



ALL SAINTS

PREBYTERIAN

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

FOR ALL SAINTS SMALL GROUPS

“Symbiotes & Liminality” | Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt | February 26, 2018

2 Timothy 1:8-13

⁸Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, ⁹who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, ¹⁰and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, ¹¹for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, ¹²which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me. ¹³Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

Mark 8:31-38

³¹And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” ³⁴And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it. ³⁶For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? ³⁷For what can a man give in return for his soul? ³⁸For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

Intro Question

Research suggests a symbiote, a fatal view of God and our relationship with Him has moved into the American church (the host). Our own faith and that of our children who act as a window into our lives is at stake. This dangerous perspective is **not** a symbiotic relationship and believes: 1) God is only interested in rule-keeping and making good and nice people, 2) God is primarily concerned with making us happy, and 3) God is distant and removed until we have a problem. Money, belongings and comforts enable us to fall into this trap of believing these lies. Do they apply to your relationship with God? How can our lives as parents/adults model a true reflection of God to those around us or our children?

Background

Jesus tells the disciples he will suffer, be rejected, killed and rise again. He also says we will suffer. His words are hard to hear and the disciples have a chance to respond. We can learn from their response and Jesus’ perfect authority. Peter wants nothing of this and sharply begins to **rebuke** Jesus because what Jesus was saying did not fit into the savior that Peter had in mind. Peter had a different vision of Jesus much like the perspectives we hold on to today. Jesus rebukes Peter and calls him satan because Peter is setting his mind on things of man and not God.

Jesus leads his disciples purposely into the **liminal space**, as they stand on two sides of the threshold. Suspended between two places, the disciples are “in the process” of being sanctified, understanding Jesus’ authority and the true cost of suffering and following Christ. Jesus shows up in these “in between places” throughout the Bible and for us each day in our lives when we encounter decentering experiences. In this space God is always present and will meet us to comfort, teach and refine.

Jesus then **widens the gap** between his disciples and himself. He doesn’t diffuse the emotion or seek to make anyone happy. Instead, He calls to the crowd and proclaims if anyone would come after Him they must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow. These are hard words and certainly not coming from a Savior that is interested in personal happiness. Jesus exposes the gap because it’s always there and because only He can bridge the gap. This is the savior we should desire!

Discuss:

- 1.) Why are Jesus’ words hard for Peter to hear and why are they hard for us to hear today? What are areas you suffer for Christ?
- 2.) Do you desire for a God, Healer, Savior, King on your own terms? Or do you set your mind on things of God rather than your own?
- 3.) Is God pushing you into a liminal space now? Or has He walked with you in a liminal space recently when you felt His presence? How can we as parents encourage our children in these spaces to seek a true view of God not shaped by culture and comfort?

Conclusion/Application

Heavenly Father, accomplish the work of your salvation in us. Remove the lies and deceit of the worldly comforts. Grant us desire to forfeit the whole world and seek to find Jesus, our treasure, present all around us. Amen.

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