

Lent Day 18
Tuesday March 1, 2016

Reading: Mark 6.53-56

When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he went—into villages, towns or countryside—they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

Reflection

Have you ever heard a story of God meeting someone's need in a miraculous way? Loren Cunningham tells of one of his YWHAM people who trusted God so much that they packed a suit case, went to the airport, and waited for the money to arrive for their plane ticket so they could go on the mission they believed they were called to. With only minutes to spare the money arrived and the missionary left for their trip. It's a rousing story of God's miraculous provision. But, Cunningham goes on to make an even more important point, that the person who has a job, earns money, and is able to live has also received God's miraculous provision. The difference is in perception.

The last time Jesus was in this region was in Mark 5 when he release a demon possessed boy and was promptly asked to leave the area. Remember the young man asked to go with Jesus and was answered that he should go home and tell his people what the Lord had done for him. Evidently, he did! What we see is a mix of two of Jesus' parables from chapter 4 "growing seed" and "mustard seed". What started with one disciple and a hostile population has now, imperceptibly, become a much larger following. God has been at work the whole time — out of sight.

Let's face it, we prefer the dramatic, miraculous activity of God over the slow, imperceptible activity. I suspect that's why we want the sinner to saint stories told to us and our church kids feel like they don't have a testimony worth talking about. I think both activities of God is necessary. There are significant moments when God grabs us and shakes us, but for the most part, I think, he is quietly forming us into his people. I suspect that being open to the slow, long process of formation results in the deeper, lasting transformation.

Prayer

God of time and patience, would you continue to do your slow and, at times, imperceptible work of transformation in our lives. Help us to recognize and value this deeper work with the same regard we have for your more dramatic activity. Amen.