

Mark 1:14-20, 6:6b-13, 30-32

Come and Go

Sunday July 22nd, 2018

God has built into his creation rhythms of life. We have the rhythm of night and day, night for rest and day for work. In many parts of the world we have the rhythm of the seasons: Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. Here in the Arizona desert we simply have the 'warm season' followed by the 'hot season' with the blessed monsoons. Children come into our families, they grow and then we send them out into the world. They come and then they go.

All of life is interwoven with various rhythms of life from young to old. My grandkids take a nap every day around noon. I wish I could, but my current rhythm of life precludes it. We transition in life from physical strength to moral and spiritual strength. We become wise.

Now a story is told about 3 young boys bragging about how tough they were,

"I'm so tough," said the first boy, "that I can wear out a pair of shoes in a week."

"Well," said the second boy, "I'm so tough; I can wear out a pair of jeans in a day."

"That's nothing," said the third boy. "When my parents take me to see Grandma and Grandpa, I can wear them out in just one hour." Mikey's

Funnies

There are indeed rhythms to all of life and Jesus in our Scriptures today highlights a major rhythm in the life of all Christians who are growing and maturing, which I simply call **"Come and Go."** It is closely aligned with the rhythm of **"rest and work"** in the Christians' life or **"abiding with Jesus and then being fruitful."**

In verse 17 we see this when Jesus said to Simon and Andrew, **"Come, follow me, and I will send you out to fish for people."** Simply, "Come and Go!" Come follow me and then go out to make disciples, but before that there was a season of abiding with Jesus to learn his ways and message.

Now I decided to preach this sermon because these 3 words kept coming to my mind the last several weeks as I read the Gospels, “**Come and Go.**” After a while I determined this was something I needed to speak to.

Think about it, in all the Gospels Jesus’ disciples come to him and follow him; and then are sent, they go into the world to do Jesus’ work in word and in deed. In our lives it is the same. We come to Jesus in repentance and then we go out into the world to serve.

Now Jesus message in a Readers Digest form is found in Mark 1:15, “**The time has come,**” he said.
“**The kingdom of God has come near.**
Repent and believe the good news!”

The time that is spoken of here is God’s perfect timing. It is Kairos time. It is the time that God breaks into our world, into our personal life and speaks. It is not Cronos time or chronological time, the simple passing of one moment after another, it is the time that God speaks and we need to listen. It is the time that God invites us into a relationship and we need to act in response.

And what is the heart of Jesus’ message? Repent, turn to God, change your mind about the things of this world and turn to God. In Greek it is the word, “**metanoia**”, which literally means a change of mind. In this change of mind we reject sin, and a sinful life; and turn to God and the lifestyle God wants. We don’t just feel sorry for suffering of the consequences of sin, but we reject the sin and sinning that caused the consequences. Repentance is more than a heartfelt sorrow for sin. That heartfelt repentance is important, but true repentance is change of heart and life.

This leads us to belief. In New Testament faith “belief” is not something floating around in our heads it is an active response to the gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ that, “**God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life!**”

When Jesus calls us to follow him it's not just to heaven,... after we die,... after doing whatever we want here on earth. Jesus calls us to a task!

Note verse 17 again, **“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”** God calls us to Come to him and then to Go and do something. Not just sit around and daydream about the sweet by and by. Jesus calls us to Repent and Believe. Another way of saying that is the 2 questions I ask after most of my sermons: **What is God saying to you? I.e. Repent, turn to God and listen.** And **“What are you going to do?” I.e. Believe!**

So you see Jesus' call to Come and to Go applies to all of us, absolutely all of us!! Whose responsibility is it to go and fish for people? It is yours and it is mine. It is ours together as Vista Church. It's not just up to missionaries and pastors and apostles and saints. It's up to you and me. It's up to common ordinary people who claim the name of Christ.

The first people Jesus called to be his disciples, eventually apostles, were common ordinary untrained, uneducated, powerless fishermen. He didn't call Rabbi's, or theologians, or Royalty, or Romans, just fisherman. He said, **“Come follow me”** and he says that to you today right here.” And just like with those common fisherman God is going to do extraordinary things with you.

We as United Methodists have this as our Mission Statement: **“To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”** It's on the front of our bulletin almost every week. That is our individual mandate, local church mandate, and the mandate of our denomination; and I would submit to you the mandate of any Christian and any Church for Jesus said in Matthew 28:19, **“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...”** Which we refer to also as the great commission.

And again does it apply to all of us? Are any of us too unworthy or too unqualified to come to Jesus when he calls? Let this video clip remind us of who Jesus called and were all on his list.

DISCIPLES VIDEO

You can come to Jesus and go into the world and transform it!

And when you get weary in the work that God has called you to then it is time to “come away and rest”. As the spiritual says, ‘steal away’. Abide with Jesus, retreat, rest and be recreated. After the Disciples went out and preached and healed and cast out demons they were so successful they were surrounded by people in need.

They were so in demand and swamped by people they couldn’t even eat so Jesus called them away to rest. In verse 31 it says, “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.”

The Christian Gospel with its call to repentance is a challenge to the very core of our being, not only for those who hear it but also for those who bring it. People don’t want to deal with the change of heart and life that we bring to them in the name of Jesus; and so they take out their frustration on us. It is wearing to share the faith at times in word and in deed. That is why Jesus calls us to come away and rest and abide with him when we are weak and weary.

We try to preempt that time of weakness and weariness by taking breaks like the committees at Vista Church do in the summer time. We try to rest; so that when the Fall, or warm time comes, we are rested enough to work. The rest and abiding with Jesus helps us to avoid becoming weary and wanting to give up as our Upper Room devotional in our bulletin reminds us.

And the work of God in Christ is hard because the call to repentance is so deeply challenging. It is a call to a complete change of life. It is a call to abandon life as one once knew it and take on another. It is a death and resurrection to new life.

When I worked with youth, I worked at one point with quite a few gang members. They were members of a Crips gang called the TCG.

Like all gangs they dealt in violence. To get into the gang you had to be “jumped in” in other words they beat the living daylight out of you. To get out, and this was one of the few gangs that would allow anyone to get out, they beat you even more.

One young man I knew decided to get out and take his Christian life seriously. He was severely beaten. He had two cousins who stayed in and pursued that violent lifestyle. They wound up in prison, just up the road from us, in Florence for murder. All 3 went through my youth program. Only one repented turned to God in heart and life and found life, a good life here on earth and eternal life in the world to come.

Not all repentance is as dramatic or so starkly contrasts the life and death consequences as these young men’s lives do. But for all of us when we come to follow Jesus, and leave all behind and set out to do the task God has set before us, our lives and others will be changed for the good.

We will see and experience the transformation of the world for Jesus Christ.

So my friends, **“What is God saying to you?” Repent turn to God!**
“And what are you going to do? Believe the Good News
and what God has called you to do.

In Jesus’ Name amen.