

Jesus Sees in You a Common, Ordinary Person Called to an Uncommon and Extraordinary Mission, the Mission of Sharing His Work in the World

"I've always been somewhat intrigued and even puzzled by the matter-of-fact way in which Andrew, Peter, James and John respond to Jesus," when he called them to follow him, the Rev. Dr. Brook Thelander said Sunday.

"Mark tells that upon Jesus' invitation, Andrew and Peter leave their nets 'at once' to go with him. In the case of James and John, we are told that they 'immediately' leave their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, to go with Jesus.

"Every time I read this text I ask myself, 'What did Andrew, Peter, James and John see in Jesus, to leave everything behind and go with him like they did?' They had to see something," Pastor Thelander continued. "Something must have happened, because they had never seen this man before!

"Turns out I am not alone in my question. The ancient church Father Jerome also was puzzled by this radical course of action by these men," and concluded that there must have been "something divinely compelling in the face of the Savior, . . . something divine in Jesus' very countenance that seeing, they could not resist."

"May I ask each of you a question this morning?" Pastor Thelander continued. "The question is this: What do you see in Jesus? Do you see something compelling enough to abandon your own selfish desires and attitudes? . . . to lay aside your own wisdom and embrace his will and purpose for your life? . . . to trust him when things in your life don't make perfect sense? . . . to trust in him during times of sickness and calamity? . . . to embrace totally his call on your life, whatever that may be?"

"There is a greater question," however, Pastor Thelander said, and that is, "What does Jesus see in you?"

One miracle in this text is that the newly called disciples "perceived something about Jesus that was extraordinary. This is Jerome's take on the text. The second—and perhaps greater miracle—was that the God of the universe and the agent of Creation saw something in these men, and called them to participate in a collaborative mission to save the world." These men were "minding their own business, which for them meant mending their fishing nets" and trying "to provide for their families."

"The important issue then, is not that they are looking for Jesus. The (p. 2→)



Jesus casts the unclean spirit out of a man in the synagogue in Capernaum, in this Sunday's Gospel lesson. Drawing by Maximino Cerezo, servicioskoinonia.org. His teaching "has such authority!"; they exclaim.



Sunday will be Epworth's 10th anniversary! The first service was on January 31, 1999, on that ancient Christian feast day, Superbowl Sunday. Epworth was then known as Epworth-in-the-Foothills.

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Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Brook Thelander. epworthrector@msn.com
On the Web: www.epworthchapelonthegreen.org
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.: Word & Table service
Sundays, 11:30 a.m.: Refreshments, conversation
Sundays, 11:45 a.m.: Moderated post-service discussion
Thursdays, 7:00 p.m.: Evening Prayers
This Sunday, 6:00 p.m.: Healing Service
For the poor: Ground beef; chicken; bacon; fresh produce (particular need now); canned fruits and vegetables; milk; cutter; cheese; cooking oil; pancake mix and syrup; dry cereal; chili powder; garlic powder; diapers and baby wipes; toilet paper; soap; shampoo and conditioner; razors; shaving cream; men's, women's and children's underwear; cleaning supplies and bleach.
Readings. 2/1, 10 a.m.: Deut. 18:15-20; Ps. 111; 1 Cor. 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28. 2/1, Healing Service: 1 Chron. 7:11-16; Ps. 103:1-13; James 5:13-16; Mt. 8:1-4, 2/8: 2 Kings 4:8-37; Ps. 142; 1 Cor. 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39.
Prayer Emphases: Venezuela; Apostolic Christian Church; Glad Tidings Church, Bangor, ME, and the Rev. Ron Morris; Prison Fellowship International; parishioners on Hartman Street.
(Sermon, cont'd.) important issue is that Jesus is looking for them. . . . The real miracle here is that what the Savior saw in them, he also sees in us, and his call to them is also a call to us: a call to be his beloved children, a call to leave behind our old way of life in order to embrace a new one, a call to bear witness to all those we meet that Jesus sees something in them that is special and unique. . . . The gifts of bread and wine are reminders to you today that in you he sees something very special. In you he sees someone very precious . . . a common, ordinary person called to an uncommon and extraordinary mission, the mission of sharing his work in the world."

Christian Love: Theory & Practice NNU, Nampa, February 5-7