

Sixth Friday of Easter ~ 5/18

"At Corinth one night the Lord said to Paul in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no one will lay a hand on you to harm you, for there are many in this city who are my people.'" (Acts 18: 9-10)

Most people find it difficult to stand up and speak out against those who are perceived to have power. This is especially true when one speaks from their own truth, a truth that may or may not match the feelings of the larger community. Being the lone voice of dissent or the person who suggests that we try a new way is risky business. If we are lucky we will discover that there are some people out there who do support us. At times we're even surprised to find just how strong is the positive sentiment.

Spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ means taking risks. When people don't want to hear what we have to say it may seem that our words have fallen on deaf ears but many will actually have heard us. At some deep level of their being they will respond even if it is not apparent on the surface. People who are honest with themselves may not like what we have to say but they will not cavalierly disregard it either. They examine our challenge on the inside until they come to clarity. These are the people God calls 'my people'.

The 'my people' that the Lord speaks to Paul about may or may not have been Christians at the time. Some may not even have heard of Jesus Christ yet. What makes them God's people is their integrity of heart, their desire for truth. These people are open not narrow in their thinking. They are in touch with the God that resides in their hearts so that when Paul speaks they will be the ones that will experience the flame being lit inside. All who seek life and love and truth are God's people regardless of whether they are Christian or not.

When we speak the truth God's people will hear it. They may have to wrestle with it awhile but their inner integrity will nudge them in the right direction. Like the dog that keeps chewing on the bone to get to the marrow inside, the seeker of God will not be able to let go of the words of truth without eventually responding.

The wonderful thing is that the Lord's people are everywhere, in every nation of the world and we will know them because they are living by the truth that they heard in their hearts.

Questions for Reflection

- 1. When God looks at me does He consider me one of "my people"?*
- 2. Who has spoken truth to me lately that has caused me to reevaluate my beliefs?*

Prayer: Lord, may I speak Your truth to those I meet and may I hear the truth from them as well.