

*Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Today is an anniversary - the fortieth. June 6, in 1953 was the day when the tornado came through our yard. My father saw it coming, rushed us into the basement, into the room where the shelves still held some of the peaches and green beans canned the summer before.

I never saw the tornado, but afterward I sensed its power. Trees, roofs, twisted, uprooted, destroyed. I never saw the tornado, but I never doubted that there had been one, seeing how it changed my world.

When it comes to Jesus, we are like people who never saw the storm, only the effects - the power - the change.

Eleven saw Jesus that day, on that mountain in Galilee. Some of the eleven did what they had never done before. They threw themselves down on the ground, prostrate, and worshipped him. And some did not. We read they doubted.

Like the trees in my yard, this one uprooted - another nearby left untouched. I cannot understand why one and not the other, but seeing fishermen worshipping Jesus as only God is to be worshipped, I know something happened. What did Jesus look like, resurrected never to die again? What did they see in him now that caused them to worship him? How could some have doubted?

Whatever they saw, some who were there heard Jesus' word and followed it with all their life and being.

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you."

Sometimes we worship Jesus, our hearts and our spirit and our whole self is caught up in our love for him. The moment ends and we return to our life just as it was before.

But when the disciples fell down on the ground, worshipping Jesus, when they stood it was not to return to fearful hiding, and uncertainty, and fishing as usual. The love and the

forgiveness they knew in Jesus they wanted to share. “Go,” he had said, “make disciples of all nations, baptize and teach,” and they did.

Whenever I am tempted to join the doubters, I think of this. The disciples were not professionals, nor political leaders. They would not start a movement that would lead to great power for them.

For themselves they had nothing to gain in this world by following Jesus’ word to go and make disciples - and everything to lose: their income and families and place in the community, even their lives. They had nothing to gain in this world, but they gave up everything for the Lord who appeared to them on that mountain. Nothing mattered from that moment on but Jesus.

No, we cannot see the resurrected Jesus. If we could right now, right here, many of us would fall upon our faces, and worship. And some would doubt.

But we sense what Jesus must be (his love, his beauty, his compassion) in seeing what he did to them, and through them. On that mountain he came through their world and everything was changed and uprooted and made new.

Most of all made new.

That is what we want for ourselves, isn't it? To be made new - to be alive with love for God and Jesus - to be alive with love and compassion and forgiveness for others. We've seen the old in us: the dishonest and the fearful, the hiding and selfish. We want to be free of all that and be fresh and new and committed. We want the power of Jesus to come roaring through our lives.

Once, God appeared to Elijah. First, there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind, and after the wind an earthquake but the Lord was not in the earthquake, and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. Then God spoke to Elijah in a quiet voice.

A quiet voice, your voice - that is how God is going to enter the life of your neighbors, your family, and your friends and change them. Your voice will bring the resurrected Jesus to them, as you tell of Jesus they will fall down to worship him. You will tell of Jesus in whom there is perfect love and forgiveness and eternal life, and hope and faith and love will be born in

them. You will go and make disciples in this nation, in your community, on your street, in your home.

And the promise of Jesus to the eleven will give you the courage and the power to do it. “I am with you always, to the end of the age,” he promised.

Jesus is with you.

Jesus who died for you, who was raised for you is with you always.

Jesus. When we finally see him face to face, it will be our joy to fall down before him and worship him forever.