

## **BIBLE STUDY**

**June 12, 2023**

### **THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**Exodus 19: 2-6a**

**Romans 5: 6-11**

**Matthew 9: 36—10:8**

#### **1. Exodus 19: 2-6a**

- Israel camps in the desert around Sinai. They will remain there until Numbers 10:10. Israel's encampment represents a significant piece in the story of their liberation from Egypt and their entry into the Promised Land. It is in the desert that God gives them the law, explains it, and makes a covenant with them.
- God gives Moses a message for the people. God uses a very powerful image to describe his relationship with them. He is their Rescuer/Deliverer/Savior who "bore you up on eagles' wings and brought you to myself."
- If the people obey all that the Lord asks of them, they shall become his "treasured possession."
- They will be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." The whole community will have a priestly role of offering sacrifice to the Lord. Individuals will be designated as priests to offer the sacrifice and lead the community in prayer, but the whole community has a priestly character. Priestly is synonymous with holy, i.e., set apart for sacred duty.

#### **2. Matthew 9:36—10:8**

- Jesus reacts to the crowds with pity—compassion. He sees their needs. They are troubled and abandoned. And he sees that they are without a leader or guide. They are sheep without a shepherd. His reaction is to want to help them.
- He tells the disciples to pray that God the Father---the master of the harvest---will send out laborers to reap the harvest. The harvest is abundant. There is a very optimistic view that there are many good people who just need someone to lead and guide them. Or not so good people who need someone to show them the way. It challenges us to not look on the world with pessimism and negativity, but with hope and expectation.
- Jesus sends out the Twelve. Unlike Mark and Luke, Matthew does not have a story in which Jesus calls the apostles. He presumes that we know who they are already. In Matthew, there is less of a distinction between the apostles and the disciples. The number twelve refers to the twelve tribes of Israel. Through them, Jesus is calling all of Israel to accept the Kingdom of God that he proclaims.
- Matthew: Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John (sons of Zebedee), Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew (tax collector), James (son of Alphaeus), Thaddeus, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot.

- Mark: Simon Peter, James, and John (sons of Zebedee), Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James (son of Alphaeus), Thaddeus, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot.
- Luke: Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James (son of Alphaeus), **Simon Zealot, Judas, son of James**, and Judas Iscariot.
- The twelve are sent out only to Israel not to the Gentiles. The commissioning to the Gentiles will take place at the end of the Gospels as Jesus is about to ascend to the Father.
- They are to make the same proclamation as Jesus: the Kingdom of God is at hand. God's rule is about to be established on earth. God is going to gather his children together from the clasp of the evil one. This proclamation requires a response.
- The twelve do the same as Jesus: heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. Jesus does not commission them to teach.
- They have received this mission freely and so; they are to share it freely. It is not they who are acting, but God acting in them. The power is God's, not theirs.

### 3. Romans 5: 6-11

- Paul says that because we have been justified by faith, we have confidence before God that we will be saved. We boast of our hope that we will see the glory of God. Even during trouble, we have confidence because afflictions produce endurance, endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope. Hope does not disappoint because hope comes from the Holy Spirit that God has poured into our hearts.
- Another reason for our confidence is that Christ dies for us when we were still sinners. It is rare that someone would die for another. Maybe if they were a good person, one would die for them. But Jesus died for us when we were still sinners. So, since we are now justified by his blood, how much more do we have a hope of being saved.
- If God reconciled us when we were enemies, how much more will he save us when we are reconciled.
- Our most important claim to hope is that we were saved by Jesus Christ, himself.