



Cultivating RE-CREATION

Sermon Starter

JULY 21: 9TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

CULTIVATING LOVE THROUGH RE-CREATION - SOME THOUGHTS TO HELP GUIDE YOUR SERMON WRITING

***Instead of a manuscript, I am providing some guiding thoughts that might help you build your own manuscript for a sermon. That way you can tell the Good News in your voice, instead of mine.**

The Gospel: Mark 6:30-34 and 50-56

30 The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. 31 Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."

32 So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. 33 But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. 34 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So, he began teaching them many things.

53 When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. 54 As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. 55 They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. 56 And wherever he went—into villages, towns or countryside—they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

As you write you sermon, focus on verse 31: Even Jesus needs to rest and so do his disciples

Here are some thoughts...

*Jesus suggests a quiet place for re-creation, in nature, on a boat

*Going by boat, even though people met them there WAS an escape. They traveled along the coast, ALONE, in a boat, instead of walking with the people on the shore from town to town.

*Many of us have been a part of outdoor ministries (camp) in some way or another. The tag line for many outdoor ministries is "a space apart" or a "a place set apart" for growing in Christ. That's not an accident. We need space apart for re-creation, just like Jesus and the disciples did. Camp is one example of a place we step away, briefly, from the chaos of ministry in our daily lives—"a quiet place to get some rest". The key is that it is a space APART. Re-creation happens when we step away or step apart from the chaos, not when we are IN it.

- Here, you might share your own space apart, or, if your congregation is interactive, invite members to share

*Recreation, in this story, wasn't long. It was a quick boat ride between two places. BUT Jesus found a way to make it a few minutes of re-creation for his disciples.

- o Short rests are Ok, even good. We don't need to get overwhelmed trying to plan re-creation. Just allow it to happen when the time is right and there is a moment. It can be as simple as a quiet cup of coffee on a drive to work by yourself. It doesn't have to be a week alone in a hermitage or a pilgrimage to India. You don't need to buy a special tent or a name brand backpack. Just take a few moments to walk or sit quietly by yourself in God's creation.

* Jesus saw the need for his disciples' re-creation. He was paying attention. He could have said "come on. People need us. Hurry up. Let's go." But he noticed they were hungry and tired, and he found a simple way to provide that recreation.

- o We are called to watch out for one another and to notice when other disciples need recreation. (That's where the cultivating love comes in.) We aren't just called to take moments of recreation for ourselves. We are called to look for the simple ways to care for one another and to cultivate healthy time away for our partners the ministry that is daily life. Do we take the kids on a walk around the block so our partner can have a moment of quiet? Maybe we offer to answer phones for five minutes so a co-worker can clear their head?
- o Even the Old Testament reading shows God's awareness of the need for rest for God's servants. "AFTER the king was settled in and the Lord had given him REST from his enemies....". And we note that a well-rested David is ready and willing to think about what is next and what is needed
- o Offer examples of ways you have seen the congregation look out for one another in ministry and provide those times of recreation for one another.
- o Challenge the congregation to think of ways we can provide that recreation for one another in this congregation, this community and this synod. You might lift up the example of on-going tornado disaster relief in the synod. Those who have been doing it for MONTHS now are tired and weary. How might we step in and provide that re-creation for them and that moment of much needed rest?

*It's also important to remember that recreation isn't intended to go on forever. The boat landed. Jesus and the disciples went back to work. Jesus didn't say "lets sail off into the sunset and go away on a private island all by ourselves forever!" The purpose of recreation is to recharge so that we can continue ministry in community among and with God's people. Recreation is supposed to be a recharge, not a permanent outlet. We use it as sacred, holy time to renew so that we can care for others as our best selves.

- o Sheep need a shepherd. Lost sheep without someone to guide them and care for them are doomed. Truly. Jesus sees people wandering lost like sheep without a shepherd and that is the "wake up call" to return to work.
- o What are your "wake-up" calls. How do you know when it's time to get back to work? How do members of the congregation know? How do we help each other get back to work and how do we watch for those lost sheep?

Bottom line: there is work to be done and that work can exhaust us, just as it exhausted Jesus. Find your space apart, help others find their, recharge and carry on sharing the good news!