

**Brian's Sermon Text for Sunday Worshiping at Brentwood
Sunday, August 9, 2020**

**Proclaiming the Gospel
(Psalm 105:1-6 and 1 Corinthians 9:1-27)**



**I do it all for the sake of the gospel,
so that I may share in its blessings.
(1 Cor 9:23)**

Word to Ponder = Proclaim

Congregational Wisdom = announce, prophet/herald who speaks out, resound, faith seeking understanding, confident announcing, announce with conviction, show clearly, enthusiastic declaration, whatever is being announced is new/news

Most of you know how much I enjoy searching for pictures to enhance our Sunday morning PowerPoints. With this new way of worshiping in our e-neighbourhood, I get to choose a lot more pictures than before. I pray they are enriching your experience of worshiping.

This week, I went looking for images of Paul conversing with others in discerning new ways of relating that were generated by a defining relationship with Jesus Christ. That's one of the insights I've gained afresh in this time of reading through the Corinthian letters afresh. Paul proclaims the gospel in conversation with others, listening with compassion to them, respecting what they understand,

cultivating the seeds of fuller awareness of God's work in Jesus,
and drawing out the practical implications of that activity
as they respond to the invitation
to align their lives more completely with the influence
of the Creator's forgiving and reconciling love that is saving the world.

I couldn't find any images of Paul in this kind of conversation.

Every image that Google showed me
portrayed Paul talking at people
from some kind of raised place.
Now, it is clear, as we saw frequently in Acts,
that Paul did give speeches in public places.
It is also clear that Paul spent a lot more time with people
in more intimate conversations in homes
where he was staying, working, and visiting.
Most of the gatherings of Jews and Christians in a city like Corinth
would have been in homes and shops
which were often in the same building.

Those conversations are the forms of communication
that I think Paul is picking up on in these letters.
They would be read and discussed
in those kinds of gatherings.
It's clear that these conversations involved dialogue
that dug deeper into the meaning of the claims
that were being presented for consideration.
What Paul consistently and clearly brought to the dialogue
was his conviction that in Jesus of Nazareth,
God acted with forgiving and reconciling love
to save the world.

It was that defining way of seeing things and being together
that Paul was convinced would truly bless all of creation.
That was a the soul of his public speeches.
It was at the soul of his more intimate conversations.
He proclaimed the gospel in all these situations
by claiming this was how the Creator acted for his beloved humans.

And now back to the picture that I chose for this morning.

This is a bronze casting in the old town in Montreal.
There are several castings throughout the province of Quebec.
It's called 'Le Chucoteuses' and was done by Rose-Aimee Belanger.

The English translation is 'The Gossips.'
Contrary to the current meanings attached to that word,
the old English connotation was talk about God.
So, we gossip the gospel.
That's an intriguing image to ponder.

Rick Fee, a colleague in ministry for many years,
took this picture several years ago when we went to dinner nearby.

Dinner with Rick was always a conversation
like we've been exploring.

What's happening in our beloved church
and how can we compose the flow of our energies
to reform it into a more faithful, wise, and effective
proclamation of the gospel?

That's how Paul shared the blessings of the gospel most often.

We all have those opportunities as well.

I pray the Spirit will reveal for us
taking up those opportunities this week.

My Notes

My Prayers



Prayers of the People

Assure us that you hear our prayers, dear Lord,
those spoken aloud and those in our souls.

And take us deeper this morning
into the profound wisdom of your prayer
as we sing it together: