

Pastor's Message

Somewhere, Somehow

Exodus 16:2–15 | Matthew 20:1–16

I once heard someone say, “The trouble with life is that we're all in the same boat—but some of us are trying to steer, some are trying to row, and a few are asking where the snacks are!” There's probably a little truth in that. Life doesn't always move in the same direction for everyone. Some of us are moving quickly, some slowly, and some of us are just trying to figure out which way is forward.

That's where we find the Israelites. They were moving forward, but they weren't happy about it. They were hungry, tired, and wondering why God had brought them into the wilderness. They even started talking about how good things were back in Egypt. They remembered the food—but forgot the chains. Yet God didn't give up on them. He gave them manna, one day at a time. God was teaching them that they didn't have to know everything about tomorrow. They simply needed to trust Him today.

Jesus tells us something similar in Matthew. The workers in the vineyard didn't all arrive at the same time. Some worked all day, while others came later. When everyone received what had been promised, the workers began comparing themselves with one another. And that's something we still do. We look at somebody else's life and think, “I've been working longer. I've been waiting longer. I've been doing this longer. Why does their blessing look different from mine?” But Jesus reminds us that **God doesn't measure us against each other**. He calls each of us to be faithful with what we've been given.

Somewhere, somehow, God has brought us together. Different ages, different stories, different gifts, and different struggles. And that's not a problem. **That's the beauty of the church.** A church isn't made strong because everybody is alike. It's made strong because people who are different are willing to love one another and work together.

So here's our challenge this week: **Don't compare your piece of the story with somebody else's.** Ask God, “What can I do with the piece You've given me?” Maybe you can encourage someone, forgive someone, lend a hand, or simply sit beside someone who's having a difficult day. You may think it's a small thing, but somewhere, somehow, God can use small acts of faithfulness to make a big difference.

There was an elderly woman who came to church every Sunday. She couldn't sing very well, she couldn't teach a class, and she wasn't able to do many of the things she once did. One day, someone apologized to her and said, “I'm sorry you can't do more around here.” She smiled and said, “Oh, I do more than you think. Every Sunday, I look around this church and I pray for the person who needs God the most.” Nobody knew she was doing it, and nobody gave her credit. But week after week, she quietly prayed.

Years later, a young man came to the pastor and said, “I almost gave up on God. But there was an older woman who sat near me every Sunday. She never said much. She just smiled at me. Somehow, every time I saw her, I felt like maybe God hadn't forgotten me.” The pastor knew exactly who he was talking about. That woman thought she was simply sitting in a pew, but **somewhere, somehow, God was using her.**

We don't always know what our little piece is accomplishing. We may never see the person our kindness reaches or know whose life our prayers change, but God sees it. So let's keep walking, keep serving, keep encouraging, and most of all, **keep walking together.** Somewhere, somehow, God is taking all of our different stories, gifts, and imperfect pieces and creating something none of us could create alone.

We may not see the whole picture yet, but God does. And perhaps the question isn't, “Where do I fit?” Perhaps it's, “**Who needs me to be their piece today?**” Somewhere, somehow, God may be using you to help complete someone else's picture.

Amen.

-Pastor Thad

