**Luke 10:1-20 July 3, 2022**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our text for this morning comes from our Gospel lesson, Luke chapter 10 here re-reading these words. “Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house!’ And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you.” This is our text.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The road. What is the longest you’ve ever been on the road? After high school I went to Concordia University Wisconsin which meant that to get to school from Bay City, Michigan was about 9 hours on the road. 9 hours riding with your brother or riding with a friend listening to the radio or to your favorite music, having fun, talking, stopping to get food or snacks goes by pretty fast, it’s easy and enjoyable. The pressure is off, you aren’t driving, you are just riding along. You don’t pay that much attention to where you are supposed to go or what exits to take, you can just relax. Compare that to what should be 9 hours by yourself in a snow storm that turns into 12 hours is another story. I remember the difference of making that drive later on after my brother had graduated and now it was just me. And to this day, although I do it regularly and did quite a bit of it this past week going to Ann Arbor and back for the Michigan District convention, I don’t particularly enjoy driving on the highway. Maybe it’s the higher speed, or the constant change of vehicles merging on and off but I always just feel a little uneasy driving down the highway, and it’s always been that way from when I first learned to drive as a young man. The road is long, it can be treacherous, driving through Onekama is much different than driving through a big city like Chicago, and we grow weary of continuing down the road after a long time. This is especially true in the road of life.

Can you imagine what it was like for these men on the road? The 72 that are sent out by Jesus Christ in our Gospel lesson from Luke chapter 10? I may have been uneasy traveling down the road at a high speed, but I had a comfortable seat, air conditioning, a radio, all the luxuries that a car gives when you are traveling along. These men had nothing. “Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road.” They knew no one where they were going and you can imagine that the road was long for them. To go and do the good things that Jesus had asked them to do would be exciting, but the question is, how long would it be before they were weary doing good? How many towns would they go to that rejected them before that was their default response? To not even try to witness to these people, or do good for them, or heal them after so many before them had turned their backs on them in their desperate state. To not even look to do good but to immediately move to dismiss them, dusting of their feet and moving on to the next town. As Paul writes in our Epistle lesson from Galatians chapter 6, on the road of life, especially as a Christian, in a world of indifference, in a cloud of relative morality meaning that good is defined by the majority and there is no outward expectation for you to do good, at least not the good that God has called you to do, how often have we, “Grown weary of doing good.”?

The road gets long, setbacks seem to pile up. Everywhere you go there is something to slow you down: a slow car in front of you, road construction, an accident that has closed down lanes, you have car problems that slow you down, you’re hungry, you’re tired, you’re thirsty, you’ve been driving all day, you just want to get off the road and take a rest. It’s a lot easier to travel if you don’t adhere to every single rule that you’re supposed to out on the road. After all, you get there faster if you go above the speed limit. You get there faster if you speed past someone who is trying to merge in front of you, or pass someone going slower even if it’s not a passing lane. The road is long and makes you weary. The road is long and makes you agitated and frustrated and angry at others for not being like you and doing what you do. Imagine the frustration to come to a town with a message of peace and to be rejected. We just saw last week Jesus and his disciples go to a Samaritan village and are rejected. Here in Luke 10 Jesus says very plainly to the 72, “Behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.” The road isn’t easy. The road of life is hard for all, especially those who call upon the name of Jesus Christ. And we grow weary of doing good. And who can blame us? How can we possibly do good all the time? After what we’ve been through? After what we have to face out there on the road of life? When others have no regard for the rules that God has clearly given in the 10 Commandments and in the Law?

If you’re playing a game you play by the rules, what would be the point of playing if you aren’t going to play by the rules, right? But if you’ve ever had an experience where you’ve played by the rules and someone else isn’t you’ll find that you grow weary of the game very quickly. Take basketball on a playground for example. They don’t have to dribble, they can go out of bounds, they can foul you without penalty while you are trying to play the game as it’s supposed to be played. You see their constant breaking of the rules and grow weary of playing at all. You are passed by someone on the road going way over the speed limit with no penalty and you grow weary of the speed that you are supposed to go. Our following of the rules and doing good in the eyes of God grows weary when we are faced with those who have no regard for God and His Word and seem to never receive any punishment. We either want to see them be punished or we want to join them in breaking the rules and doing bad rather than good. And it's so easy to see others breaking the rules and disregard all the times that we break the rules too…When we are caught speeding we point out others who were speeding to, but it doesn’t excuse our own breaking of the Law. Of doing the good that we were supposed to. We can’t pretend that we never break the rules in moments when we have grown weary of doing good on the road of life. That we’ve never stepped out of bounds, or fouled someone and gotten away with it. We are all guilty, we just want others to be shown for their problems, rather than to focus on our own failures.

It’s how our sinful nature operates, ultimately it has nothing to do with them it has everything to do with us. When we do good we are doing it for the good of others, we are sacrificing for their sake, we are putting their needs before our own to maintain good order in our society and world, but when we break those rules for the sake of our own convenience we show sin’s true foundation which is self over others. God said not to do that and we say we’re doing it anyway because we want to. And we are tired of doing good and traveling down the road of life with so many things holding us back from enjoying all that we want to. And we are quick to dust off our feet, as the disciples do, to those who would dare to treat us as less than special on account of the good we did, at least at one time. Because we are weary and tired of doing good as God’s children. And we want to take the exit ramp on the road of life and service to God, and rest, and be done, and not have to drive on forever.

You may think you’ve taken the exit ramp in your life, that you aren’t like these 72 sent out by Jesus Christ, you are in the rest that comes after a long and faithful life of service. And you’d be wrong. Because you’re on the road until you go to be with our Savior. And you are called to serve and be his witness all the days of your life. For these 72 we see their joy when they return from the road. “The 72 returned with joy, saying, ‘Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name! And Jesus said to them, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” For most of the trips to and from Wisconsin I was alone. I was nervous driving through Chicago, I was uneasy driving on the highway, but then I got to an hour away, the Perry exit, and I got to get off the highway, and I got to drive on the backroads home through Owosso and St. Charles, and what made that drive so much easier was that it was slower, I was off the highway, I was able to take a breath, and the road was easier, and I knew, soon, I would be home. The 72 have comfort of knowing that their names are written in heaven, which makes the road easier because they know where the road is leading to. You know where you are going, you know where your road is headed. The road is long. You grow weary, it gets hard, you don’t want to keep going, but the comfort you have is knowing where you are going. And to take a break here in God’s house, where you come to get a small picture of the rest of heaven, where you sing hymns of praise, where your soul is comforted in the forgiveness of your sins and your faith is strengthened in hearing the Word of God. Where you are reminded that you know where your name is written, not on account of what you’ve done, but because of what has been done for you. How you were washed and made new in the waters of Holy Baptism. How your faith was confirmed, how you receive the very body and blood of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. How you read in the Word of God how Jesus Christ came and died on the cross to save you from your sins and rose again to give you eternal life so that when the road of life ends your wearied soul finds rest with your Heavenly Father who loves you.

So do not grow weary in doing good. Continue on the road of life, even the parts that make you uneasy, and are hard. Even when you want to break the rules and do whatever you want because you see others doing the same. Know with confidence your name is written in the book of heaven, and be a witness, a disciple, see your own wonderful call to serve the Lord where he has sent you and called you, as a lamb in the midst of wolves, but not without hope and not weary to serve because you are saved and your road leads to paradise.

Amen.

The peace of God which surpasses all human understanding keep our hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.