

“WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO FOR YOU?”

Proper 25B October 25, 2009

Hebrews 7:23-28; Mark 10:46-52

Introduction:

Have an imaginary moment with me. You've come to church this morning. It is now time for Communion. I've led us in the Eucharistic Prayer. I've consecrated the elements of bread and wine. I don't expect them to turn into actual flesh and blood, but I do expect that something transpire. Somehow, the real presence of Jesus is now found in the consecrated elements. What that means exactly, I'm honestly not sure, except I expect that something will occur between you and Jesus when you receive the bread and wine. It is a mystery that I entrust to God's care. I don't need to understand it in order to believe in it.

But, today something different happens. Today, when I consecrate the bread and wine something more mystical than I can image begins to take place. There, on the Communion Table, right before my eyes, before Deacon Betty's eyes, the bread and wine fuse together and begin to transform into a real human body. In a matter of moments the body takes shape, increasing in size until there is the body of a grown man lying on the Communion Table. Are you weirded out yet?

In another moment Jesus Himself sits up, smiles

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at all of us, jumps off the table, and says to all of us here: “What do you want me to do for you?”

“What do you want me to do for you?” What an incredible offer! How would you respond to Jesus if He asked you, “what do you want me to do for you?”

Our gospel lesson for today contains a story with exactly that question. It is

The Story of Blind Bartimaeus.

Bartimaeus was a blind man who lived in Jericho. He sat on the side of the road each day begging for a living. On this particular day Jesus was coming through Jericho on His way to Jerusalem for what will become Palm Sunday. As He was leaving the city Bartimaeus heard it was Jesus of Nazareth who was passing by. Immediately, he began to shout out, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” Many were exhorting him to be quiet, so he cried out even louder, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

Evidently, Bartimaeus was a desperate man. He wanted healing in the worst way. He didn't care what anyone thought of him. He didn't care if he was being judged as foolish. None of that public scorn mattered. All that mattered was getting Jesus' attention. Somehow, he knew that only Jesus could help him. No one else had

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been able to help him. Jesus was his final resort.

And, you know what? Jesus heard him, and sent for him. Bartimaeus threw off his cloak, sprang up, and hustled over to Jesus. It was then that Jesus said, “What do you want me to do for you?” Bartimaeus replied, “My Teacher, let me see again.” Jesus said to him, “Go; your faith has made you well.” Immediately, he regained his sight and began to follow Jesus.

So, Jesus has jumped off the table, is standing before us as we come to Communion, and His is asking each of us, “What do you want me to do for you?”

I want us to respond to Jesus’ question in two parts: corporately and individually. What do we want Jesus to do for us as a congregation and what do I want Jesus to do for me? First,

What Do We Want Jesus To Do For Us As A Congregation?

I want to prime the pump on this by saying, “I want to thank Jesus for answering our prayers about The Free Garage Sale.” Friday night when we gathered to set-up the Parish Hall it seemed like we had a lot of stuff but when we had finished putting out everything we could we still had boxes and bins of stuff under the tables. I was praising the Lord for all the stuff God had caused to be

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given. I was saying, "Thank you Lord for all this stuff! Now, surely Lord, if you caused all this stuff to be brought here you are going to cause lots of people to show up tomorrow. Thank you!"

Then Saturday morning, we gathered in the Parish Hall and we stood in a circle, joined hands, and gave praise to God, also petitioning God to anoint each piece of stuff there with the Spirit of God; so that everyone who took stuff would have an experience with God Himself. Then, at 8:00 we opened the back door, and ... a flood of people came into the room. It was amazing. It was miraculous. God honored this outreach majestically.

Stuff showed up. People showed up. God showed up. People came into our Parish Hall and had a meeting with God. You won't believe how many people I personally refused to take money from; explaining to them that God gives us His love and grace for free. That, we want them to take home the stuff they need as a reminder of that free love and grace; that if we took money it would undermine the witness we were making. I had people just look at me like I was telling them something they had never heard before.

Some of us have been praying that God would make us to be a soul-winning and disciple-making

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congregation. Yesterday was a step in that direction. Jesus began doing for us what we had asked.

Does anyone else want to share a testimony about yesterday, or a word about what we should ask Jesus to do for us?

The next thing I want us to consider is this:

What Do I Want Jesus To Do For Me?

This is personal and you may not want to share this with anyone. However, I would encourage each of us to share our request with at least one person you can trust. Why? Because, you have extra power if you have at least one person agreeing in prayer with you. You have the power of correction and the power of Scripture.

If you are asking God for something you shouldn't your prayer partner can say, "No, that's not right. I won't agree to that." If your request is a good thing then you have the promise of Scripture. In Matthew 18:19 Jesus says, ¹⁹*"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.* Bartimaeus shouted his request loud enough that a crowd of people could hear it. That's why I want you to share what you want the Lord to do for you with someone else.

If you want to share your request with the

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congregation I'm going to give you that chance. You don't have to but I do want you to share it with someone before the day is over; and, I want you to bring that request to the Communion Rail. As you open your hand to receive the body of Christ, let go of your need to Jesus. Then be open to receive what He has in store for you.

Is there anything anyone wants to share?

Let us express our faith in the living God through the ancient words of the Nicene Creed.