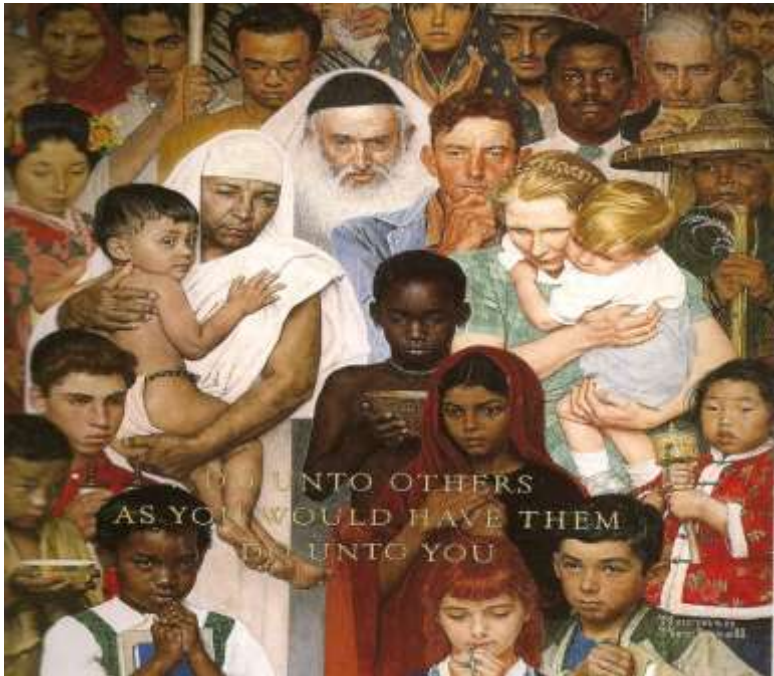


Mark 6:1-13

Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. “Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him that he even does miracles! Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. Jesus said to them, “Only in his hometown, among his relatives and his own house is a prophet without honor.” He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. And he was amazed at their lack of faith. Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. Calling the Twelve to him, he sent them out two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits. These were his instructions: “Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. Wear sandals but not an extra tunic. Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you; shake the dust off your feet when you leave, as a testimony against them.” They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.



“Glorious Leadership”

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord . . .

Glory, glory, hallelujah, His truth is marching on.

‘Battle Hymn of the Republic’

Glory means weighted with the significance of God. In the ‘Declaration of Independence’ we see glory coming in the recognition by society that all men are created equal and with the unalienable rights of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. We see glory as governing powers that are just and that are derived from the consent of the governed. We see glory as the right of the people ‘to alter or to abolish a government that becomes destructive to these ends’ And, we see glory as the power to re-fashion government gone bad so that it is better able to pursue safety and happiness. 239 years ago the Continental Congress formally freed itself from the rule of an oppressive, unjust king and formally freed itself for the purpose of living to the glory of God.

Glory in Bible speak means ‘weighted with the significance of God.’ Two thousand years before that glorious meeting of the Continental Congress, the gospel writer Mark records the time that the glory of the Lord freed Jesus from oppressive honor and shaming codes of conduct that ruled Jewish households. In our culture that sounds like --‘you’re embarrassing me’ and ‘our family isn’t like that.’ In Jesus time it was the strict rules of boundary keeping: don’t eat with sinners, don’t talk with women in public, don’t touch the unclean, don’t hang out with strangers. His public retort, “Only in his hometown, among his relatives and his own house is a prophet without honor” represents his programmatic break with those social structures of kinship that blocked his vocation of overcoming the powers of evil with non-violent love. Once freed from the obligation to act according to the religious rules of his hometown, Jesus was free to leave that place of once-upon-a-time comfort and security to check out the faith in strangers in nearby villages. After doing so, he sat down with his disciples to teach them how to bring the love of God amongst people of difference. Jesus said: “Take nothing for the journey except a staff—No bread, no bag, no money in your belt (Mark 6:8). What is weighted with the significance of God in his teaching? In his book, “Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark’s Story of Jesus,” author Ched Meyers proposed that it lies in the ‘utter dependence of the disciples upon hospitality’ (p. 213). It meant glorifying God by accepting hospitality from strangers. It meant sharing meals with them and getting to know their hearts of compassion, and common desire for

happiness and safety. It meant finding ways to live peaceably with people of difference. It also meant refusing to take vengeance upon households that outright rejected them. According to Jesus, this kind of hospitality is amazingly and powerfully weighted with the significance of God.

