

June 23, 2019 - Speaker - Dave Solmes
Text: Luke 6:12-19 From the Inside Looking Out

As we imagine our text it seems that Jesus had slipped away to find some kind of quiet place. There was certainly a lot going on those days. Crowds continued to grow. There was no shortage of conversation as people tried to figure Jesus out.

One of the biggest changes on the religious front was that the religious centre was shifting. For hundreds and hundreds of years the religious centre had always been the activities of the temple. If you were wanting to have a sense of what God was up to you were directed to the temple. God met with people at the temple. Jesus' opponents, the Pharisees, were the watch dogs for this - vigilant - rallying to keep their religious system in order and centred around the coming and going from the temple. This tension was very evident as the events of this evening and morning unfold.

"One of those days" ...

The Jew and the Pharisee were followers and protectors of the law which placed different levels of value on certain days. Certainly, for the Jew and Pharisee the Sabbath was the most important day of the week. Furthermore, there was a whole religious system that marked certain days as set apart requiring special acknowledgment and practise.

What we see in Jesus life and teaching is a fulfilment of those laws. Jesus is teaching and modelling that each day matters. Every day is a gift from God. Days don't become special because they are tagged as religious days or filled with religious ceremony. Jesus was Lord of every day not just the sabbath. Perhaps Jesus is casting vision and creating expectation that everyday has the potential to be special and sacred. Monday - Saturdays are the Lord days as is the role of a sabbath even in our lives today.

On this day it says Jesus climbed a mountain to find a place to pray

To those familiar with the Old Testament it would have typified in Exodus 19 Moses climbing Mt. Sinai to meet with God. The Jews and Pharisees would have been very familiar with the idea of climbing the mountain to meet with God and coming down the mountain with revelation and timely words.

Perhaps what we see here with Jesus is more about Jesus seeking out a meeting place with His Heavenly Father.

What we do see here is the theme of Jesus' reliance on God through prayer. Prayer is the first thing, not the last thing Jesus does. This is obviously a strong Lukan theme in this gospel. Jesus prayed all night.

#1. I would suggest that this is not about the length it was more about praying until His meeting with his Father was over.

Question: What value is there in praying in an unhurried manner?

Question: What value is there in praying until the meeting is over?

#2. I would suggest this all night prayer meeting was about intercession.

Hebrews 7:25 - He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for us..

Question - What do feel about the idea that Jesus has fulfilled the law, is now our active High Priest, and is presently interceding for you?

Prayer is a personal meeting with a great God. This God / This person - The One who is not like us. The wholly other, acknowledging the differences between God and everything else. God different than all the other things that exist. The God who we know, while being the one who is mysterious. The God who is unchangeable. Our maker, the creator of His universe, supernatural, all knowing, full of wisdom and knowledge, willing to speak, share, willing to listen.

When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them,

As people came, Jesus chose 12. It is not that He was just choosing 12 and not choosing others. Luke identifies some specific people that were being called by

Jesus at a certain time, for certain reasons. These 12 who were being called to align with the great needs of that hour.

This was actually the Calling of the apostles, or the sent ones. This confirms that God won't give up on the "human project" but will seek to heal and restore through the human life of Jesus, and the human lives of these first followers commissioned to carry the message/and the work of God forward.

Still today - Jesus knows your name, and your calling you qualifies you!

Exodus 33:17 - ¹⁷ The Lord replied to Moses, "I will indeed do what you have asked, for I look favorably on you, and I know you by name."

Isaiah 43:1 - "Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine.

Question: How does it make you feel that God knows your name?

(verse 17) He went down with them and stood on a level place

Note: Luke says Jesus is on a "large level area". Not sure what Luke's getting at here but as we understand the big picture we remember that Jesus is "the great equalizer". It's a great picture. All on equal footing with one another, all together with Jesus in the middle, depending on him for life, wholeness and God's vision for human life. God does this through Jesus who stood on "level ground" with us (Philippians 2). We are equal in sin, equal in God's grace given. It's not about what we've done, or where we're from, but God's life and love given through Jesus.

Verse 17-18 A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases.

Here we have it: The gospel in a simple picture: Jesus in the centre and people reaching for Him. Jesus drawing all people into community and to Himself. Faith rising as people gather. People reaching for Jesus and people are being healed and helped. People meeting Jesus, "the wholly other". Someone who not only speaks with the words of God, but has the power and life of God pulsating through this Him.

One might say - here is this vision of human flourishing. You and I standing around Jesus and all people reaching to Him. Jesus the new temple. Jesus, the One reaching out. Certainly it is of our best interest to reach out and receive.

How beautiful a day: A cinematic scene and a picture of what Jesus does for all who come to him. Perhaps even a forecast of the end of the story - Heaven, when mankind will come together, surrounding Jesus, in the new heaven and new earth, everyone healed, everyone taking hold of Jesus and receiving eternal life.

Question:

Is Jesus in the centre of your life?

What would be the evidence of Jesus at the centre of someone life?