

Rev Sally's Sermon January 17, 2021

Have you ever been so excited about a new discovery that you can't wait to share it with others? Maybe it's a delicious recipe that you can't wait to share on Facebook. Or maybe you just finished a great new book. Or maybe you found a useful new app for your phone. When we make these discoveries, we want to share our good news with everyone.

Phillip knew this kind of excitement. When he met Jesus, Jesus said, "Follow me." And though we don't know the details of this meeting, we know that something made Phillip stop what he was doing and follow Jesus. And something made Phillip so excited that he had to share the good news. Immediately he went to find Nathanael and told him about Jesus. "We have found the one promised by God. He is Jesus of Nazareth." Nathanael was a bit hesitant to believe. Yet still Phillip urged – "Come and see for yourself." Phillip was so excited that he would not be deterred.

Like Phillip, we're also called to share what we know about Jesus. The collect that we will pray today reminds us of this call. "Grant that your people illumined by your Word and Sacraments, may shine with the radiance of Christ's glory, that he may be known, worshipped and obeyed to the ends of the earth..." We're called to share the faith we know. We share our faith through both our words and our actions. In baptism, we make three promises as part of our Baptismal covenant. "Will you proclaim by word and example the Good news of God in Christ? Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself? Will you strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being?" As we live into these promises, we are sharing our faith in Jesus.

So, what does it mean to make these promises a reality in our lives? It means allowing others to see our faith both in our words and action. It means telling others what we've experienced about God's life and love. It means caring for others through the actions of our lives. It means being willing to sacrifice our own comfort for the sake of others. It means working for a world where the love of God is experienced as a reality. When these promises become a reality in our lives, God's love is revealed in our world.

But living into these promises isn't easy. It may be easier to follow the status quo. Sometimes we just glibly repeat the promises. But if we will take

these promises seriously and let them shape our lives, then we will be helping to share God's good news.

And though living into these promises may not be easy, we don't do it alone. Our God is the greatest change agent in the world. He can empower us to change. Through prayer, through listening to God's word and through keeping our hearts open, God will shape our lives. He will help us to see our lives as he sees them and He will help us to see the ways we are called to share his good news.

There're several ways we can share this good news right now. We can share what we have with others. One way to do this is to bring food to our food cart for those in our community who are hungry. We can pray for others, especially for our nation and our leaders. This week will be a critical week for our country. We all need God's wisdom and guidance. In this week's e-info, I included a selection of prayers for our nation. Use them this week. If you didn't get them, call or email me and I'll send them to you. And finally, we can try having a generous spirit even toward those we disagree with. There's a tradition of providing a 100-day grace period to a new administration, giving them a chance to make a good start. I hope that no matter our political perspective, we can give each other a grace period. We can look for the best in each other, remembering that not only are we all citizens of this nation, but we are all children of God.

We call Phillip, Nathanael, and the other first disciples, apostles. An apostle is one sent to share the word and work of another, to share the good news they know. Today, all of us are still called to be Jesus' apostles. As we let the love of God be reflected in our lives, we will be sharing the good news of God through our words and actions. And when we do, the love of God will be known throughout our world.