God blesses.” - God is already present and at work, so we don’t need to generate activity for him to do something - instead we *discern* where he’s at work and participate with him there.
 - Luke 10:1-12 - POP
 - Welcomes you (staying in their house)
 - Provides for you (“eating and drinking whatever they provide”)
 - Receives from you (“cure the sick, and say ‘the kingdom of God has come near.’”)
 - To find a person of peace, we have to be a person of peace.
 - **Surrendered Sentness**
 1. We are sent into mission - it’s part of our discipleship
 2. Mission is something we surrender to. It’s not something we control or make happen, like a bathroom remodel.
 3. We go in dependence and reliance on God, connected to him, surrendered to him so that we can discern the evidence of where he is already at work.
 - **Mutual Submission**
 1. “Lambs among wolves...carrying no purse” (v.3-4). Go in submission to the one you seek to reach.
 2. We don’t go as those who have what others need, but as those who need (1 Cor 2.1-5; Phil 2.1-11; Acts 16.11-15).
 3. This submission to others is so we can receive from them (vv. 7-8) and they can receive from us (v.9).
 - **Responsive to Grace**
 1. Because we are accustomed to noticing God’s grace in our lives and participating in it (our own discipleship), we can do that for others as well.
 - **Listen and See as Jesus Would**
 1. “Most people do not listen with the intent to understand, they listen with the intent to reply.” - Steven Covey
 2. If we’re honest, most of us listen to others while we’re thinking about what we’ll say next. But the greatest way to LOVE others is to LISTEN. Listening is an act of love, all by itself.

3. So, when we find a person of peace and they welcome us, we receive not just food and shelter, but their story.
 - STORY - Wednesday open dinners, invitations, finding a POP.

“It can only be that God begins in a small way, at one single place in the world. There must be a place, visible, tangible, where the salvation of the world can begin: that is, where the world becomes what it is supposed to be according to God’s plan. Beginning at that place, the new thing can spread abroad, but not through persuasion, not through indoctrination, not through violence. Everyone must have the opportunity to come and see. All must have the chance to behold and test this new thing. Then, if they want to, they can allow themselves to be drawn into the history of salvation that God is creating. Only in that way can their freedom be preserved. What drives them to the new thing cannot be force, not even moral pressure, but only the fascination of a world that is changed.” - Gerhard Lohfink

- **Questions for Reflection**

- How does this understanding of mission/evangelism differ from how you’ve experienced it in the past?
- What’s one area of your life that is challenged by the call to BE a Person of Peace?
- Who are the Persons of Peace in your life?
- Part of mission is our Practice of “Going” - how do we intentionally be “among” as salt/light, providing opportunities to discern POP?
 - How can we be intentional about being among the marginalized? Do more than say the right things on Sundays and social media?