

## Seedling Group Questions for the week of September 30 – Lectionary 25B

The sermon can be found at [www.lipstosing.wordpress.com](http://www.lipstosing.wordpress.com)

### Questions for opening up

What was your circle of friends like in high school?

What makes for a good friend?

### Read James 5:13-20

How has prayer have been beneficial, nurturing, or a source of healing in your own life?

Are there any types of prayer or disciplines of prayer that are especially helpful for you in opening the channels of communication between you and God?

Is James' instruction that if "anyone who wanders from the truth [they are to be] brought back by another," from another time or can/should this still apply to our shared life?

### Read Mark 9:38-50

Describe the nature of Jesus' response to John when the latter comes to Jesus with a concern that there are people doing deeds in Jesus' name who are not a part of the twelve.

Jesus could have used a number of illustrations to demonstrate service to another – serving food, extending welcome - What so you think is significant about a cup of water?

### Putting Things Together

God gives us many, many gifts. Why does Joseph suggest that *prayer* is the gift that "enlarges the circle" until it includes everyone?

Why is it that serving others can open our eyes to a new experience with God? The example in the sermon was the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students serving our CARITAS guests. When is a time that you formed a relationship through service that opened your eyes?

How does the Apostles Creed act as a tool for "keeping the team together"? Are there other ways that this statement of belief is beneficial or instructive to the mission of the church?

### Making It Personal

Joseph asks, "Where are the places in our individual lives, in the workplace and school, that we have an opportunity to step back and make room and invite people into the fellowship of Jesus? What are the opportunities we have as a congregation to step back and make room for others to be a part of friendship in Christ?" How would you begin answering these questions?

## **Second Reading: James 5:13-20**

*Marks of the Christian community include praying for those who are sick and in need, celebrating with those in good health, restoring those who have strayed, confessing sins to one another, and offering forgiveness to each other.*

<sup>13</sup>Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise.

<sup>14</sup>Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup>The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. <sup>16</sup>Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. <sup>17</sup>Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. <sup>18</sup>Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

<sup>19</sup>My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, <sup>20</sup>you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

## **Gospel: Mark 9:38-50**

*On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus teaches his disciples about ministry that involves service and sacrifice. His disciples are slow to realize that these words apply to them as well as to others.*

<sup>38</sup>John said to [Jesus,] "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." <sup>39</sup>But Jesus said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. <sup>40</sup>Whoever is not against us is for us. <sup>41</sup>For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

<sup>42</sup>"If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. <sup>43</sup>If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. <sup>45</sup>And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. <sup>47</sup>And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, <sup>48</sup>where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

<sup>49</sup>"For everyone will be salted with fire. <sup>50</sup>Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."