The Pilgrims were sojourners among people of great difference and refugees with no place to call home. Massasoit Sachem or Ousamequin (c. 1581-1661) was the sachem, or leader, of the Wampanoag, and “Massasoit” of the Wampanoag Confederacy. (The term Massasoit means Great Sachem). According to English sources, Massasoit prevented the failure of Plymouth Colony and the almost certain starvation that the Pilgrims faced during the earliest years of the colony’s establishment. Massasoit forged critical political and personal ties with the colonial leaders John Carver, Stephen Hopkins, Edward Winslow, William Bradford, and Miles Standish—ties which grew out of a negotiated peace treaty on March 22, 1621. Listen to the Pilgrim’s account of the way in which mutual hospitality secured life promoting peace among strangers in that meeting. ‘About an hour after noon on a fair, warm day on March 22/April 1, 1621, Samoset and Squanto appeared in the village of Plymouth with some skins and newly caught and dried herrings to trade. They told the colonists that the great Sachem Massasoit was nearby with his brother Quadequina and all their men. About an hour later Massasoit came to the top of the hill with some sixty of his men. However, the Pilgrims were not willing to send their governor to meet them, and the Indians were unwilling to come to them. Squanto went again to Massasoit and brought back word that Massasoit wished to have trade and peace with them, asking the Pilgrims to send someone to parley with him. Edward Winslow agreed to serve as diplomatic ambassador and went to Massasoit. The scene was described by Winslow in his Journal as follows: “We sent to the King a payre of Knives, and a Copper Chayne, with a Jewell at it. To Quadequina we sent likewise a Knife and a Jewell to hang in his care, and withal a Pot of strong water, a good quantity of Bisket, and some butter, which were all accepted: our Messenger (Winslow) made a speech unto him, that King James saluted him with words of love and Peace, and did accept him as his Friend and Alie, and that our Governour desired to see him and to trucke with him, and to confirmed a Peace with him, and his next neighbor: he liked well of the speech and heard it attentively, though the Interpreters did not well expresse it; after he had eaten and drunke himself, and given the rest to his company, he looked upon his messengers sword and armour which he had on, with

intimation of his desire to buy it, but on the other side, our messenger shewed his unwillingness to part with it; In the end he left him in the custodie of Quadequina his brother, and came over the brooke, and some twentie men following him, leaving all their Bowes and Arrowes behind them. We kept six or seaven as hostages for our messenger.” Immediately, Governor Carver came to the house with drum and trumpet after him and a few musketeers. Governor Carver kissed the hand of Massasoit and Massasoit kissed Carver before they sat down. Governor Carver called for some strong water, and made a toast to Massasoit. Massasoit drank deeply of the liquor which made him sweat. Then, Carver called for fresh meat, which Massasoit ate and shared with his followers. Later in the text, Winslow remembered additional details “one thing I forgot, the King had in his bosome hanging in a string, a great long knife, he marveled much at our Trumpet, and some of his men would sound it as well as they could . . . “ Apparently table fellowship, gift exchange, strong water, and giving proper recognition to those in charge disarmed fear and fed trust.

In the terms of the Peace Treaty they agreed to do no harm to each other, to disarm when meet, to punish their own, and to form an alliance against the Wampanoag enemy. But, ‘Not long after the signing there was tension between Massasoit and the colonists when they refused to give up Squanto whom Massasoit believed to have betrayed him. This was not resolved until a visit by Edward Winslow to Massasoit in March 1623 when Massasoit was ill and Winslow nursed him. After his recovery, Winslow reports that Massasoit said “the English are my friends and love me.” Moreover, Winslow also noted that Massasoit felt duty-bound to observe that “whilst I live I will never forget this kindness they have showed me.” As time passed, the Pilgrims insisted that the expansion of their lands was necessary to support their growing colony. Massasoit; unwavering in his loyalty and commitment to the Pilgrims, and over the protestations of some of his Sagamores, sold additional land to the Colony to keep the peace. The first known land sale occurred on March 23rd 1649, on Sachem Rock, where Massasoit met with Myles Standish and two others and sold the land “called Saughtuckett. . . for consideration of seven coats, nine hatchets, eight hoes, twenty knives, four moose skins, ten and one half yards of cotton, and 20 pounds sterling. So I’ll end with a question for us. When we think about those early settlement leaders, and those moments of glory when they welcomed each other with open hearted, open handed hospitality, doesn’t our faith smile wide with amazement at what the non-violent love of God can do?