

Sermon Outline - Sun, Oct 10, 2021- Tribe Troubles

Overview: It is the first Sunday and we usually start a new conversation but we are going to continue leaning in on the conversation about calling. We have been working with the equation and I am going to change the order of that equation - Calling = God's Plan + Our Community/ies of Engagement + Our Gifts & Experiences.

Exegesis

- Nobles, the middle and the poor with the middle being squeezed more and more
- Even the wives were crying out
- Resources were at the crux of the conversation – The abundance was hoarded.
- Nehemiah was trying to save people one at a time but he can't keep up. The people cry out because the system is crushing them.
- This situation was not new – the outcry because it was affecting the middle folks
- The babies in the river – looking for the root cause
- Systems that benefit the powerful – The few over the many – The right of some to have what they can get over the right of all to have what they need
- Willingness of elders to use their children as currency
- Silence from spiritual leaders – The priests come to hold folks accountable, but where were they before? Scripture suggests many instances where they are silent as long as folks bring their just due to the temple.

Key Points

- Focus on the margins rather than the center; leadership from the margins
 - Many times there are margins because we create them through our norming and/or our resource distribution. The community needs to be to do its best to end margins and to push the leaders to the edges where they prioritize those who are struggling and are a protective space holder for the rest.
- Start with the needs of future generations when making decisions – getting out of short term thinking
- Spiritual leaders tasked with speaking truth to power - comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable.

Questions

1. Think of an example of a community you were in that was very unhealthy, in what ways did their practice align with the Israelites? OR Think of a community you have been in that is very sustaining, how did they align with the principles explored in the sermon?
2. When you look at your role in community where do you find yourself – in leadership, on the margins, in the center feeling squeezed? How are you called to act from the place that you are in?
3. What is your orientation to future generations – children in New Roots and beyond – how can increasing your connection to them deepen (y)our sense of calling?