



“Being Jesus Christ in a Strange Land”

Theme: Church Status - It's Complicated!

Sermon Scripture: Genesis 12:1-3

Weekly Memory Verse: *“In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”* –Matthew 5:16

Love Out Loud: This week we are talking about what it means to be church, or be the presence of Jesus Christ in the world. Because of COVID-19, we cancelled our Love Out Loud projects we normally do through the city this past weekend. We typically cancel our regular weekend services to do these projects. We hope you might find your own way to Love Out Loud this week and be the presence of Jesus Christ in the world. For some ideas, you can check out <https://app.vomo.org/org/summitdurango>.

Family Activity for the Week: How do you love your neighbor? (Mark 12:31) What are some of the things you take for granted? A big one for most of us is food! This week, as you and your family think about what's on your plates, consider the families in La Plata County that have nothing. Summit Church partners with the Giving Garden to supply the La Plata Family Centers Coalition with fresh produce. It's located just behind the church and is a GREAT place to volunteer as a family. Get outdoors, learn something new, and contact Jamie Matthews, jamiematthewsavila@yahoo.com, to become a volunteer today! But if gardening isn't your thing, choose your favorite family meal – buy the ingredients, write out instructions and a sweet note, and donate it to the Family Center, contact@lpfcc.org, (*non-perishables are great!). Jesus lived a life of love, taking every moment on Earth to teach and show others what it looked like to truly love one another. Together, we can change the world by shining our lights for Him.

Monday, June 15 – Read Matthew 5:13-16. Jesus didn't specify that those who follow him should “go” to a certain place, like a church or a synagogue. He called them to live in a certain way for God by following him. In Pennsylvania, the Tri-County Church gave their members T-shirts. On the front, they read, “I don't go to church,” and on the back, they said, “I AM the church.” That reflected Jesus' message. As we let God's light shine through us, we truly ARE the church, even in a time where everything feels disrupted.

- ▲ Have you ever flown over a city at night? Or driven along a highway from the dark countryside into the light of a city? Think about what it felt like to go from darkness to light. What are the dark corners of your neighborhood, city, and world that need to experience God's light? What can you do to help shine God's light into these dark corners?
- ▲ In Jesus' day, with no refrigerators, people used salt to preserve food as well as to flavor it. Jesus called his followers to be “the salt of the earth,” living in ways that add flavor to our world and “preserve” life's God-intended goodness. As one teacher put it, Jesus did not say, “You are the vinegar of the

(Message Notes and Meditation Moments for June 13-14, 2020 – For more, go to www.summitdurango.org)

earth"! In what ways are you living out your faith in ways that flavor life positively, and preserve its goodness?

Prayer: Lord God, if I forget, remind me that “we the people” ARE the church. By your Spirit, help me to live as your salt and light, your physical presence, right here in my hometown. Amen.

Tuesday, June 16 – Read 1 Peter 2:5-10. Peter’s description of what it means to belong to God’s people, the church, showed how New Testament Christians found Jesus’ work and its effects all through the Old Testament. Verse 6 quoted Isaiah 28:16; verse 7 drew on Psalm 118:22; verse 8 used Isaiah 8:14. Verse 9 took language that first applied to Israel in Exodus 19:6, and verse 10 played off the sadly symbolic names of Hosea’s children in Hosea 1. Peter’s point was that God’s mercy draws and shapes us all into a community to bear witness to God’s marvelous light.

▲ Some Bible scholars believe 1 Peter may have been adapted from instruction given to new converts at their baptism. (The church pictured glowingly in Acts 2:41-47 included 3000 or more people who joined the church after Peter’s sermon at Pentecost.) How, if at all, do you remind yourself of your confirmation, baptism, or other time when you first “owned” your faith in Jesus? (To learn more about baptism, for yourself or someone else, you can watch the video of Pastor Jeff talking about it here... <https://www.summitdurango.org/baptisminfo/>.) How do you purposely let your identity as a Christ-follower shape your daily life?

▲ Peter applied powerful Old Testament terms for Israel to God’s people, the church, calling them (us) “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation” (verse 9). How can we as a faith community show God’s grace and light in ways we can’t do alone? How can a sense that together we are God’s hands in the world help us better understand the meaning of “church”?

Prayer: Lord God, I often fail you, yet you call me chosen, holy, a part of a royal priesthood. Help me each day as I seek to live into the amazing titles with which you honor me. Amen.

Wednesday, June 17 – Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. The apostle Paul explained to the Christians in Corinth, who experienced great disruption daily because they lived in a port city with people from all over the world, that God gives each Christian gifts and talents that empower us to join in the divine mission of changing the world for the better. In other words, God loves variety! But, no one person receives all the gifts and talents needed for the job. There aren’t “good” and “bad,” or even “important” and “unimportant,” sets of abilities and gifts. God wants each follower of Jesus to fill a place that makes the overall body stronger.

