

THE PRODIGAL / Sun. June 27, 2010

Sermon: THE ROAD MORE TRAVELED - Luke 9:51-62

Sermon by: The Reverend Don E. Legge

Tonight's gospel reading gives us a good look at the kind of daily life Jesus led, and a short little history lesson as well.

Jesus had made up his mind to go to Jerusalem; he knew it was time to for his death. It was a long hard trip by foot from up in the north of Galilee down to Jerusalem. Long and hot and dusty.

He was tired; his body ached, his feet were sore, his back strained.

He was hungry, hot, sweaty and dirty.

He was about worn out.

(You know what that feels like, I'll bet.)

They came close to this dinky little Samaritan village, and Jesus asked a couple of his guys, John and Jimmy, to go on into town and get a couple of motel rooms and arrange for some dinner for him and his folks.

Well. Here's the history lesson: there was bad blood between the Jews and the Samaritans. . . had been for years and years. They just didn't like each other.

So the locals told the travelers, "Too bad. We don't have any place for you Jews."

They wouldn't welcome him.

Pretty nasty.

That ticked off John and Jimmy, and they wanted to "call down fire from heaven" on the village to get back at them.

Tired as he was, Jesus told them, "Now, I know how you feel, you're tired and hungry and so am I, but, you know that's no way to behave. We'll just go on down the road a piece. "

The Samaritans had chosen to operate out of old prejudices rather than compassion for tired travelers.

They chose to be fenced in old religious rules rather than to break loose and move out of the hospitality that is the hallmark of God.

Along the way, someone came and said, "I'll follow you anywhere."

And, tired as he was, I think Jesus, who surely was always able to laugh at himself, must've sorta grinned and said, "Well, friend, you may be in a world trouble because I don't even have any place to spend the night tonight." Be careful what you ask for.

And to another man hanging around, Jesus said, "Follow me."

(Now when you hear Jesus say, "Follow me", you better pay attention because it may be really important! Like maybe he is saying, "I'm going to one of these meetings that I know about and I want you to come along." Or something like that.)

So, this man said, "Okay, I love you, Jesus, but I'm really busy, and the days are too short, and I've got some really important things to attend to. I'll be along as soon as I can. "

Jesus answered, "First Things First. You are responsible for carrying the message of the Kingdom. "

Another said to Jesus, "I'm coming with you, but first let me finish up these other things, then I'll catch up with you.

Jesus told him, "Make up your mind. If you're going to get with the program, get going, and keep after it. I know you are busy and tired and still have many things to do. But, hear this: "It works if you work it, and it won't if you don't."

The Kingdom of Sobriety Heaven will come to us who listen, decide, take action, and change.....those who do what is necessary and don't look back

Abandon yourself to God as you understand God;
Admit your faults; clear away the wreckage of the past;
Give freely of what you find;
Reap the blessings of God's invitation to the gift of new life.

It Works if you work it, and it won't if you don't.

Amen