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**August 17, 2025**

We can all recall a time when someone was very angry with us.

So angry we could not absorb the content of what they said.

Yet hours or days later, upon reflection, we found a kernel of insight in the anger. A statement or image that made us reflect and perhaps even change for the better.

In today's Gospel we encounter Jesus's anger. Full steaming anger.

Not only is this reading filled with anger, but the Old Testament reading expresses anger as well.

WOW. These are not an easy set of lessons to preach about. So, I took time, I stepped away from the anger, and I waited for a kernel of insight to emerge.

I turned to the Epistle. Two words have stayed with me. BY FAITH. In the Epistle, BY FAITH is stated three times. Reflecting on the Gospel and Epistle readings, not acting BY FAITH distances us from God and evokes the anger.

So, what does BY FAITH mean? If we are to live BY FAITH, three implications emerge:

- First – faith has consequences.
- Second – faith requires courage.
- Third – faith provides comfort.

BY OUR FAITH, consequences occur. Some consequences are wonderful – the gift of the resurrection and salvation. Other consequences are painful – ranging from dislike from others, to rejection, to persecution. These consequences of faith, both wonderful and painful, call us forward.

To move forward, to live intentionally BY FAITH, requires courage. Courage to not just be a believer of Jesus Christ, not just a follower of Jesus Christ, but a disciple of Jesus Christ. A believer knows Jesus Christ is right and true, a follower ensures this belief guides their life, a disciple brings Jesus Christ into the world. And at times, being a disciple requires steadfast courage.

How we live our lives is how we are the Body of CHRIST. Every time we acknowledge our faith, every act of patience and kindness, every public discourse or private conversation can be an act of courage. We have the choice to bring Jesus Christ forward into our daily lives. I ask myself, we ask ourselves, are we being the best possible disciple for a given moment or circumstance?

To live BY FAITH, is to live into JESUS CHRIST. Living into JESUS CHRIST is the ultimate gift of comfort, for we know we are given the gift of salvation. However, this gift can seem distant and remote. Yet, there is also God's care in these times and circumstances. As Christians, we know wherever we go, whatever we do, whatever we experience, BY FAITH we are comforted by God. This comfort is our belief in God as the Creator, the Redeemer, the Sustainer.

A powerful comfort of faith as Episcopalians, is the pairing of personal and shared faith. We believe to live BY FAITH occurs within each of us and among all of us. When any one of us is at our most alone, someone is living BY FAITH with us and for us.

BY FAITH...take these two words into your heart and your week. Know that to live by faith there are demanding consequences, shared courage, and mutual comfort. BY FAITH, BY FAITH, BY FAITH.

Amen.