

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June  
Luke 9:1-6

## **Luke 9:1-6**

### **The Mission of the Twelve**

Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. He said to them, 'Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money—not even an extra tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there, and leave from there. Wherever they do not welcome you, as you are leaving that town shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.' They departed and went through the villages, bringing the good news and curing diseases everywhere.

"Come in for a coffee" How many times have you heard that expression recently?

I have heard it on a number of occasions recently when I have been out and seen a Church member in his or her garden as I have walked by and stopped to speak, or when I called on someone for a specific reason and stepped back from the door. I have turned down the invitation each time. We are used to being made welcome; "whatever house you enter, stay there," Jesus told his disciples.

According to the guidelines the house we were dwelling in back in mid March has been the house we are meant to have stayed in since. There have been some who have changed lodgings for a variety of reasons; some have been high profile and others not noticed; some have left for reasons of safety others have endured discomfort and even pain.

To be welcomed is a great thing; to not be made welcome is another matter. We may want to know why we are not welcome; is it something we have said without realising it, is it a personality clash, is it what we represent? To be unwelcome is a bad experience.

Over the years we have heard stories of many people who have not been made welcome for a whole raft of reasons. There are people who have come to live in a country from abroad, may be as refugees or asylum seekers, perhaps for employment purposes and they have been made unwelcome. In recent months we have realised how often those who have come here for work are actually very important; they are working in the care sector or have been seasonal workers on farms bringing in the crops for us to eat.

Some will remember the days of "No Blacks or Irish" on adverts for accommodation or on restaurant doors. As I am writing this we have been made aware, once again, of the issue of racial discrimination and mistreatment in the USA. It is good that many are protesting at the maltreatment of George Floyd but it is disturbing how there is such an escalation of violence, looting and inflammatory comments from those who should know better and be guided with greater wisdom. In many ways things have not changed for people of different cultures and colour in many so parts of the world and we need to play our part in ending such injustice through our prayers and our showing respect for people regardless of background, culture and creed. That does not mean we agree with all but where challenge is needed it is challenge issued with respect.

Unlike such places The Kingdom of God is a place of welcome; there is a welcoming Heavenly Father seeking for people to enter the Kingdom; background does not matter, faith in the power of transforming love revealed in Jesus is all that matters. The One who welcomes is the One who asks us to be part of the invitation process. How good are we at going to share the good news to those who are not like us?

Last Sunday was Pentecost Sunday when we remembered how people from many nations heard the Good News spoken to them in a language they could understand regardless of colour, creed or country.

We are a resurrection people, so we proclaim a new life, but we are also a Pentecost people so we are called to share the news with all, not in our strength but by the Power of the Holy Spirit. Where we are not welcomed we can leave such a place behind but may we not miss being welcomed through not going to share the message in deed and word.