

Sunday June 21, 2020 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church

**Bible Study – Matthew 10:24-39
Hear All the People**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes). In pairs or groups of three, name a person you like to hear from the least (it could be a politician, friend, coworker, or family member —hopefully not your pastor!).

Group Dialogue (Approximately 30 minutes)

Matthew 10:24-39 - Context. This week’s reading is the conclusion of the “Missionary Discourse,” where Jesus is looking ahead, not only to his own suffering, but also to that of his disciples, both then and since then, as God’s kingdom will draw nearer and nearer and God’s true “family” will be set apart for ultimate blessing, however nasty it gets in the meantime.

Read Matthew 10:24-39

What touches your heart, what do you hear in the scripture, what questions do you have, or what doesn’t make sense to you in the story?

Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Read Matthew 10:24-39 again

Some reflection questions – Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

- Verses 34-39 can be some of the most surprising and even shocking words of Jesus. Which statement (listed below) do you find to be the most difficult to understand and why? [Take your time with this exercise.
- "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword" (10:34).
- “For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one's foes will be members of one's own household” (10:35-36).
- “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me” (10:37);
- “and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me” (10:38).

- “ Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it” (10:39).
- In what sense does Jesus “bring a sword” instead of peace (v. 34)? [As Jesus points out in the prior verses, claiming to be with Jesus will not necessarily make life easier. In fact, it might bring a whole new set of difficulties, as people experience persecution and misunderstanding. Just as Jesus was misunderstood and persecuted, his followers should expect to encounter some of the same.]
- However important we might conceive of families today, they were even more vital for survival in Jesus’ time. What might Jesus be getting at by stating that those who love family members more than Jesus are not worthy of him (v. 37)?
- As disciples of Jesus, who strive to be like the teacher (v. 25), how might we, as individuals and as churches, hear all the people around us? How might we hear those in our community whose politics and ideas cause us discomfort?

Read Matthew 10:24-39) again

Closing Reflection Question

How is this scripture calling you to change, to see, to be or what might it be calling you to do?

Prayer (10 minutes). Each person prays sharing their answer the following statements:

I ask God for....

I thank God for.....

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, pray the closing prayer. Ask for a volunteer to lead the group or read the following prayer in unison:

Lord of life, you call us to life that is really life, abundant life, life full of grace, sacrifice, and compassion. Empower us to love you above all else, that, in turn, we might learn to love others and hear them on their own terms. **Amen.** And now we pray The Lord’s Prayer....

Our Father who art in Heaven

hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,

on earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power

and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.