

Second Hand Preacher

3rd Sunday of Easter

April 30, 2017

1 Peter 1:17-21

I love to travel. I haven't done it as much as I would have liked, but I have traveled in the United States, Europe, and some in the Middle East. My favorite way to travel is by pilgrimage. I love churches and religious art. Each trip I take, even though the destination is mostly for pleasure, I like to include a religious element. The travel is temporary. One can take it to refresh and focus on God. Just after Memorial Day, I will go on an 8-day silent retreat in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. These short trips can be called a sojourn. Everyone should try to take at least a short sojourn.

St. Peter encouraged his followers to sojourn. This is a way to evangelize. Often his helpers would have known Jesus or heard of his teaching through the Apostles, so they were prepared to spread the good news. Many of Peter's followers would have spread the teachings of Jesus to other Jews. They would have been steeped in the law and probably had the scriptures memorized. Peter and his followers would have the task of getting these Jews to believe that Jesus was the fulfillment of these Scriptures. They believed that Jesus is the Messiah. He is the Lord who came into the world. Jesus was born of a virgin. He taught and performed signs like a prophet. He proved himself more than a prophet. He is the Son of God who suffered and died for the forgiveness of sins. He rose from the dead that we might have eternal life. Peter wanted his disciples to know the true value of Jesus and how to live by his principles.

Two Thousand years later these principles of Jesus still apply. The letter to the Hebrews said Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Because of Peter and Paul, the message of salvation has made its way to Minnesota. To think that in those two thousand years the message has been consistent. The followers of Peter kept a legacy that developed into a creed. This creed has been passed on so that we who believe can pass on our faith. Next time you are at a Sunday Mass, you may have the opportunity to recite the Creed in order to profess our faith. The Church has suffered over time like the early disciples who gave their lives that Jesus may be glorified. Perhaps we aren't called to the same persecutions that lead to physical death. We are often put down and mentally persecuted for believing what Jesus taught. Caring for the poor, living our faith, and becoming intentional disciples is how we live our faith. Sometimes a sojourn is what we need to build and spread our faith in a broken world.