



The Rev. Alan Sutherland, Rector

January 25, 2009

Epiphany 3 2009

8oz water, 2 tsp yeast, 1 1/2 tsp salt 1 1/2 tbsp sugar, 2 tbsp olive oil, 3 cups flour, 2 tbsp dry milk.

Any idea what we are making?

These are the ingredients for bread. Different ingredients that on their own you would not normally eat but when mixed together they make bread. We take some raw materials, mix them together and we make something.

This morning we find Jesus calling 4 fishermen to be his first disciples. They were not theologians, not well versed in Jewish Law or thought or debate. They were simple fishermen that knew when they caught fish they ate and when they didn't they went hungry. They were simple fishermen who had responsibilities to family, and to business. Their lives were uncluttered and fairly routine. Their work was hard and it was long but they did it.

Then along comes Jesus and sees in them a raw material that if by some teaching, some example and some guidance he could make them into 4 people who could change the world.

Now the ingredients he had to work with were a mixed bag.

One of them Peter was notorious for engaging his mouth before his brain. Peter also had a tendency for violence because it is thought that he was the one who cut off the person's ear in Gethsemane.

Peter also had a tendency to deny the truth when put under pressure so that he could save his own skin.

Then there was Andrew who was kind of on the quiet side and did not like any of the limelight but did

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many good things in a very quiet and subtle way

Then there was James and John who Jesus nicknamed Boanerges-sons of thunder. This probably reflected their personalities because I am sure that they did not put up with much nonsense. They had a hard head on their shoulders.

One time John said that he tried to stop someone working in Jesus name because they were not following Jesus and Jesus said do not try to stop them.

In Mark it tells of John and James looking towards the future and who will be the leaders in Jesus kingdom. In Matthew it is their mother who had great intentions for them both when the kingdom of Jesus was inaugurated.

These guys had visions of grandeur and power. They had visions of being the leaders who would be looked up to. It was at this point that the other 10 disciples got angry at them.

And so we find Jesus this morning looking at these 4 disciples and saying follow me and I will make you fishers of men.

One of the favorite words that Mark uses in his gospel is the word immediately. Well let me assure you that immediately they did not become the greatest men on earth. Jesus did not promise them that. What Jesus offered is that if they followed him, if they observed him, listened to him watched him, and trusted him he would make them into something.

Jesus did not say he would give them anything but would make them into something.

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I believe in our life of discipleship we often lose that sense that Jesus has called us to make us into something.

The society we live in is an immediate society. We are now a people of instant gratification. It seems whatever we want there is a way to have it now.

Mark used the word immediately many times in his gospel but I do not believe that these 4 disciples' lives were changed immediately.

During his 3 years with Jesus I am sure that peter was challenged many times by Jesus words and actions. Jesus spoke much on what we think and say. He said if you think it, it is as good as done. He said it is not what goes into a person that defiles, it is what comes from a person that defiles. Jesus said following him is hard and he told parables of seeds and soil, of rejection and of denial. And peter listened and peter learned and peter grew into the potential that Jesus saw in him.

Jesus talked of doing good things in secret and your father will reward you. I am sure that Andrew grew in confidence in what he did and who he brought to Jesus.

Jesus talked much of authority and said if you want to be great you must first be a servant. The first will be last and the last will be first. He turned the whole idea of power and authority upside down and I am sure that both John and James listened very carefully.

When Jesus took the children in his arms after they had been told by the disciples not to bother Jesus, Jesus said let them come to me for it is to such as these that the kingdom belongs.

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Today we read of the calling of disciples but we must never think that just because Jesus called them life was completely different for them . The way life was lived was different but how they were , what they said, what they did changed over the course of time. Jesus took the ingredients they offered and made something.

Too often we come to God and we ask Give me something now.

What god asks of us is not ask god to give us something but to make us into something.

So we do not ask for God to give me love We ask god to make me loving

We do not ask for Joy we ask make me a joyful person

We do not only ask for forgiveness we also ask make me a forgiving person.

This move from give to make is so important in our journey as disciples of Jesus.

Today Jesus asks each one of us again to follow him and I will make you all fishers of people.

Because right here in this building today we have the talent, the ability, the calling to offer the world not just a list of ingredients but the bread of life.

amen

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