

Gaines Congregational United Church of Christ

June 7, 2020 Trinity Sunday

Old Testament Reading; Genesis 1: 27 – 2: 4a

Responsive Reading; Psalm 8

Epistle Reading; 2 Corinthians 13: 11-13

Gospel Reading; Matthew 28: 16-20

Sermon Title: **Created To Be Commissioned**

By Rev. Jim Gardner

Summary: In the beginning man was created in God's image. After Pentecost man was commissioned to spread the Good News of The Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost.

One evening two guys, Sam and Bill, went into a bar and sat down next to each other at the bar. They introduced themselves to each other and engaged in conversation. Sam told Bill a couple jokes and then Bill said, "did you hear the one about Jesus?" Sam said, "no". So, Bill said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Then God said, "Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the

earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So, God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” Bill went on and told the whole story right up to the Easter message.

Well that was probably not what you expected and it certainly was not what Sam expected but it would be exactly what Jesus had commanded.

Let me plagiarize William MacDonald in the Believer’s Bible Commentary; “In Galilee the risen Lord Jesus appeared to His disciples at an unnamed mountain... What a wonderful reunion! His sufferings were passed forever. Because He lived, they too would live. He stood before them in His glorified body. They worshiped the living, loving Lord-- though doubts still lurked in the minds of some. Then the Lord explained that all authority had been given to Him in heaven and on earth. As Head of the New Creation [that is a creation where all mankind had direct access to God] He then issued the Great Commission, containing standing orders for all believers.”

As we heard in our Gospel reading today Jesus said to his followers on that mountain, “ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo. I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen

Isn't it totally crazy that on Christmas Morning Jesus was born to be crucified, a terrible thing, and at the creation of the world we were created to become partners with God and heirs to His eternal Kingdom? Who'd a thunk it?

Who'd a thunk it, but it is real, and it is a testimony to how much our Heavenly Father loves us, believes in us, and trusts us.

As we look around us at the state of the world and the nation at this time and we wonder how God could have faith in a train wreck such as we seem to be. Worst of all this is not a one-time thing. There was Adam and Eve. There were the people at the time of Noah. There were the complainers in the wilderness with Moses. There were the tyrants from Nebuchadnezzar to Nero to Hitler. There was the Civil War and the Civil Rights conflict of the sixties and now riots across America and spilling into Europe. It just seems to go on and on.

How can God believe in us and commission us to bring about change in this world?

Maybe that question is our problem. I just asked "How can God...?"

It is not our job to question God, or to try figure out His plan. It is our job to keep His commandments and especially the "new"

commandment given by Christ. Jesus said, "I give you a new commandment, Love others as I have loved you."

Who is that person that we should love? Maybe it is the one that won't wear a mask. Maybe it is the one that is overly expressive in voicing their views. Maybe it is the one that constantly claims to be the victim, and the most oppressed victim at that. Probably they have a reason to have their reactions, even if that reaction comes from being so stressed or depressed that they just have to vent about something even if it is not actually the thing that started their fears. Our reaction can make a difference. I once gave a sermon titled "Don't douse a fire with gasoline."

I believe that the three greatest history changers, besides Christ, were Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, and the apostle Paul. They all kept their cool and got results. If you want someone to listen, whisper.

When the great commission says make disciples of all nations it is not asking for world conversion, it is asking us to live our faith where ever we are and Jesus will be with us, even unto the end of the age. We have a blue print to follow. Back in the sixties there was a mantra, WWJD, or What Would Jesus Do? It still works. Just remember that the one thing that Jesus never did was NOTHING. Don't do nothing Live your faith, be a history

changer even if it is just in your neighborhood or in your house.
Let a thousand flowers bloom in Christ's garden.

Hallelujah and Amen!