

This week, I was talking with a friend of mine, and they were telling me how upset they were at work. They had been doing all of these things and were getting no recognition for it. And I told them, you know, I get it, it can be really frustrating. I had a job for a long time, and the owner hated me, just absolutely hated me. Everything I did was absolutely wrong all the time, no matter what. If I found a way that we could do something a little better, it didn't matter. He didn't want to change anything. It wasn't, how it was, he was just against everything I did. So I started showing other people these things. I was like okay this is a better system. Let's do this. Whatever. And when they did it, he was happy. He thought it was great ingenuity on their part, to find the new system. He thought that it was a great way that we could change things so we could come together and build this. And at that time I was miserable.

I mean I was so miserable at the time, and Alyssa was like it's not going to change. He's not going to change his attitude towards you. So it's you either live with it or you find a new job. It's kind of like today's reading. We've heard this story a number of times about how Jesus goes back to Nazareth and He gets into it with the people and his synagogue. They don't really agree with what he's saying. The way Luke talks about it, it's a little different than how Matthew and Mark do. He goes in on a Saturday night and the way that at that time to use went through the scrolls was the same way that we do with our lectionary series.

So, it's like each week, we have a set reading that we're supposed to do. Well, when they gave Jesus the scroll, He looked at it and he was supposed to be reading from Isaiah, but he changed what he read. He only read part of it. You read about how great things were going to be with God, coming to them, how they would change, how they would be the light, how he would set people free, how he would do these things, and he stopped. He stopped talking. The people were kind of like what's going on here, and he said, the time has come. I am here to deliver you. And they paused, and they were like, well, this is great news. This is fantastic that God is here among us. But then they started to think about it, like all this time, you've been going around doing these miracles. You've been going out and healing lepers. You've been going out and helping, giving sight to the blind, making people walk, all of these things. You've been doing all of these great things everywhere but here.

So they weren't upset that he was doing it. They were upset that he wasn't doing it for them. They were upset that they were going to Gentiles before he was staying with Other Jews. And he told them, this happens all the time. Elijah went to a gentile Widow. I gave her bread and oil. All eternity, Alicia went and did the same thing, helped a gentile. Doesn't matter who they are or that they're finding God. Doesn't matter that everyone else is getting recognition and getting this special treatment or is more important that these people who do not have God are finding God.

They were so upset that they tried to kill him because they wanted it all for them. They wanted recognition back in their place. They want him to do these things for them.

They were so upset that they tried to kill him, and nothing happened. God protected him, because it wasn't his time yet.

I told the story to my friend. They were like, I don't get it. Like, is it important that you are getting recognition? That all of these things are happening for you? Or is it more important that things are happening for others? For people who don't have the same opportunities that you have. I realized that it didn't matter to me if I got the recognition for coming up with these ideas, for changing these opportunities. What mattered to me was that people were succeeding. People were moving past where they were. We were all getting better because we were doing it collectively as a family.

Jesus reached out to the Gentiles. He reached out to the people who didn't know God. He went to the tax collectors, the prostitutes, he went to people who were lost, and he helped them first. His friends already knew God, already gone to Bible school with them, Hebrew school. He'd already done all these things with them. They didn't need his help as much as the others did. They already knew God. They were sitting at Synagogue, They knew these things, he was going and helping those who needed help more. We forget that sometimes.

We want the instant gratification and recognition that we have done something good. We want the instant gratification that people are giving us because they recognize where we are. They recognize who we are, but it's not about us. It's never about us. It's about helping others. Find God's love. It's more important because we already know we have it. We already know that God is here protecting us, but there are so many out there who don't know, and they don't recognize. Even if it's just one person at one time, finding the way, finding that God is here to help them and help them get through everything. It's more than just recognizing the fact that we took God to them. Let us pray.