

From this week's Old Testament Lesson, from the Book of Genesis:

*So Abram went, as the LORD had told him...*

Genesis 1:4a

+

The opening chapters of the Book of Genesis record for us some of the great defining moments in our long human story; that long all too human story, all too real story, of division and brokenness and disorder. Iconic stories that have entered into our shared story at every possible level: the brokenness of the relationship between husband and wife; the brokenness of the relationship between brother and brother; the brokenness of the relationship between humanity and the created order.

Adam and Eve. Cain and Abel. Noah and the Ark.

All of which are summed up in one final image, the image of the Tower of Babel; that image that speaks so powerfully of the brokenness of language: humanity forever divided by the challenges of speaking and listening; the challenges of truly understanding each other; humanity forever struggling to love each other well.

And all of that sad story of division and disunity unfolds not just in the pages of Holy Scripture; it just as surely unfolds in the pages of our newspapers; just as much as it unfolds in the pages of our daily life.

The Book of Genesis doesn't just speak of what happened long ago in the sad unfolding of our shared human story. It speaks all too clearly of what is happening right now in the human story that we write every day.

That's why the words that we hear this week from the Book of Genesis are so incredibly important. They speak of that moment when God chose to take a different path. When God chose to start again. Of that day, after all those other dark and disappointing days; those days that ended, over and over again, in just more disorder and disunity, when God chose to start again to remake humanity: not with the waters of the flood but with a humble man named Abram and his wife Sarai.

God starts a whole new relationship with his people, starting out all over again with just two. Calling them to walk away from their past; calling them to leave all that is expected and familiar, calling them to leave their home and their family and all that they know that they might follow him to an entirely different land.

That's the story that we hear this week.

The very first words of a story that will lead them to a new home and a new land; the very first steps of a journey that will lead them to a world that they do not yet know; to a land they have never seen.

It is, as we might imagine, a journey of immense faith. A journey built on hope and trust. They live in a world of countless gods. Gods that they do not really know. Gods who can not really know them.

And all that they have to do to ensure that these so-called gods are happy is offer a sacrifice or an offering; to light a fire' to mutter a few words.

Nothing more; nothing less.

It is a world of regularity and reliability.

They know what they have to do; what is expected of them.

But in this midst of this deeply impersonal world, where they count for nothing at all; where humans are nothing more than drops of rain water in an ocean of fate, where individuals are nothing more than an expendable commodity in the relentless service of gods whose lust for power and wealth are insatiable, they suddenly have an encounter with an entirely new God, a God who claims to be not just one among many but who claims to be the only true God; a God who calls them to get up and leave everything behind; a God who promises them something better than the endless inescapable cycles of season and time; a God who promises a relationship, where he will know them and they will know him; a God who gives him a whole new name because he is tarding an whole new kind of life; and going to an entirely new kind of world.

Holy Scripture tells us that Abraham walked with God; as two friends might walk together. And that's what we're doing in these early days of the Season of Trinity. Christ has called us to walk with him as his friend. He has called us to leave behind the old world of selfishness and greed; the old broken, disordered, world of human division.

That's what John writes about in this week's Epistle. He writes of a world filled with more hate than we can imagine that cannot understand the world that Christ has offered us; a world where love binds us together when the winds of division threaten to pull us apart.

And that's what Jesus speaks of in this week's Gospel; when he talks about a great feast, a great banquet, to which a man invites his friends; a great feast which these so-called friends casually dismiss for any number of reasons.

And that's where we come into the picture; because we're the poor and the maimed and the halt and the blind that get to come to the party after all the high and mighty ones decide that they have better things to do.

We're all, in one way or another, challenged to walk and talk and see as clearly as we wish to; we sometimes stumble, we sometimes trip; we bump into things without ever every seeing what we're tripped over. In one way or another we all struggle.

But because of Jesus Christ we've been invited to the feast none the less.

And the only thing that we have to do is accept the invitation.

Like Abraham and Sarah.

Who started out on a journey without any clue where it might take them.

Without seeing where the end might be.

That's what we're doing right now in our relationship with Christ as we begin again the Season of Trinity; starting out all over again on a journey; trusting that he will walk with us; trusting that he will lead us; trusting that he will show us the way, even when we can see little more than the next step in front of us.

To be a follower of Jesus Christ is to walk with faith and trust to a new and better world; a world marked by love rather than hate; and world marked by compassion rather than greed.

That's what Christ invites us to do this day.

Now I don't know where this road will take me.

I don't know where that road will take you.

I only know that, whatever comes, Christ will walk it with us.

And, I hope, for us that will be enough.