

Sunday, January 15, 2016

Forest Hills United Methodist Church

Broad Series: Grounded (The life of Jesus in four parts, Exploring Jesus as the incarnation of God in the created world, and how that gives salvation an earth grounding.)

Series Part 2: Dirty Feet: Jesus' earthly life.

Sermon #3: "Getting Our Feet Dirty"

Rev. Dr. David Werner

Scripture: Luke 5:1-11

Text: Luke 18:28 "Peter said to Jesus, 'We have left all we had to follow you!'"

Sermon Blurb: When Jesus came to earth, He called disciples to travel with Him. They were His friends, and they joined Him in His work. That's what Christians do. We follow Jesus. We do His work. Not only did Jesus die for us and win our forgiveness and eternal life, He also calls us to live with and for Him now. This Sunday we will walk with Jesus around Capernaum and Galilee, and we will discover what it means to follow Him.

Hymn Sing: - Andrew

Welcome: - Pastor David

Worship Set: - Sanctify

Build Your Kingdom Here

The Same Love

For the Beauty of the Earth

Kids invited to Kid's Church

Prayers: HCI - Andrew

Offering: *Invitation Fountain* - Scott Van Daalen

Sermon Video Bumper

PP#1: Grounded: Dirty Feet

Getting Our Feet Dirty

"Peter said to Jesus, 'We have left all we had to follow you!'" -Luke 18:28

Grounded: God's Dirty Feet. "Getting Our Feet Dirty." Luke 18:28, "Peter said to Jesus, 'We have left all we had to follow you!'"

PP#2: *Image of someone looking like we do, walking with Jesus.*

God shows up. That's really the Christian message. It is so amazing; such good news! And you know what? You don't get that anywhere else. All other philosophies and religions...people strive to get *to God*. But Christians have a different message. Our God strives to get *to us*.

Think about that. The general philosophy of American culture is that God is real, but distant. God wants us to be good and do right. Then we'll be OK. Good people go to heaven. It's up to us.

Other religions teach the same thing. Buddhism teaches that we must find the right path, and walk in it well. When we do, we will eventually attain Nirvana. Hinduism says that we must strive all our lives long to behave well, then, in our next life, we will get promoted to the next level, in which we need to behave well again. It's like a transcendent video game. It's up to our performance. Islam teaches our fundamental duty is obedience to Allah. Uphold the Five Pillars. Our merits are based on our obedience. Judaism also. It's in what you do.

But only Christianity gives a radically different message. We don't have to work to get to God. Our God works to come to us. That changes everything!

This is why Jesus is so mindblowing. Christmas is God showing up. Jesus is God, walking among us, working on our behalf, earning the help we need, repairing our separation from God.

Our God comes down to our dirt. That is the good news we share with everyone.

So, for a few months, we who are followers of Jesus here at Forest Hills, we're spending some time going to the dirt. We're looking at where Jesus got dirty, where He walked, and lived, and traveled. And we're seeking to walk with Him, see Him where He goes, experience Him right here among us. We're tracing His earthly life, walking with Him, trying to get to know Him better.

Jesus came in a place called Israel. It's not really near Minnesota. So, again, as my kids so eagerly cheer: MAP TIME!

PP#3: *Map of the world with an expanded location of Israel.*

We go to the other side of the world, to the Middle East. It's the country of Israel today, along the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. It's a tiny place, really.

PP#4: *Map Time! Image of the outline of Israel fitting inside Minnesota.*

Jesus spent His entire earthly ministry in an area of about 120 miles by 40 miles. That's like from here to Duluth. Not a big footprint, at least geographically.

PP#5: *Map at <http://www.biblestudy.org/maps/the-journeys-of-mary-and-joseph.html>*

[Assemble the map if Israel. Something like: Let's take a look at Israel 2,000 years ago. Jerusalem was the capital, then, too. See in there lower middle? It's near the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth. The area around Jerusalem was called Judea. If you go up from the Dead Sea, this is the Jordan River. It flows down from the Sea of Galilee, that little body of water to the North. That area to the North, that was called Galilee. Galilee and Judea made up the first century kingdom of Israel. In between them was an area called Samaria, and it was not part of Israel.]

