

Ascension 2018

One of the things that I did every Mother's Day was to drive to Mom and Dad's – spend the night and then all day on Monday plant Mom's flowers. We did pots and beds – both in the front of the house and out back on the deck and patio. It was generally an all day affair with a couple runs to the nursery to get more stuff. When we started we had flats and flats of flowers – and bags and bags of mulch.

I would get to one of the beds and clean it best I could and start planting. Mom would always come behind me and pick up dead leaves and a few weeds that I left. I always told her that it would all be covered with mulch anyway – it would be fine. She never complained and never listened to me – but always said that she was saving herself from some work down the road.

That's how Moms always work – they always look ahead. They tell us to make our beds right the first time so we don't miss time with our friends when we get called to fix our mistakes. It's why Moms always tell to read over our homework – so we won't have to spend the next night doing it all over again. It's why they ask us to make sure that we are dating the right person so we won't end up with a broken heart. Mom's are always helping us try and it get it right the first time.

Jesus has completed his time after the resurrection with his disciples. He's come back to make sure that they understood. He wanted to build up their hearts and their faith. He walked with them for awhile after the resurrection to make sure they were ready to go out and continue his work – and build his church. And after a few last marching orders he leaves them to it – and goes back to the Father.

And the work they did was amazing. They were always in agreement. They never had any disputes – and it was a life that was easy for all of them. They went and created the

church that you and I enjoy today and for those first disciples – life was a breeze.

The problem with that – is that we know it's not all true. Yes – these disciples set the church on a course that has found it alive and well even today. But they made mistakes – sometimes big mistakes – along the way. They didn't always agree – they sometimes hurt people. They didn't often find a kind audience for what they had to say – and many of them died for their efforts. And yet through it all they persevered – they persevered because of the guidance of the spirit and the loving forgiveness of God.

You and I are called to continue this work of Jesus – all of us are. And we won't always agree how to do that. We'll make mistakes – sometimes big ones – but we have to persevere. The Holy Spirit is still guiding us – and God's forgiveness is still being poured out over all of us. Living as a disciple is never a call to live a perfect life. A disciple is called to get up each day and say, "Today I'm going to live as Jesus did." And when we fail to do that – to accept God's forgiveness and try again tomorrow.

Moms try to help us get it right the first time – but when we don't – when we make mistakes – they hold us tight – tell us we're loved – and send us back to try again. Moms are good imitators of Jesus.

May we continue to work each day at getting better at our discipleship. May we always persevere and know that we are forgiven. May those who meet us this week find in us a loving and forgiving God.