

## **Pastor Roy's sermon from January 19, 2014**

Children's sermon: friends, introducing friends.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah sees fellowship as a deep communion which cuts through barriers of race, and status. Fellowship is first communion with God and one's immediate family and people, then this communion can spread to others, far removed from us. "It is too small a thing for you to raise up the tribes and survivors of Israel, I give you as a light to the nations." You, the least, servant of Israel, carrier of the Word of Salvation, you will be on equal terms with the greatest of the kings, CEOs, Presidents, stars. "Kings shall see and stand up, princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

Isaiah is talking about unity. He's talking about a surprising equality where it was never seen or expected before. The one who bears the message of truth, wisdom, peace. . .this one has already crossed the finish line. --Has already found the secret which brings hope and life. These bring courage to speak and be heard without fear.

Isaiah speaks of such spiritual leaders. We have found one who teaches us to live in such a peace of unity and communion. We have found a Servant, of whom Isaiah seeks, the Messiah, the Anointed One—Christ our Lord. The one who teaches us to trust.

We have the testimony of John the Baptist—of the Spirit resting upon our Lord, Jesus Christ. There is unity between Jesus and the Spirit. We experience this unity and communion between Jesus and the Spirit, with God.

The fellowship of unity is what makes Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Spirit of one is the Spirit of the other.

Andrew wants is the first in his family to discover this Servant described by Isaiah. Naturally he wants to introduce Simon to Jesus. This is fellowship. My brother just has to meet this teacher, this rabbi, this Jesus. Then Jesus changes Simon's name. In the Gospels it's a bit random, this story of Jesus changing Simon's name to Peter--feels a bit random. This name change reveals fellowship between Jesus and Simon and Andrew. It reveals a unity of Spirit--kindred spirits. Andrew learns to be ok with this, much like John seems to accept that Jesus is increasing, and he is decreasing. John and Andrew were willing to go with the flow of the Spirit. They let go of competitiveness. They let go of the need to be more important or even as "important." They let be, what is. Very healthy. Very healthy. This is fellowship. This is unity.

Epiphany is discovering the unity of our existence in God's mercy. That we can rest in hope and so be filled with courage.

God is faithful; by God you were called into the fellowship of the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Fellowship. I believe fellowship is life. We are very interconnected with one another and all that is around us. Fellowship is a celebration of our interdependency. We have fellowship with God. Fellowship with family. Fellowship with sisters and brothers in faith in the love of Christ.

Indeed we have fellowship with the nations. This is why we support programs which alleviate world hunger. This why we contribute to anti malaria campaigns, and Habitat for Humanity.

Let us do what we can to support fellowship here in this place, in the community, and around the world.

Amen.