

Sermon Outline - Sun, April 11, 2021 – Honor Your Roots

Overview: Last week we began our series on roots. We looked particularly at the story of Jesus' resurrection. Today we are reminded of Jesus and his connection to the deep roots of the Jewish tradition that he came to proclaim.

Story Exegesis

- As a quick reminder our scripture comes from the book of Job a unique book of the Bible about a man who has almost everything taken from him – his family dies, his crops fail, he loses all of his servants and as he is trying to figure out why this is happening to him, his friends start abandoning him, assuming that must be cursed
- A man definitely in need of a comeback pens this scripture about the roots of the tree
- Most trees rely on their leaves, branches and trunks for growth, so when they are cut down it's a wrap. But some trees like elms and willows can send sprouts from their roots - with water access they can regrow from a stump.
- Last week as we celebrated Easter, Jews around the world were celebrating the last night of Passover. The two holidays are always close to each other but only sometimes on the same day.
- As we look at the question of roots, today we are reminded of the importance of remembering the Jewish roots of Christianity and to remind ourselves to be in right relationship with the tradition from which we come. We sprout from Jewish roots, not replacing that tradition but growing from it.

Key Points –

1. **Jesus was a Jewish man ministering mostly to Jewish people from a Jewish text.** Born to Jewish parents, in a Jewish hood, and spent the most of his ministry w/ Jewish people. He constantly quotes the Hebrew Bible.
2. **Jesus' beef was not with the tradition but with the religious authorities who abused their power and he was calling folks back to a way of love and justice.** Jesus fits squarely in the tradition of the prophets who throughout history have called people back to God calling when we lose our way.
3. **Working to be in right relationship with our Jewish cousins is essential to following Jesus's teaching and pushing back on white supremacy and all forms of oppression in our tradition.** From the Council of Nicea in 325 Christianity became the religion of power and empire and actively oppressed other religious traditions and people who were not Christians. [NOTE – Right relationship does not mean Christian Zionism and supporting the Israeli occupation] As we look at reimagining church we must be open to naming and reexamining parts of our tradition which contradict the teachings of Jesus and perpetuate oppression.

Core Questions –

1. How has Christian supremacy played out in your life and/or theology? How has it hurt you or engaged you in hurting others?
2. What is your relationship to the Jewish tradition that Christianity comes out of? Have you considered the power dynamics between the traditions or studied the history?
3. Even as we are trying to build a new way of being church, how are you/we called to be in relationship with the wider church and Christian tradition?