PP#6: *Map A at <http://www.generationword.com/notes/bible-information/jesus-maps-ministry.html>*

Well, Mary and Joseph both lived in a village called Nazareth. **You can find that up in Galilee, between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean Sea.** Joseph and Mary got engaged, and Mary got pregnant. Then they had to go to Bethlehem, down by Jerusalem, for a census. It's while they are in Bethlehem that Jesus is born. Eight days later, they take Jesus to the Temple for His dedication, and then go back to Bethlehem. They're there for a number of months, and then flee into Egypt when Herod's soldiers come marching in. **Egypt is to the lower left on the map.** Again, after some months, they head back to Israel, and go back home to Nazareth. Jesus grows up in Nazareth, although the family makes trips down to Jerusalem for certain Jewish holidays.

PP#7: Jesus' 3½ Years of Public Ministry (perhaps AD 30-33)

Jesus begins Public Ministry (Beginning months)

Baptism, temptation, calling the first disciples

Year of Inauguration (First Year)

1st Passover (Jesus celebrates in Jerusalem)

Jesus moves to Capernaum and selects 12 apostles who travel with Him

Jesus travels throughout Galilee, preaching, teaching, and working miracles

Year of Popularity (Second Year)

2nd Passover (Jesus celebrates in Jerusalem)

Jesus makes three tours of Galilee, speaking in parables

Large crowds follow Jesus. People want to make Him king.

At the age of about 30, Jesus leaves home and begins His public ministry of teaching, preaching, doing miracles, and calling people to return to God.

In the Gospels, we can divide up Jesus' public ministry into three years, based on His celebrations of the Passover. The Passover is one of the two most important Jewish holidays, and it celebrates when God led the Israelites out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. We see Jesus celebrating four Passovers in the Bible. And the three years in between show the change of Jesus' reception among the public.

The first year, which we'll call the Year of Inauguration, shows a public that first hears about this Jesus and is initially curious and impressed. Jesus makes His home base in a fishing village on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee, and He mostly stays up in Galilee throughout the year, teaching, preaching and working miracles.

He travels to Jerusalem to celebrate the next Passover, and the second year shows Jesus wildly popular and a celebrity. People flock to Jesus and hang on His every word. He gives the Sermon on the Mount, and feeds the thousands. He also teaches using a lot of parables. He again stays mostly up in Galilee, and more than once the people try to make Him their king.

PP#8: Jesus' 3½ Years of Public Ministry (perhaps AD 30-33)

Year of Opposition (Third Year)

3rd Passover (Jesus celebrates in Galilee)

Jesus teaches on the cost of following Him; many disciples desert

Jesus' Gentile Tour: Tyre & Sidon, the Decapolis

Jewish leaders challenge Jesus

Jesus' Transfiguration; heads for Jerusalem

Arrives in Judea in October

Judean tour, often sparring with Jewish leaders

Last Days (6 weeks)

Enters Jerusalem in fanfare, in March.

Celebrates the Passover (Last Supper)

Crucified, raised, and ascended back to Heaven

This time Jesus seems to spend the Passover up in Galilee. He teaches the people more bluntly the cost of discipleship, how it means dying to self and not the revolt they were hoping for. As He teaches this, the crowds began shrinking, and Jesus doesn't have the following like He used to. Then, the Jewish leaders start challenging Him, testing Him, and quarreling with Him. This

becomes a year of opposition for Jesus. The tide begins to turn. He heads into foreign areas. His transfiguration marks the turning point, and from then on, Jesus is heading to Jerusalem.

He spends five months traveling throughout Judea before entering Jerusalem for the Passover for the last time. Four Passovers, three years. From inauguration to popularity to opposition to crucifixion to heaven.

Our God showed up. He lived on earth. He walked around. He had dirty feet.

So, let's walk with Jesus a bit. Let's get our feet dirty, too. Jesus' first year of public ministry.

PP#9: *Map B* at <http://www.generationword.com/notes/bible-information/jesus-maps-ministry.html>

It begins in Nazareth. Jesus leaves His home town and goes down to near Jerusalem for His baptism, temptation, and calling His first disciples. Then He heads back up North and performs His first miracle. Church, do you remember what that was? What was Jesus' first miracle? [Turning water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana.] He then heads over to Capernaum and calls some more disciples. So far, this has been the setup—or prolog—to His public ministry.

PP#10: *Map C* at <http://www.generationword.com/notes/bible-information/jesus-maps-ministry.html>

He now heads down to Jerusalem for the first Passover recorded during His public ministry. This begins the first year. And now, Jesus begins engaging the wider public. He talks to Nicodemus, telling him he must be born again. He tells him John 3:16. He also travels through Samaria for the first time. His ministry is not just among Jews. It's for all people.

He then goes back to His home town and teaches at His home synagogue, announcing that He has begun His public ministry as God's Messiah. He proclaims what His purpose is, what He has been called by God to do.

