

Read

Luke 9:12-17

Consider

Let me set the stage for this week's passage with a few questions. Have you ever experienced that a planned activity of yours was jeopardized by some unwarranted interruptions? Maybe you were heading out for bubble tea but were stopped by your parents who wanted you to help with something. Or you had a deadline to meet and were fully engrossed in work when a friend unexpectedly showed up at the door to share with you his/her trouble. And do you sometimes feel that there are far too many things and needs vying for your attention and commitment? Or sometimes you feel annoyed that some people are asking too much of you? As we go about our days, how shall we plan our time and commitments? How do we set priorities? Last but not least, how do we see the time we have in our hands?

Read Luke 9:1-17. Imagine yourself to be one of the Twelve sent out by Jesus to preach the gospel, drive out demons and heal the sick. You went from village to village, preaching and healing everywhere (9:7). Now you rejoined Jesus and the other apostles (9:10). There must be so many exciting stories to share and catching up to do with one another. You might also be physically tired and emotionally drained after all the travelling and excitement on the road. Now you could relax, catch some good rest and enjoy the company of the Lord.

What about Jesus? Apart from receiving the return of the Twelve, he just learned that John the Baptist was beheaded by Herod. Matthew 14:13 tells that when Jesus heard the news, he right away withdrew privately to a solitary place. John was the one who prepared his way, preaching and baptizing people and proclaiming the coming of the Lord. Jesus must be filled with tremendous sorrow. His grief must be so overwhelming that he needed to be alone. He just wanted to quietly slip away. But the crowds won't let him. They followed and gathered around him, bringing the sick along. Despite that the Twelve had just returned from their mission trips, and despite how much he wanted to withdraw from the people, he welcomed them and started ministering to them.

It was getting late, and the crowd was still there. The Twelve came to Jesus and said, "Send the crowd away". The apostles put it nicely that they were concerned about the crowd getting hungry. To them, the simple solution was to dismiss them. The crowd has been around for too long. They didn't need to stay. But Jesus replied, "They do not need

to go away (Matt 14:16)... you give them something to eat (Lk 9:13)". How did the apostles and Jesus see things differently in view of the situation and the needs of the moment? To the apostles, the crowd needed to go look for food and lodging. They would be an inconvenience if they stayed on. To Jesus, they didn't need to go. Here different needs of the moment surfaced. What did the apostles see? What did Jesus see? What needs and whose needs carried more weight? Consider how the result could be very different if the people were sent away. Reflect on how the way we see things and people affect the way we act.

Finish reading Luke 9:12-17 and reflect on the miracle act of Jesus. What can you learn about Jesus from this event? What can we learn from this passage?

Come this Sunday as we worship and learn more about our Lord of miracles.

Deaconess Josephine Chow

P r a y

May the Christ who walks on wounded feet walk with you on the road.
May the Christ who serves with wounded hands stretch out your hands to serve.
May the Christ who loves with a wounded heart open your hearts to love.
May you see the face of Christ in everyone you meet,
and may everyone you meet see the face of Christ in you.
Amen

D i v i n g D e e p e r

Read 9:10-11

- Skim through Luke 9:1-2 and Matthew 14:6-13 to find out what happened before this passage and why Jesus took the apostles to "withdraw by themselves".
- How did Jesus respond to the crowds that followed him?
- What does this tell us about Jesus and what can we learn from him?

Read 9:12-17

- Why did the Twelve ask Jesus to send the crowd away? What were their concerns? Imagine how they might be feeling.
- How did Jesus respond? Why didn't he send the crowd away?
- How did the apostles and Jesus see things differently in view of the situation and the needs of the moment? Consider how the way we see things affects the way we act.
- Imagine how things would be different if the people were sent away? What would have the apostles and the crowd missed?
- Examine the miracle of Feeding the Five Thousand. What can we learn about Jesus.

Reflection:

- What can we learn from Jesus in the way he sees and responds to the needs of people?
- How do you make decisions, plans and set priorities as you go about your day. Do you see the needs of people apart from your own needs?
- Pray for a heart that cares, eyes that see and hands that serve others like Jesus.

How can we live closer **WITH GOD** in our lives?

How are we being **TRANSFORMED** to be more like Christ?

How is the Holy Spirit empowering us to imitate Christ in what we **DO** this week?