▲ In what ways are you already using your particular gifts and talents to bless others and bring glory to God? Have you ever seen your gifts become more effective when they work together with other people’s various gifts? Think and pray about one way, in the next 12 months, that you might more fully integrate your gifts and abilities into the “the body of Christ’s” overall mission. (If you’d like help in identifying and using your gifts, go to https://spiritualgiftsdiscovery.com/assessment-login/?invite=k_52d56c999ee9f.)

▲ “Different gifts”— “same Spirit”; “different ministries”— “same Lord,” “different activities”— “same God.” Have you ever seen people with different gifts or ministries yield to the all-too human temptation to see other gifts or ministries as “rivals” for attention or resources? Naturally, we’re all inclined to believe what we’re involved in is the “most important.” How can we allow the “same Lord” behind them all to help us avoid being unhealthy by staying in our “silos” or infighting?

Prayer: Generous God, you’ve given me a portion of your divine power. You’ve called me to use that power in carrying out your mission in the world. I offer you the gifts you’ve given me to be used for your purposes as I seek to be the presence of Jesus in the world. Amen.

Thursday, June 18 – Read John 4:19-29. Jesus met a person with three strikes against her in the eyes of the religious leaders of his day: a) she was a Samaritan, b) she was a woman, c) she'd had multiple husbands. To his disciples' surprise, he treated her as valuable. In fact, verses 28-29 show her as the first "preacher," the first witness to Jesus in John's gospel! Jesus needed his disciples to know that human prejudices or boundaries did not limit his kingdom. Jesus called someone whose entire life had been one of disruptions to be his presence in the world.

▲ The woman expected Jesus, a Jewish man, to despise and avoid her. But he spoke to her seriously, asked her help and treated her with dignity. He refused to argue about whether Jerusalem or Gerizim was the true holy mountain. He said the key was that people worship "in spirit and truth" (verse 24). What makes it necessary to honestly open your whole inner life to God's love and grace to worship in spirit and truth?

▲ For what reasons were Jesus' disciples surprised when they found Jesus talking with this woman? In what ways did they not recognize her value? Who do you know who is like the Samaritan woman? Do you tend to look right past those people because they are unlikely or unsuitable candidates for God's kingdom? How can you better engage with people like this woman who are already members of your congregation?

Prayer: *God, open my heart and mind to your word. Bless me with your vision and let me enter into a state of harmony with your divine will. Amen.*

Friday, June 19 – Read Ephesians 3:10-21. God has a big dream—to restore our world to total wholeness (see Revelation 21:1-5). In divine wisdom, God seems to believe that faithful humans are the best means to carry out that mission. The apostle Paul wrote that the church is God's main instrument to show his wisdom and glory. The scriptures point to the truth that the local church is meant to be the hope of the world. And "the church" is people—is us.

▲ In Greek, "the many different varieties" in verse 10 was one word—"polupoikilos." It meant "many colored," as though Paul was picturing God's grace and wisdom as a kind of cosmic rainbow. In what ways have God's grace and wisdom added color and beauty to your life? How can you help your church reflect that beauty to all who come in contact with us?

▲ Reflect on verse 20: "Glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask for or imagine by his power at work within us." Do you believe that God can really do far more than we can ask or imagine? If not, what holds you back from that belief? What God-sized hopes, hurts, dreams and challenges can you identify, trusting that God's mission can go to work through you to help to address them?

Prayer: *Great God, I know you have big plans for the world. I know your plans are to use your church to accomplish your purposes. Help me be faithful to you as part of your church and join in your work in the world. Amen.*

Saturday, June 20 – Read Ephesians 4:25-32. These verses set out a challenging standard for Christian interactions. They call Christians to live by a simple guideline: "Only say what is helpful when it is needed for building up the community." Often, that stops being easy or simple when the community does something differently from the way we would have liked to see it done. But it is precisely at those times of change, when stress and tension tend to rise, that the guidelines in today's reading become most crucial for all of us to live into.

▲ Ephesians 4:32 said our ideal is to treat one another "in the same way God forgave you in Christ." Have you learned ways to "be angry without sinning" (verse 26)? What steps can help you grow a character strong enough to treat others as God treats you?

▲ Have you been through times when it was helpful to hold back a comment or observation, even if it might be accurate? Are there other times, as verse 25 suggested, when the truth is so needed and helpful that it would be wrong to keep silent? How can the Holy Spirit help you discern when you should speak the truth without being unchristian?

Prayer: *Creating, Redeeming God, your gracious acceptance has brought me life. Give me the courage to speak truth in love, the humility to say, "I'm sorry," when I'm wrong, and the heart to forgive others who admit a wrong. Amen.*