PP11: Luke 4:18-19 (CEB)

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to liberate the oppressed, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

Church, let's read this, all together. This is what Jesus explained was His ministry purpose. Let's read it together. **“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to liberate the oppressed, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”**

PP#12: *Map D* at <http://www.generationword.com/notes/bible-information/jesus-maps-ministry.html>

Well, He continues and explains that His ministry is not just for the Jews, but for the Gentiles, too...for all people. And He quickly falls out of favor with His home congregation in Nazareth. They drive Him out, and even consider throwing Him off a cliff!

Incidentally, Jesus decides to move. He takes His ministry “on the road.” He heads east over to a fishing village on the north side of the Sea of Galilee, called Capernaum, and then travels throughout Galilee.

Jesus had already called a couple of disciples, like Philip and Nathaniel, who started to follow Jesus, treating Him as their rabbi. A few others, it seems, came on their own to followed Jesus, such as Andrew and Simon. Let's go back a few weeks when Jesus was down at Bethany with John the Baptist and see when Andrew and Simon first meet Jesus.

PP#13: John 1:35-42 (CEB)

35 The next day John [the Baptist] was standing again with two of his disciples. 36 When he saw Jesus walking along he said, "Look! The Lamb of God!" 37 The two disciples heard what he said, and they followed Jesus.

38 When Jesus turned and saw them following, he asked, "What are you looking for?" They said, "Rabbi (which is translated Teacher), where are you staying?"

39 He replied, "Come and see." So they went and saw where He was staying, and they remained with Him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon.

John 1, starting with verse 35. "The next day John [the Baptist] was standing again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus walking along he said, "Look! The Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard what he said, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he asked, "What are you looking for?" They said, "Rabbi (which is translated Teacher), where are you staying?" He replied, "Come and see." So they went and saw where He was staying, and they remained with Him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon."

So, Andrew seems to have been down with John the Baptist, and perhaps Simon, too. They had grown up in Bethsaida, just east of Capernaum. They had moved to Capernaum and had been in a fishing business on the Sea of Galilee. But now we find them down here near Bethany, somehow drawn to John's ministry. Evidently they felt some draw to John's purpose, and wanted to be a part of what God was doing. We don't know how long they had been there, either. But what we do know is that whatever drew them to John, also drew them to Jesus.

PP#14: John 1:35-42 (CEB)

40 One of the two disciples who heard what John said and followed Jesus was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. 41 He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Christ). 42 He led him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon, son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

Verse 40, "One of the two disciples who heard what John said and followed Jesus was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Christ). He led him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon, son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter)."

It seems they followed Jesus for a time, but then headed back to their homes in Capernaum. So, what I notice is that when Jesus calls someone to follow Him, and they do, like Philip and Nathaniel, they followed Him full time. When others come to Jesus and decide they want to give following Jesus a try, it seems to be temporary, like Andrew and Simon.

PP#15: *Image of Jesus teaching the crowd from the boat with Simon and Andrew, or in the boat with Simon and Andrew, with their large catch of fish.*

I can say that because, when Jesus moves to Capernaum, He finds Simon and Andrew there, back home and fishing, along with their partners, James and John and their father Zebedee. So, when they followed Jesus, it didn't seem to be full-time.

Well, when Jesus leaves Nazareth and moves His basis of operations to Capernaum, He goes and finds Simon and Andrew.

PP#16: Luke 5:1-11 (CEB)

1 One day Jesus was standing beside Lake Gennesaret when the crowd pressed in around Him to hear God's word. 2 Jesus saw two boats sitting by the lake. The fishermen had gone ashore and were washing their nets. 3 Jesus boarded one of the boats, the one that belonged to Simon, then asked him to row out a little distance from the shore. Jesus sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. 4 When He finished speaking to the crowds, He said to Simon, "Row out farther, into the deep water, and drop your nets for a catch." 5 Simon replied, "Master, we've worked hard all night and caught nothing. But because you say so, I'll drop the nets."

Let's look at Luke 5. Starting with verse 1: "One day Jesus was standing beside Lake Gennesaret [that's another name for the Sea of Galilee] when the crowd pressed in around Him to hear God's word. Jesus saw two boats sitting by the lake. The fishermen had gone ashore and were washing their nets. Jesus boarded one of the boats, the one that belonged to Simon, then asked him to row out a little distance from the shore. Jesus sat down and taught the crowds from the boat."

It seems that Jesus chose that particular boat because He knew its owner. He considered Peter a friend. Evidently a pretty good friend, because before long, we see Jesus staying with Peter in Peter's home in Capernaum. It might be that Jesus even moved in with Peter and his family.

