

Notes for Brian's Sermon at Kerrisdale Presbyterian Church

Sun, Jan 5, 2019

The Education of Jesus

(Ps 114 and Luke 2:41-52)



After three days they found him in the temple,
sitting among the teachers,
listening to them and asking them questions.
(Luke 2:46)

Insights from the story within the story

I'm not an expert in the protocols of good parenting at the time of Jesus' upbringing, so not noticing that your 12-year-old son was not around on the journey home from Jerusalem to Nazareth may have been normal – or maybe not – but that's not really the point of the story – at least, not as I read it this morning – I was more intrigued by this little glimpse Luke gives us into the education of Jesus – what was happening in those 30 years prior to his public ministry beginning with the prophetic text from Isaiah that got him kicked out of his home town by an angry mob – this is the only concrete glimpse we get in all of the Gospels – this is the kind of inadequacy in documentation that sends historians like me into despair – so, we are left with having to imagine what might have been going on, based on the attitudes and behaviours in the three years for which we have multiple sources – what emerged from those 30 years of formation was a passionate, persuasive, and prophetic rabbi who sought to call his people back to the essence of their faith found in God's covenant with Abraham and Sarah – “I will be your God so you can bless all of my creation” – and, as people came to trust the man and his message, they came to understand more and more deeply that this was not just another radical roaming preacher, but God incarnate, God with us, in the flesh, full of grace and truth – what Jesus learned in those 30 years was what God wanted to make happen in and to God's good earth – nothing less than the redemption of all creation

Provocative points to ponder – as always, too many to cram into one sermon

Two insights came to me this week as I ponder this sermon as a contribution to the conversations we are having here at Kerrisdale about continuing the reconciling ministry of Jesus Christ in all that we do – to continue that ministry, we must be constantly learning about the ways God chose to be human while among us in Jesus Christ – that's what makes learning more and more about the living Word so important – Canadian Presbyterians have treasured that aspect of the faith – treasures in earthen vessels who

see through a glass darkly, so who must be constantly learning better ways of doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with our God – in our search for a new ‘teaching elder,’ that’s a big part of what we are seeking – someone who values that and will work with us to learn ever more deeply – the two insights, very briefly, to provoke further ponder among you:

- **Compassionate** – deep learning arises out of love – we learn best what we love most – a deep love must have been nurtured in this 12-year-old for the God in whom his people trusted so faithfully, for so many centuries, in so many traumatic and terrifying circumstances – a soul-felt response of gratitude for the love that God had for them and their potential as blessings
- **Curious** – that loving relationship makes us want to know more – provokes fascination – it’s significant, I think, that Luke doesn’t have Jesus teaching the teachers, but listening and being curious – what would happen if we, his followers, adopted that approach to sharing the Good News that God is love – not a monological message with an attitude of having what you need to know, but a dialogical conversation that generates a community of mutual learning, no matter who is part of the conversation – to discern and align with where God is at work in God’s world

How does this apply to our mission here at Kerrisdale?

So, be curious in compassion – that’s the lesson I got from this morning’s story that gives us a perceptive glimpse into the education of Jesus – I think that’s a pretty good way of imagining that process and of imagining how we can invite people into a space of grace where the Holy Spirit can inspire us together to grow into our full humanity by doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with the God we see in human flesh in Jesus Christ – that’s what I pray your new teaching elder will do with you

My Notes

My Prayers

