

Our Commonwealth

Sermon notes for the sermon
Given by Rev. Dr. Gregory B. Young
On Sunday, October 2, 2011

Have you ever stopped to ask yourself why you do the things you do? For instance, why do you go to work? To earn money that will support the family; to have a sense of accomplishment and achievement; to feel as though you are making a contribution to the human race? Why do you go to the grocery store each week? To provide food for your household; to pick-up some extra, non-perishable food to donate to Elijah's Promise; to purchase something special for a birthday or other occasion? I would encourage you to take some time today to reflect on the things that you do that are important to you and ask yourself the simple question, "Why do I do this? Or, why is this so important to me?"

With that being said, I now ask the question you thought I would ask, "Why do you come to this place to worship God?" Why did you choose to come here today? Anyone care to share?

I was raised that way;

I want to be a good person;

I need God in my life;

I want to be with family and friends;

I am looking for purpose in my life;

I feel the need to worship God...

In our Gospel reading today Jesus continues to speak to the Pharisees and elders of the Temple. The writer of the Gospel According to Matthew has Jesus sitting within the Temple and teaching any who would care to listen. He then proceeds to share this parable of the tenants in the vineyard. This parable is used by Jesus in an effort to get the Pharisees and elders of Israel to stop and ask themselves why are they doing what they are doing? God is looking for a partnership and the rulers of Israel have taken over the business. God is seeking to transform the life of the world through the lives of faith of Israel and the rulers instead are grabbing the power for themselves. God is looking for humble and obedient servants who will seek to do God's will and the Pharisees and elders have puffed themselves up, proclaiming to all that they are better than everyone else.

So, why do you come to church and worship God in this place? Is it to puff yourself up so that you look better than others? If so, the only one you are fooling is yourself. Is it to draw near to the God of creation, redemption and salvation that your life might be transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ? Perhaps it is to find ourselves numbered among those who now live in God's kingdom and are now governed by God's values and God's hopes and dreams. By virtue of our baptism God has invited us to stand with those who through the ages and throughout the world gather to worship and glorify the Triune God. Today we find ourselves standing in the commonwealth of God's holy kingdom receiving the food and drink that transforms us into the body of Christ and makes us one.