

Coffee To Go | Proper 9

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SPEAKERS

Blake Smith, Karin Peter

Karin Peter 00:26

Welcome to Coffee to Go, where we center ourselves in the scripture, seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition. I'm Karin Peter here with Blake Smith, and we welcome you on this journey. So the question we ask ourselves each episode is where are we with Jesus this week? Or even where the heck is Jesus this week? And today we are listening in, as Jesus is teaching his disciples. And Jesus is preparing them to go out in mission. And their mission, of course, is to share the good news of God's peaceable reign. So, our scripture today is a little bit longer than some of them that we've listened to. So Blake, where are we in the scriptures?

Blake Smith 01:18

We are in the Gospel according to Matthew, the 11th chapter, and the verses are 16-19, and 25-30. "But to what will I compare this generation, it is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another. We played the flute for you, and you did not dance. We wailed, and you did not mourn. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, he has a demon. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, look, a glutton, and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners, yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds. At that time, Jesus said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent, and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. And no one knows the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy. And my burden is light" Now, I just had my nieces and nephews over for a day. And it reminded me of this passage of these children just bickering about. Oh, you didn't do this, or you didn't do that or wasn't good enough. And this is just a bunch of highly critical and unhappy people. And they're like petulant children that you can't please no matter what you do, and we know, we all know people like that, no matter what you do, you can't please them. So John didn't eat, so he had a demon. Jesus ate and drank, and he was a glutton. If you've got these, these children that are sitting in the street, saying, we we played the flute, flute, now dance, and then Jesus came to dance, and they didn't want him to dance, they wanted them to be what they wanted him to be. So Jesus just tells those that are listening, that it's not necessary to keep trying to please those who will criticize. That that's no way to be. I mean, we would spend our whole life spinning our wheels, if we tried to please everybody. And it's combination. I mean, it's it's

either we don't do enough, or we do too much. So we can be demonized for not doing things the way somebody wants or demonized for trying to do the faithful thing. And yet being seen by some as we might call it, a brown noser or someone who's trying to climb the ladder. So it's really hard. And Jesus in this passage is just telling us don't try. Here's, here's the way to go.

Karin Peter 04:21

Yeah, here's the rest that that passage has always been a really wonderful pastoral one that comes to mind for me when I am feeling burdened. The whole find rest for your soul, piece. And I think when I first read this, something that came to mind was that women experienced this kind of double edged critique on a regular basis. Or we're nurtured in it from the time we're born. We're either too fat or too thin. If we are a working mom are criticized if we're stay at home mom we're criticized. As you get older, you get criticized for trying to look too young and when you're young you get criticized for trying to look too old. And it's it's a different experience, I think, than men have men, men suffer the same kind of double edged sword. It's just that women seem to it seems to be part of our culture, that it seems almost okay to do that to women. And that comes to mind when I read the scriptures that women live in that kind of tension on a regular basis.

Blake Smith 05:24

Oh, that's that's a great point. Yeah. And I do believe that, that men, in some ways, I think of myself, I mean, I grew up in the South, I wasn't athletic. I wasn't the picture perfect Southern masculine man. I like art and music and that kind of thing. And so there was, there was some of that. I mean, that's not, certainly not the culture as it is with women. So, you know, when, as I was reading this passage, I'm reminded of the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. It's like, oh, this bed is too soft! Oh, this bed is too hard! Well this one's just right. And finding the just right, is hard. I mean, you got this, the Pharisees on one side saying, this is the way it is. And it's, it's rigid and hard set. And they're kind of that authority, authoritarian church, that's too hard. And then Jesus, at least interpreted by some of us, is incredibly welcoming, radical hospitality, as we've talked about many times, and for some of those who want some structure, and want to be told how to think and how to believe that's too soft. <Yeah.> Jesus says again, don't don't try to fit in that, "Come unto me." You know, "my, my yoke is easy and the burden is light" doesn't mean that... there is a yoke, there is a burden. This is not going to be easy trails. But when you are living into the will of God, in a relationship with Christ. There's, you're in a you're in community. And, and it does make it easier, it doesn't make it easy, makes it easier.

Karin Peter 07:12

So I think, I think that idea of is not that there's no burden, it's that the burden is light. <Right.> But even with that burden, walking with Jesus, you find rest, you find a place. You find that just right place, because you're allowing yourself to be authentic and, and be in relationship in community in an authentic way. Rather than trying to measure up or feel feel like you don't.

Blake Smith 07:21

And I think that word there is key—authentic. I mean, when we're being authentic, and as God has created us with the gifts God has given us, and walking in the light of Christ, being authentic, that is easier, in some ways. fleiger Because it's who we're meant to be.

Karin Peter 08:00

So do we have questions this week?

Blake Smith 08:03

Yeah, yeah. I think it's important for us to hear this and maybe ask the question, when have I felt diminished or overlooked? Or, so for being, not being able to measure up diminished or overlooked for not being able to measure up? But also, when maybe have I felt mocked for trying to do the right thing and being seen as you know, someone trying to climb the ladder? <Trying too hard.> Yeah. Another question would be, what are the what are the burdens and quite often unrealistic expectations that you or someone else has placed on you? That you've seen, you simply need to let go of and find rest?

Karin Peter 08:51

Ah, Jesus is really speaking to that here in Matthew's Gospel.

Blake Smith 08:55

Yeah, you're gonna just have to let go, because you're not going to please everybody. So, and finally, what does rest for your weary soul look like for you? Because that's going to look different for everybody. What does it look like for you?

Karin Peter 09:10

I think that's probably the hardest question, Blake. Because when we start to look at that, we start to realize that maybe we haven't been searching for that kind of centeredness and, and rest for our soul and it's uncomfortable to do so. So how can we experience this as we go forward this week? And so the first thing that came to mind for me, Blake, was every time I grab my backpack, or my purse or my very stylish mini crossbody bag, all you lady listeners out there, or your briefcase or your tote bag or whatever it is, as you leave the house. Ask yourself what do I have in here? Am I carrying burdens of criticism? Am I trying to measure up to unrealistic social standards? Am I feeling like I'm being mocked or looked at in an unkind way because I'm trying to do too much or I'm too assertive. Do I have shame in here; do I have worries and mistakes in here that I continue to rehearse in my mind. And if so, as you pick up that backpack or purse or briefcase, take a minute to release those things. And I say this quite often— take three deep, peaceful breaths. That's the thing to do. Take three deep, peaceful breaths. And each time as you breathe in, breathe in rest for your soul. And as you breathe out, breathe out that extra baggage you've got in that vessel. So you've got a blessing?

Blake Smith 10:49

And if that deep breaths isn't enough, do five or 10, do whatever it takes. There are those moments.

Karin Peter 10:53

Do 5 or 10 depending on your morning, there you go. There you go.

Blake Smith 10:57

Yeah, our blessing this morning comes from "For Letting Go of Toxic Relationships" by Terry Stokes. Oh mother who holds us fast, open our hands to let go of toxic relationships, shake the dust off our feet

as we move on, in every place that's been obscured, distorted, or gaslit, shine light, clarifying light and for every loss on the investment of ourselves, recoup relational wisdom for our future, evict these relationships, from their occupation of our inner lives, and usher in positive experiences to supersede the former through Christ who heals our hearts, who reigns with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, restoring all things. Amen.

Karin Peter 11:49

Amen.

Blake Smith 11:52

Well, thanks for joining us this week on Coffee to Go. We invite you to join us for Coffee to Go for the next part of our journey through the liturgical seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition.