

“We Must Be Crazy”
3rd Lent, March 4, 2018

Exodus 20:1-17

20:1 Then God spoke all these words: 20:2 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; 20:3 you shall have no other gods before me. 20:4 You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 20:5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, 20:6 but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments. 20:7 You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. 20:8 Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. 20:9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work. 20:10 But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work--you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. 20:11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it. 20:12 Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. 20:13 You shall not murder. 20:14 You shall not commit adultery. 20:15 You shall not steal. 20:16 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. 20:17 You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

1:18 For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 1:19 For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." 1:20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 1:21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. 1:22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, 1:23 but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 1:24 but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 1:25 For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. [Return to top]

John 2:13-22

2:13 The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2:14 In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. 2:15 Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. 2:16 He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" 2:17 His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." 2:18 The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" 2:19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 2:20 The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" 2:21 But he was speaking of the temple of his body. 2:22 After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Long ago, God realized that there could be no true society without rules, without laws for the guidance of people. In order to structure society for the health, safety and happiness of God's people, in God's grace, God gave the law. After a long history of living by the rules of the survival of the fittest, with continual lapses into chaos, God said enough is enough and God gave the law to order life. The ten commandments are the basic form of this law. It deals with how we treat God, each other and how we are to live in community. It's also the law that proves people are crazy. Here's Moses up on the mountain talking to Almighty God, the one who had just delivered these people from Egypt. The one who parted the sea. The one who gave them manna. GOD! So what happens, Moses comes down the mountain looking like he fell asleep in the tanning bed with latest covenant hammered in stone and before he's half way down these people of God had pretty much obliterated the first few of the ten by making and worshiping a bull made of gold.

Since that golden bull, we have seen two things happen. An amazing proliferation of the laws of people for governing life in all of its aspects. As if we think, hmmm, if ten are good, thousands will be better. And an equally amazing history of the people of God breaking each and everyone, some with such regularity, we have, in our wisdom, rewritten the laws, the rules, the regulations, to make them more livable....only to violate them with just as much enthusiasm in the new form as the old.

God's plan for people is simple. Love God. Love each other. Live in joy because of loving God and each other. Have **enough** to live. That was pretty much the plan for Eden, which we have even called paradise. God and God's people living together. Humanity having all we needed to live. Enough, even seemed an abundance. All that was there, save for a small part was ours. But, and in this but is the violation, the transgression, the disobedience of every law, rule and regulation. We wanted more. We wanted in effect, to break the only rule God gave, long before any rules were needed. Leave that tree alone. That was it...but for us, enough was not enough....and the rest, as they say, whoever they are, is history. Our story...and we have not stopped making, not breaking rules ever since.

In Jesus time the law made provision for a certain amount of commerce to take place outside of the temple in Jerusalem. Naturally, people, being people, stretched the law by gouging and cheating. Jesus, rarely got angry, but when he did it was for righteous reasons. Some think the reason Jesus was angry at the temple was because they were buying and selling there. Not really, Jesus got angry, Jesus said, "enough is enough," when he discerned that those who were exchanging money and selling animals were doing so at the expense of simple people, poor people, who just needed to buy a 'sacrifice' with which to approach God. The heat of Jesus anger is the same passion with which he dies for us. It is passion that says, so many want so much more than what is enough that so many

more must suffer in order to have anything at all. Jesus legacy of caring for the poor, for the oppressed, for the weak, for the sick...should be our legacy today. If our righteous anger is kindled and we enter conflict to free those who are oppressed, then we may be approaching God's will....but let us be sure **that is** our motivation. Let us be sure that we see with the eyes of Christ and not with the eyes of economics gain, or political conquest... let us be sure that we are doing what we are doing because we see the plight of these people and say 'enough is enough,' and not we can never have enough.

This man didn't live by the old rules if you hit me I'll hit you back, if you throw a rock at me then I'll shoot you, then I'll bomb a bus, then I'll knock your house down with your children still in it. This man taught us a new way. He taught radical forgiveness. He even forgave the people who crucified him. He taught that enemies can become friends. He made his suffering mean something. He showed us that walking the way of the cross leads to resurrection. He showed us the way to a new start. He gave us a chance to begin again. And he commissioned all of us to continue his work of reconciliation. He taught us that to know when enough is enough....you have to take action...even action in righteous anger. But mostly, he taught us that to know when enough is enough....It should be enough for us to live so that someone else may also have enough to live. Does this sound foolish to you? Does it sound crazy that our stand as Christians should be enough is enough and there is enough for all? "Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the

world?" We are called to be ambassadors of enough. Enough for us, enough for our neighbor, enough for our enemies. And when we must, with Christ, to say enough is enough. Because for us, Christ is enough.