

Sermon for the 6th Sunday after Pentecost 07

Pastor Mike Schuessler

Text: Luke 10:1

“After this, the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him, to every town and place where he was about to go.”

Every three years our church body holds a national youth gathering. Young people from across the nation and around the world gather to grow in their faith and in their desire to serve others in the name of Jesus. Later this month, St. Timothy will send 12 people to the gathering in Orlando. The theme this year is “Chosen”. God has chosen us to be members of his family. He chooses us to meet the needs of our neighbors.

In our text from Luke 10 we see Jesus choosing people. In the previous chapter Jesus had sent out the twelve disciples to heal the sick, cast out demons, and proclaim the kingdom of God. Then Jesus chose a little boy and blessed his loaves of bread and little fish and used them to feed thousands.

“After this, the Lord appointed seventy-two others...” These other followers were sent out to the towns where Jesus was about to go. They went with authority to proclaim a special message of peace from the One who would save all people from their sins. But for those who rejected that peace, they also had authority to give a warning of judgment to come.

Jesus said that the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. Jesus chooses his people to be the workers in his harvest field. Like the seventy-two, the church has authority to proclaim a message of peace, and to give a warning to those who do not welcome it. 60% of the people in the world are not followers of Jesus now. We’ve responded to our Lord’s call by setting a goal to reach 100 million people with good news by the year 2017 which is the 500th anniversary of the

Reformation. We can meet that goal if each of us tells four people about Jesus every year. How have you been doing?

Peter didn’t do very well telling others about Jesus. He denied Jesus three times before the rooster crowed. At that point Jesus could have said to Peter (and to all who fall short of the task Jesus gives them), “Even the dust of your town that sticks to my feet I wipe off against you. I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for you!”

Instead, Jesus willingly dies on the cross, and on the third day rose again with words of peace and hope for Peter and for us.

It was Peter who was chosen to see Jesus alive, and to write three books of the Bible. As our young people go to the National Youth Gathering they will spend time reflecting upon Peter’s words of witness and encouragement. They will be reminded that God chose Jesus to be our Savior. Although we sometimes fail to go before Jesus to prepare others for his coming, Jesus has gone before us to prepare a place for us in heaven. Though his suffering and death all of our sins are forgiven! We have all been chosen to have eternal life.

God continues to choose us. He knows our limitations and weaknesses. But he chooses to work through us to care for others in the many roles we play in this life. We are chosen to care for parents, spouses, children, neighbors, coworkers and friends in our home, church, community and around the world. We are chosen and equipped to do good works. God has chosen to give us the gift of his Holy Spirit to comfort and guide us as we represent Jesus to others.

Tens of thousands of young Lutherans will gather in Orlando to worship Jesus together. How exciting and encouraging! But wherever two or three gather together, Jesus chooses to be there with us. May God’s Spirit lead us to joyfully choose to spend time with one another, and to invite others to experience God’s love and free forgiveness. Amen.