

Sunday, March 7, 2021 – Third Sunday in Lent

Exodus 20:1-17 - 10 Commandments Given at Sinai

²I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; ³you shall have no other gods before me.

*Why would you not choose and follow the God who had done all that for you?
The foolishness of worshipping a golden calf, when the gods of the Egyptians had not delivered them and had been decisively defeated by the God who did deliver them.*

*The Ten Commandments are highly relational. First three – relationship with God (Leviticus).
Next seven – relationship with other people (second half of Exodus).
Cf. Matthew 22: 36-40 – The greatest and first commandment – the second is like it.*

*Romans 7: 12 – The law is holy, just, and good.
The law restrains evil, shows me my sin, and gives me a guideline for living.
What would life in the wilderness have been like without the law – as summarized in the Ten Commandments, expanded upon in the rest of Exodus and Leviticus, and repeated in Deuteronomy?*

⁸Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work. ¹⁰But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work.

*God gave us the Sabbath as a time to focus on our relationship with God, a reminder that all of time is a gift from God, and a time for much needed rest.
Mark 6: 31 – Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest awhile.*

Psalm 19 - The commandments of the LORD give light to the eyes

¹The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims its maker's handiwork.

What about creation – what places in creation – for you most declare the glory of God?

⁷The teaching of the LORD is perfect and revives the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom to the simple.

⁸The statutes of the LORD are just and rejoice the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is clear and gives light to the eyes.

¹¹By them also is your servant enlightened,
and in keeping them there is great reward.

*When and how have you found God's Word to be perfect, sure, just, and clear?
When and how has it revived your soul, given you wisdom, made your heart rejoice, and given light to your eyes?
When and how have you found great reward in following God's Word?*

¹⁴Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight,
O LORD, my strength and my redeemer.

Are the words of your mouth and the meditations of your heart acceptable in God's sight?

1 Corinthians 1:18-25 - Christ crucified, the wisdom of God

¹⁸The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

How would the message about the cross be foolishness?

How have you experienced it to be the power of God?

1 Corinthians 2: 2-5 – I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.

Paul's experiences in Athens immediately before coming to Corinth - When have you felt that something you did was a total failure but God was able to bring about good from it?

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe.

²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

Where are you most glad that God's wisdom and strength are far, far greater than yours?

John 2:13-22 - The cleansing of the temple

The Synoptic Gospels – Matthew, Mark, and Luke – place the cleansing of the Temple near the beginning of Holy Week. John, writing later, places it near the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Did it happen twice, or did John feel the freedom to place it at a different time because of the point he wanted to make - perhaps setting the stage for the beginning of Jesus' confrontation with the religious leaders?

¹³The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables.

¹⁵Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!"

¹⁸The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?"

¹⁹Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

²⁰The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" ²¹But he was speaking of the temple of his body.

²²After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Mark 14: 58 – "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'"