

If you want to do right and obey the LORD, follow Abraham's example. He was the rock from which you were chipped. Isaiah 51:1 (CEV)

On the way to visit our son in British Columbia four years ago, we saw the Crazy Horse sculpture being carved from a mountain near Mount Rushmore. This tribute to all Native Americans was commissioned by Native Americans. Work began 60 years ago; it could take another 40 years to complete. The metaphor is profound: his enduring image on a horse being chipped out of rock--the very earth native peoples so loved and cared for. The massive scale puts the relatively brief 240 year history of the United States within the larger context of thousands of years of careful stewardship of this land by native peoples who understood their connectedness to their ancestors.

As followers of Jesus, we can claim to be chipped off both the Abraham and Sarah rock, as well as Peter "the rock" (Mt. 16:18). Jesus promised to build his church on the lives of people, who like Peter, allow God to renovate their minds. Both Saul (Acts 9) and Peter (Acts 10) experienced dramatic transformation from the way they had always done things (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 5:17).

The word *Mennonite* connects many of us with the last 100 years or so. But there is value in going back almost 500 years to see the Anabaptist rock from which we were chipped. If we do, we'll discover a rock formation similar to the strata found in the New Testament, which was characterized by four priorities: non-resistance to evil, community, discipleship and missionary zeal.

16th Century Anabaptists gave equal focus to the Word and Spirit: they looked to the Spirit to enable them to interpret the Word within community. In doing so, they focused on making disciples, and let Jesus build his church. How might this inform our mission statement conversation?

- Gary Martin

Looking Ahead:

Sept. 11 9:30a.m. *The Lord Always Wins the Battle* 1 Sam. 17 - Gary

11:00 a.m. Congregational Dialogue #4: Mission Statement

Sept. 18 9:30 a.m. Sermon-Brian

Gary's projected in town schedule: Sept. 11-14, 18-19