Verse 4, "When Jesus finished speaking to the crowds, He said to Simon, 'Row out farther, into the deep water, and drop your nets for a catch.' Simon replied, 'Master, we've worked hard all night and caught nothing. But because you say so, I'll drop the nets.'"

Peter is a bit surprised with Jesus. I mean, Peter grew up in Bethsaida, on this lake...he knew it probably better than most. He had moved to Capernaum, only six miles along the shore to the west, and there he became a professional fisherman. He had partners...this was no small operation. He was a professional fisherman, and an expert on that particular lake, especially that shoreline.

Jesus, on the other hand, was from land-locked Nazareth. He had carpenter hands. What would He know about fishing?

But remember down in Bethany? Simon had met Jesus before. John the Baptist, whom they had been hanging with, said that this Jesus was the Messiah. Simon knew there was more to Him than they knew. So, he stammers, "What? My partners and I have been fishing all night, and I'm telling you, the fish just weren't biting." OK, they were using nets. Even still, the fish weren't in that location. "But you're the Master, and so I'll do what you say, anyway."

PP#17: Luke 5:1-11 (CEB)

6 So they dropped the nets and their catch was so huge that their nets were splitting. 7 They signaled for their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They filled both boats so full that they were about to sink. 8 When Simon Peter saw the catch, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Leave me, Lord, for I'm a sinner!" 9 Peter and those with him were overcome with amazement because of the number of fish they caught. 10 James and John, Zebedee's sons, were Simon's partners and they were amazed too.

Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid. From now on, you will be fishing for people.” 11 As soon as they brought the boats to the shore, they left everything and followed Jesus.

Verse 6, “So they dropped the nets, and their catch was so huge that their nets were splitting. They signaled for their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They filled both boats so full that they were about to sink. When Simon Peter saw the catch, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, “Leave me, Lord, for I’m a sinner!” Peter and those with him were overcome with amazement because of the number of fish they caught. James and John, Zebedee’s sons, were Simon’s partners and they were amazed too. Jesus said to Simon, ‘Don’t be afraid. From now on, you will be fishing for people.’ As soon as they brought the boats to the shore, they left everything and followed Jesus.”

PP#18: *Image of Jesus with Simon and Andrew with the huge catch of fish, on/near shore.*

Stop for a minute. Why did Jesus have Simon and his partners catch that miraculous amount of fish? Was it because He felt sorry for them, having worked so hard all night long? Or perhaps He wanted to bless their business, and give it a boost. Or perhaps He wanted to lift them up, to make them the talk of the town. Well, it doesn’t seem to be any of those.

But aren’t these some of the reasons why we often want Jesus to come to our help? Don’t we feel like, when we work so hard, and try and try and try, that God should just give us a bit of a boost? Why can’t He make things turn out well in my business, or job, or what I work so hard for. “Dear Lord, please give me reward for my labor.” Not a bad prayer, perhaps, but I don’t see it here. Or we may want God to lift us up, make us important, help us to do amazing and exciting work. “Dear Lord, let me see great things happen in my life. Use me to change the world. I want to really make a big difference.” Again, not really a bad prayer, but I don’t see God doing that, at least here.

PP#19: Getting OUR Feet Dirty

1. Letting Jesus be the Master

“Simon replied, ‘Master, we’ve worked hard all night and caught nothing. But because you say so, I’ll drop the nets.’” -Luke 5:5

There is also part of following Jesus that comes in plain, ordinary, everyday work. In days when there are no fish. In seasons when work doesn’t seem to do much. In groups where others seem more important and impressive.

There’s something about letting Jesus be the Master. We tend to have a pretty good notion for what we think God should be doing, at least in our lives. We pray for how we see things. God ought to be doing this or that. Not that we can’t have some discernment. But I think we struggle to let Jesus call the shots. It does take some surrender to put aside what we want God to do, what we wish God would do, what we may even read in Scripture, or discern in the quiet of our hearts, that God could do. When we follow Jesus, we need to let Him be the Master. How much more helpful might it be to pray, “Master, do what you will. Do with me what you will. Let me have all things, or let me have nothing. I will strive to be content, to be grateful, and open to whatever you bring my way.”

Well, as soon as they get the fish hauled in, Jesus calls them to follow Him. They leave the fish with their other partners, sounds like maybe just Zebedee, and they leave it all behind. They themselves got no benefit from the fish. Jesus wasn’t giving them the fish.

But what we see is how it shows Peter again who Jesus really is. It gets his attention. Peter is now certain that Jesus is from God.

