

Scripture and Sermon for Sunday, August 2, 2015

2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a

When the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she made lamentation for him. When the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife, and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord, and the Lord sent Nathan to David. He came to him, and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had very many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. He brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children; it used to eat of his meager fare, and drink from his cup, and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him. Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was loath to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb, and prepared that for the guest who had come to him." Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. He said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity." Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you from the hand of Saul; I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added as much more. Why have you despised the word of the Lord, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, for you have despised me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. Thus says the Lord: I will raise up trouble against you from within your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes, and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this very sun. For you did it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun." David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

This is the Word of the Lord, thanks be to God!

John 6:24-35

So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus. When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal."

Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

Here ends today's readings from our Holy Scriptures: may God bless this, our understanding of God's Loving Word. This is the Word of the Lord, thanks be to God!

Let us pray...Amen.

I love words. I love all kinds of words. I play all kinds of word games, like Scrabble, Words with Friends, Boggle, you name, I love it. I obviously spend a good portion of my vocation working with words, and I will always appreciate a nice turn of a phrase, or a new word that explains a new concept.

So it was with some surprise that I read the other day that the New Oxford Dictionary, one of the word industry standards, added 500 words in June of this year. This dictionary is updated *4 times a year!* If they average 500 words a quarter, then that means that the New Oxford Dictionary is adding around 2,000 words a year! Who could possibly keep up with that kind of pace?

Well, I imagine a few particularly obsessed word smiths could, but as much as I love words, I just don't have the time or the inclination to learn 2000 words a year.

Now, when a reason pops up to learn new words, count me in! And today's Gospel lesson gave me just such a reason! I've picked out a few of the top new words added recently to the world lexicon, words and phrases that seem to be in the media, or used by my daughter, Leni and her friends, and one word that has a particular bearing for today's Gospel lesson.

Lifhack: a tip, trick, or efficient method for doing or managing a day-to-day task or activity.

Basic: characterized by predictable or unoriginal style, interests, or behavior.

Bae: Special one, before anyone else,

Slacktivism: actions taken to bring about political or social change but requiring only minimal commitment, effort, or risk: students engaging in slacktivism by signing an online petition.

Hangry: When you are so hungry that your lack of food causes you to become angry, frustrated or both.

So, now you have increased your 21st century vocabulary by 5 words. But there's only one word I want us to remember, only one word I want us learn so that we can use it regularly in our lives.

During the summer when I was in high school, I worked for a house painting company. My brother, Ken, who is a year younger than I am, worked for a contractor. Being the youngest member of the crew, I was the one who was expected to do most of the ladder work. The third floor scraping, priming, and painting, often in the sun. I was expected to unload the van, set up the ladders, and generally do what the boss told me to do.

My brother, being the youngest member of his crew, had to carry shingles up the ladder to the roofers. In the sun, day in, and day out. Rainy days meant indoor jobs, but for both of us, the work was hard, but the pay was good.

At the end of the day, he and I would meet at the local pool. We'd shower, then swim, and often have competitions to see who could do the craziest dives off the diving board. Long summer days working hard in the sun, and then in the evening, a time of hard play to refresh us.

Except that when we would get home for dinner, we were exhausted, we were hungry, grumpy, even angry. Yes, my brother and I were the perfect 1970's example of the 21st century term: Hangry!

Argumentative and grumpy until we had eaten. And then, mostly we just fell asleep in front of the Yankees game on tv until our mom told us to go to bed!

Hangry. It's a great word, that describes exactly the kind of feelings we have when we're so hungry we're angry. And that's the word I want to focus on with today's Gospel lesson. I want to explore what it means when we are spiritually hangry.

That's right, what does it mean when we are so spiritually hungry, so empty, that we are literally angry with the people around us.

We see it all the time: too often we judge others, we blame others. Friends and loved ones who hold grudges, and are so impatient with those who struggle. The signs and symptoms of a spiritually hangry person are so obvious when we think about it, but it

wasn't until the new word 'hangry' arrived that we could apply it to being fed spiritually.

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

So just like we can read the traffic signs that tell us what is ahead, we can probably read the signs from those around us that can tell us what is ahead: a patient and generous person is not a spiritually hangry person. A thoughtful and kind person is not a spiritually hangry person. They have come to Jesus, and have tasted the bread of life, and it shows.

Now, one of the things about modern life that really bugs me is our penchant for labeling things 'good' or 'bad'. We really need to try to move away from these kinds of labels.

A spiritually hangry person is not a bad person. They are just unfulfilled. They just haven't tasted the bread of life yet. It may be up to us to share ours with them.

All this talk of new words and new uses has me thinking about making up a new word myself: thirksome. A person who is so thirsty, their behavior is irksome.

Spiritually hangry and thirksome people need to be fed, need nourishment, need sustenance. We need to be fed, and need to be nourished when we are so hungry and thirsty for our Lord and Savior that we become angry and irksome.

These signs can tell us what is ahead for those around us, and they can read our signs as well. Today, after receiving the bread of life and the juice of the covenant, let us go from here ready to soothe the spiritually hangry, ready to calm the spiritually thirksome. And when someone we know and love tells us that we're hangry, or thirksome, let us be ready to accept the bread of life so that we might not hunger, or thirst again.

Who knew that a new word in 2015 would describe a spiritual condition from the Gospel? Amen.