

Sermon for 25 June 2023 @ Bethesda UMC/Baltimore

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Scriptures: Genesis 21:8-21; Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17; Romans 6:1b-11; Matthew 10:24-39

"We are one."

I'm brooding now, and I hate it.

Sin ... what is it?

Twisting good situations into one-sided power-grabs.

Taking the joy out of sharing.

There's too much here to preach about.

Sarah takes matters into her own hands and makes a mess of it.

Paul tries to explain that you don't take advantage of God's forgiveness.

Gentle Jesus loses his cool with religious folks ... and then backs off and says God never gives up on us.

You know the Bible. Its truths are endless.

I can get more good quotations standing around listening to you after the benediction than you'll ever get out of one of my sermons. How come I'm up here and you all just keep sitting out there, week after week?

My father had two excellent wives. After my mother died, he remarried. My Mom wasn't a big Bible quoter, but I remember she said once, "For I have learned, in whatever situation I find myself, therewith to be content." Then Elizabeth told me her favorite quotation: "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me." I think those are just a few lines apart from one of St. Paul's letters!

Matthew gathers a whole slew of Jesus' quotes together in today's lesson, and they all warn us to be ready to suffer for truth if we follow him.

So much is going on this week, you know I have lots to say. Here the Southern Baptists have decided, in an overwhelming vote, that women can't be preachers ... and their huge Saddleback Church, led by one of their outstanding preachers, can't be Baptist any more.

Today's our monthly One Church meeting after the 10:30 service, and I've got a whole list of ideas for us to try out ... but to tell the truth, I'm tired of doing that... and you all are, too.

So what can we do?

What should we be doing?

What's the future, for us, or anybody else?

I think my Texas trip did me in. The doctor said if I could sleep twelve hours straight, I'd be OK. I can't ever remember sleeping for twelve hours straight.

Let us pray.