

## HEARTBEATS- Staying Connected 8/23/2021

Dear Friends in Christ,

***ONE AT ONE*** – *Every day this week beginning on Tuesday, August 24 you are encouraged to pray for one minute at one o'clock. This week, continue pray for the many places in the world that are in need of God's presence. Add to your prayers those who are being affected by the storms and hurricanes in the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and the southern and eastern seaboard. Ask God to bring peace and mercy to all who are in need and to provide faithful workers to bring God's comfort.*

---

Jesus often just did things the wrong way—at least by the world's standards. When He put together His rabbinic school, He chose the wrong people. Rabbis wanted the smartest and most accomplished students. Jesus, however, chose people who had washed out of synagogue school and had to go home to learn the family trade—fishermen, manual laborers, etc. He even chose those who collaborated with the enemy (a tax collector who worked for the Romans), a potential insurrectionist (a member of the Zealots), a cynic (“Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”), and even one who He knew would betray Him.

Even in His development of leaders, Jesus did what most leader cultivators today would avoid (though I think many who develop leaders would do well to look to some of today's practices. The Peter Principle states that people who do well will continue to be promoted until they reach a level of incompetence—a job where they can no longer excel.). Jesus continued to work with people who missed the point, tried to abuse their power, spoke without thinking, and sought to direct Jesus away from His agenda and toward the things that they wanted.

One time, a couple of disciples who didn't like that some towns rejected them asked if they could call down fire from heaven and destroy those towns. On another occasion, when some of the disciples saw someone performing healings using the name of Jesus wanted to stop him because he wasn't part of their group. They tried to prevent the people with whom Jesus clearly wanted to spend time from having access to Him. They tried to steer Him away from places to which He obviously wanted to go. And they often tried to dismiss those whom Jesus wanted to

help. Most leader developers today would have fired or demoted those who behaved this way. But not Jesus.

Jesus even allowed and arranged for His followers to fail. He told them to feed a multitude when they had no money to do so. He sent them out to proclaim the gospel when they were ill-prepared to share that message. He invited one of them to get out of a boat and walk on water, knowing that he would end up sinking. But Jesus knew that in failing, they would have greater motivation to learn from Him and pay better attention to what He was trying to teach them. And eventually (for the most part), it worked. Not always right away, though.

Too often, we dismiss those who don't measure up to our standards. We prefer not to spend time or energy on those who aren't yet able to follow the example of our Lord, or at least those portions of that example that we can follow. Jesus, however, chose those who were not the best-of-the-best, the cream-of-the-crop, and mentored them. Jesus took the rough and crude and disappointing, and worked with them in order to bring them closer to being the people God wanted them to be. Jesus accepted them as they were, modeled a different way of being, challenged them when they got it wrong, and continued to love and guide them so that they might more fully become the gifts of God that He knew them to be. That's not the way the world tells us to do things. But it is the way God works. And in doing so, God challenges us to expand our vision for others (and for ourselves) and to seek to find the good that exists in everyone.

In Christ's love,  
Pastor Jeffrey