

Theme for 2018

WE ARE THE ARMY OF GOD & **WE ARE ARMED AND DANGEROUS!**

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)



This Week’s Thought – October 14, 2018

“Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me.” Mark 9:39 (NRSV)

Mark 9 is a remarkable text in which we find the disciples unable to do miracles in Jesus’ name, outraged at people successfully doing miracles who clearly are not yet His disciples! The disciples want to claim exclusive rights on the ability to do anything with or for Jesus. They are the ones who know Him most intimately, they are the ones who have a full and robust vision of His kingdom and of faithful discipleship. Yet in this story, Jesus shows incredible compassion for those who are infants in their faith and deeply desires to welcome them into His kingdom and for them to grow and flourish.

As I have pondered this scene, I am struck by the fact that Jesus is okay with a slow process of growth. Are we?

Jesus is remarkably comfortable with long stories and a slow process of growth. On the other hand, culturally we are deeply frustrated and annoyed by anything that takes a long time. We live in the age of microwaves, Air Fryers, Fast Food; of airplanes and crash diets. We have been formed in countless ways to be people who demand immediate results, and that expectation extends into our spiritual lives.

We must look to Jesus and learn to embrace and celebrate, as Eugene Peterson calls it, a “*long obedience in the same direction.*”

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We must cultivate a deep desire to seek out the grace and goodness of God that can be found in long stories, to see how Jesus is patient with us and others in our lives that we may struggle to love or be patient with ourselves. Jesus celebrates our victories in faith while loving us in our deep places of need.

If you feel stalled out in your faith or like an infant in your Christian journey, receive the love of Jesus today. He looks at you in your need and invites you closer through perfect love and compassion. If you today feel like the disciples did and struggle with God’s lavish love towards those you deem unworthy, remember afresh your own brokenness and need and learn to cultivate a posture of gratitude and humility before the Lord.

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” (1 John 3:1)

Application: Is there someone in your life towards whom you harbor bitterness and need to learn to instead seek God-given patience and love? Ask God to teach you to love others just as He loves and welcomes them.

Prayer of reflection you might pray this week: “Heavenly Father grow me into a faithful disciple, so I can help grow disciples of Jesus. This is my prayer in the matchless, wonderful and compassionate name of Jesus, Amen!”

“And then God answered: “Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what’s coming. It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait! And it doesn’t lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It’s on its way. It will come right on time.” Habakkuk 2:2-3 (MSG)

Yours in Christ, Pastor King