But the catch of fish, it seems, also becomes a message to Peter and the others who hauled it in. It was a sign of what they were going to be doing. They were being called to stop fishing for fish and start fishing for people. Even when the waters may seem to be empty and the work pointless, when you listen to Jesus, the catch will be amazing.

PP#20: Getting OUR Feet Dirty

1. Letting Jesus be the Master
2. Hearing the call

“Jesus said to Simon, ‘Don’t be afraid. From now on, you will be fishing for people.’” -Luke 5:10b

And this time, it is Jesus who calls Simon and Andrew. Before, they were interested in Jesus. They came to Him, seeking out something in their lives. They were impressed with John, and then by Jesus. Their hearts ached for something they seemed to offer. So, they wanted to give Him a try. They followed Him around a bit. They spent some time with Him.

But they also went back home. It didn’t last, at least not like it seemed to for Philip and Nathaniel. They were seeking something for their lives, and decided to give Jesus a try. But it didn’t last. It seems to me that they wanted Jesus in the way they understood it. They wanted Jesus on their terms. They wanted Him to do what they thought He should do. They had some expectations, and when He didn’t meet them, they ended up going home. They ended up being just tire kickers, test drivers.

We sometimes do that too, don’t we? We want Jesus a certain way, to do certain things. We want Jesus to make things work out in the ways that we understand, or do what we think ought to be done. We invite Jesus in so long as He conforms to our understanding and validates our values. We support Him as long as He fits our expectations. But when He starts not conforming, and doing things we don’t expect, we tend to part ways. We want to add *some* of Jesus to our lives, include Him in, but in a *limited way*. We want to just season our lives a bit with Jesus, to make it taste the way we think it ought. But when He starts taking over the kitchen, we don’t want Him around.

Last time Simon and Andrew come to check Jesus out. This time, Jesus comes to them. He places on their lives a calling to follow Him, to do things His way. They don’t call the shots. He does.

PP#21: Getting OUR Feet Dirty

1. Letting Jesus be the Master
2. Hearing the call
3. Leaving everything else

“As soon as they brought the boats to the shore, they left everything and followed Jesus.” - Luke 5:11

Now they have a decision to make. Will they take Him as He comes, or will they do things their way. Detrich Bonhoeffer put it bluntly, “He must have all of us, or he will have none of us.” Following Jesus means doing things His way. Simon, Andrew, James and John left everything behind. I wonder what Zebedee was thinking. “Hey! Where are you going? Get back here! What about the fishing? What about all these fish? What’s going on?”

They left everything and followed Jesus.

Jesus doesn't often make us walk away from our lives as we now know them. But He does demand to come first. Being a Jesus follower means setting our priorities right. Jesus is walking on ahead. We don't get to choose where, or even the speed of the pace. It's hard to follow. We have so many good ideas and suggestions. And at times, they work into God's plan. But we usually need to work harder at following Jesus completely, leaving behind what gets in the way, leaving behind the way we want things to go.

This may be in our lives, perhaps our hopes and dreams. I went to school to be a banker. I have a degree in market economy. It may mean in how we want our relationships to go. We may feel our heart yearning for that someone else, and we feel trapped with the loser we're married to. Or we may want our church to make sense to us and fulfill our needs first.

PP#22: *Jesus extending His hand to us, inviting us to walk with Him.*

Jesus has come to each and every one of us, and called us to follow Him and fish for people. This is a universal call to each of us. Perhaps not as our full-time career. But yes in our daily lives. We can't just be tire kickers. We may not have to leave our nets, but we do have to make sure that our nets don't keep our hands so occupied that they don't have time to do something they're not maybe as familiar with, or isn't their strength. When we take Jesus, we not only put our hope and trust in Him, we also let Him direct our path. We follow. Our feet get the same dirt as His does.

He doesn't send us on our journeys alone. He comes to us, and walks with us. But He sets the path.

During this time, Jesus is traveling around Galilee. He comes to a man with leprosy. The story, in Luke 5, says the man asks Jesus, "If you would, please help me." Jesus, it says, reached out and touched the man. He came, He was there, and He reached out to the man. He physically touched him. Jesus touched the sick man. Jesus touches sick people. Jesus comes to us, shows up in our lives, reaches out and touches us, and heals us. He then calls us to follow Him.

Luke 18:28, "Peter said to Jesus, 'We have left all we had to follow you!'"

The path is dirty. It's not one we may have chosen. But will you take those steps? Will you get your feet dirty?

Amen.

Closing Song: *You Are Good* - Sanctify

Benediction: Pastor David