

Bristol Lutheran
Luke 18:31-9:10
Lent 5
4-2-2017

At dinner time, most nights, we get to share about our days.

If your days are like mine and Lindsay's – there really isn't much to talk about. Or at least not much exciting. I went to church, I went on visits, I wrote a sermon, I planned worship, I had meetings.

Undoubtedly, Anya will interrupt us. Hey Dad –today I ate like 72 craisins for snack. Hey Mom – did you know that Liam got his head stuck in a chair. Hey, Hey ,Hey, . I bet you can't guess the primary colors .

Yes, Anya, we know them. Oh, it's fun to hear what she is learning about. But I don't really want her to interrupt us.

Recently, this has been her favorite interruption.

Knock, knock...(Who's there)...interrupting cow...(Interrupting Cow w..)
MOO!

Jesus constantly gets interrupted. Sometimes we may think Jesus interrupts us - our lives, our plans, our control. The Holy Spirit shaking us up. Jesus changes our course – whether we like it or not.

Yet it seems that Jesus gets interrupted by us as well.

Jesus – at this point of the gospel – is set towards Jerusalem. His focus is on one thing, tunnel vision...getting to the cross, to accomplish all the things about which the prophets wrote. This is the third time that he predicts his brutal death – mocked, insulted, spit upon, beaten, killed, and raised again to new life...the disciples didn't get it, they were blind. So Jesus leads them, to Jericho to pass through it.

There was no intention of stopping. Jericho was on the way, and it was quicker to cut through the middle, than go around it.

So he heads right to the front gates...only to be interrupted. Like when the hemorrhaging woman tugged on his robe for healing, or the Centurion who needed his kid rescued, or the Pharisees who question him about taxes. This time, it comes from the guy sitting outside the gate.

You wish Jesus could catch a break. Just once – be able to carry out his plan without disruption.

I complain every time Anya interrupts my stories, my plans – sometimes I barely can get started on a sentence before she either cuts me off, or raises her hand uncontrollably. But Jesus doesn't complain.

His plan was altered, and he paused and showed compassion, loving him, healing this blind man.

And then he keeps moving. I'm not sure Jesus even heard the praise on the man's lips, before he kept going.

To save one man, in this moment is important.

To save the world, hanging on a hunk of wood in Jerusalem – is his mission.

I'm not sure how much further he gets...but Jericho has started to gather a crowd. The streets are lined. The rumors and whispers make their way through town. Jesus is here! Did you hear, he healed old George out there by the gate. That crowd starts to swell.

But Jesus still is planning to pass right through it – even if he is on parade, his mind is set for Jerusalem.

No more interrupt.... Wait...now what is this? This guy...arms and legs hooked around the branches of the tree, hanging there, trying to get a glimpse. What a silly sight. The crowd stares, and groans.

“Jesus – ignore him. That is just Zacchaeus, the tax collector, the sinner, the swindler. He oppresses us, steals from us, gives the money to the Empire.”(Yes the very Romans that carry out Jesus execution.)

“He isn't worth your time. Ignore him.”

What the crowd may not know, is Zacchaeus longed for something more. He knew that making a **living wasn't the same as making a life**. He wanted life. He wanted to be found. He wanted salvation.

Yes, Jesus heals the blind– but more important– he eats with tax collectors, forgives sinners, that is the gift for which Zacchaeus yearned.

Little did Zacchaeus know – that he would be interrupting the Savior of the World. It wasn't intentional. Hey Zac! Hurry, Come down here. I am going to your house...today! Yes...890 Jericho Lane, got it. 😊

This day changes his life in radical ways: he gave half of his possessions to the poor and promised to pay back fourfold anyone he had defrauded.

But the salvation that comes to this house TODAY, has nothing to do with taxes...but inclusion into the sacred family, a son/a daughter of Abraham, like all of us.

I'm not sure what happens to Zacchaeus– it might not matter.

Encountering Jesus, eating with Jesus, **made life more than making a living.**

For Zacchaeus. For the blind man. For us.

Salvation TODAY. Life TODAY.

Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. That's not a promise postponed until we die. It's a promise now.

Jesus stops for the poor lost soul, even when his mission focus is to save the world. Both are important. Jesus dies for your sin – and for the sin of the world. They are part of the same mission.

He stops to pause, and welcomingly accepts the interruptions. Every time we think we interrupt, with our petty requests, or shallow prayers, our deep confession, or our life altering petitions. Jesus stops today to meet us... to respond to us, wherever we are at.

See, we can't really interrupt Jesus.

Because he has already made it to Jerusalem, to the cross, the death, and to life again. His focus is to be with us, for us to know he is with us.

Do you know why our family spends time sharing about our days, our lives, our mundane tasks? Because it connects us.

Sharing our day, is rarely exciting, but we take time to talk to each other, to eat together, because we love spending time together. It keeps us in relationship. Through all the interruptions. We are even learning to value the interruptions.

That's the relationship God seeks to have with us.

It's what Jesus did on his Journey to Jerusalem.

It's what he does in your life, living in you, giving life in you. Today. A gift that nothing can interrupt.