

Monday, 24 May 2021 – Weekly Inspiration from Rev. Jason

These past weeks in church as we've moved through the Easter season, we've been looking at the work of the Spirit in the book of Acts. Similarly, the Sunday School class has been reading it's way through Acts, verse by verse, looking at some of the stories & encounters that don't always make it into the lectionary readings for worship. (And by the way, if you ever find yourself desiring some really great and engaging conversation, this Sunday School class is one of the best places I've ever seen that - all you have to do is come to church a little earlier at 9:30!).

During our Sunday School class just yesterday, one sentence particularly caught my eye: the first part of the first verse of chapter 8. Coming at the end of the story of Stephen, the first martyr for the faith, chapter 8 begins with, "And Saul approved of their killing him" (Acts 8:1a, NRSV).

Now, by itself, not a very positive or uplifting sentence. And while we know the story of Saul's "Divine Encounter" and ultimately conversion to Christ (and his name change to Paul), none of that is happening in this line. Instead, we (the readers) are left with this simple statement that tells just how against the Early Church Saul is.

And here's what's so amazing to me, as I continue to think on it: This is not just a descriptor of Saul, this is an indicator (to us)...an inkling and foreshadowing of just how powerful is the Holy Spirit! It can take someone like Saul, so against the possibility of this new focus of faith, and ultimately turn him into a new person all together! And if the Holy Spirit can so easily and readily do that with someone so hard-hearted, imagine what it can do in our hearts?

That's the invitation to you this morning: Today, and in the days to come, actually imagine what the Holy Spirit might do in your heart to help you grow into the person who you are designed to be. Hopefully it won't come with a blinding Divine encounter, but hey, you never know!

Prayer: Lord, you sent your Spirit for us to know you better and to be guided and comforted in our lives. May we be transformed, day by day, into the faithful disciples you have called us to be. Amen.