

Look for the Good

Reflection for February 4, 2018

Federated Church

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In our First Reading from the Book of Samuel, King Saul showed his very human emotions of anger and resentment... which actually boils down to Saul's jealousy of David. People pointed out that David had 10X's the victories of Saul, even though the women were singing the praises of BOTH men's accomplishments.

Saul's jealousy was even to the point that he had ideas of killing David. Fortunately, instead of taking that sinful action, Saul discussed these thoughts with his son, Jonathan. Jonathan heroically not only warned David of his father's thoughts, he advocated directly with his father Saul on David's behalf. With that, Saul could see, through the words of his son, the good in David, and therefore David was able to continue to live and serve on earth his king... both King Saul, and our Heavenly King, God.

In the Second Reading from Genesis, it was God who was feeling anger toward his people on earth. So much evil and wickedness... not what God had hoped for when he created humankind. God was grieving... God too had thoughts of killing... perhaps it would be better if all human beings were blotted off the earth. But fortunately, God also saw the good. And that good was in the form of the man Noah, who was obedient and trusting of God.

Then in the Gospel, we have Jesus living on earth, trying to teach the people by his stories, example, and deeds. Jesus becomes grieved and frustrated because he has shown them signs and miracles... miracles with significant numbers that were meant to be symbolically significant

to them, but his disciples were not 'getting it.' Instead, they continued to fret that they would not have enough bread. But Jesus stayed with them and kept trying. When he went to cure the blind man, at first the man could see somewhat, but things were blurred. With another attempt of laying on of Jesus' hands, the man's sight was completely restored and clear.

So it was with Saul, when his jealousy clouded his sight; and with the disciples, who took a long time to catch on to what Jesus was about.

For us too, we may only gradually learn to see and have faith in Jesus. Our faith is a journey, and never complete at any one moment. After the death of a loved one or our own illnesses or infirmities, even strong faith can be shaken. But may we always be on the lookout for the positive virtues, like faith, hope, and love. Given in the midst of seeing evil and experiencing grief, God focused on the good he could find in the world, in the person of Noah. As examples of good in today's world, we think of people who have dedicated themselves to be good parents and grandparents; helpful people in our neighborhoods, classes, or at work; and the widowed and divorced who are there to help others by sharing in their grief. A famous quote by Fred Rogers, the gentle man from the Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood Show, is as follows: "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." Today at Federated, we celebrate all those who are on a journey to Guatemala. Not only will they be able to see the good, they are being the good. Let us balance all the horror stories of this world, with examples of people who manifest God's goodness, and may one of those people be each one of us.