



<https://youtu.be/Vb24Lk1Oh5M>

The new shape of an age old question;

Yesterday morning I would normally have gathered my things to come to church, I would be thinking about everything that needs to get done before the service starts; all the doors need to be open, the lights be turned on, simply getting ready for people to come, and somewhere in all that I would want to read over my sermon notes and have a moment to breath.

I don't think for a minute it is only about me. I am pretty sure you know and understand in your own life what's like. And it is not just Sundays, it is every day, it is every week. It is life.

As I finished the sermon for the past Sunday (which I had to cut a bit shorter than I would have liked, because it was too long), I paused for a few seconds to look it over and a question formulated in me; "What really matters?" It was one of those thoughts that come unbidden and unannounced, the kind that shows up and interrupts the flow of things, challenges the familiar. It was one of those thoughts that hunts, so I shared it with you. in a new shape "If you could ask one thing of God, what would it be?"

What really matters to us? What really matters for the lives we want to live? What matters so much to each of us that when it is ignored, forgotten, denied, covered up, or worse supplemented, it becomes the matter with us?

Like someone is asking you, "What's the matter with you?" Not in a disparaging, critical manner but in a caring, concerned way?

Asking "What really matter to you?" is like asking "If you could ask one thing of God what would it be?"

1 Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was [a]who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. 2 There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. 3 Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. 4 But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, 5 "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for [b]three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" 6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. 7 But Jesus said, "Let her alone; [c]she has kept this for the day of My burial. 8 For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always." John 12

Judas is responding to the obvious, ... wastefulness ..., and so John helps us to understand the power of circumstances, of the obvious in our lives. "What really matters to us," challenges the obvious and our circumstances. Jesus response is not addressing the poor but the power of circumstances that pull us into a common and shared direction. The answer to "What really matters to us," provides a point of friction and slows us down. Jesus could easily have said, "You always have the wanting, the dissatisfied around, just as you always will have the rich around you. You always will have errands and chores to do. There always will be one more bill to pay, somewhere to go, one more thing to have. We all always have things to tend to, an unfinished to-do-list. We all always will not have enough time." Circumstances, not matter how trivial or seemingly important can sway us from "What really matters," can stop us to ask God of the one thing.

So I am back to my question; "If you could asked one thing of God, what would it be?" What really matters?

The respond of Jesus of Judas stating the obvious is pointing to an important lesson, circumstances must not overtake what really matters! It is more important not to lose Jesus in the circumstances of our lives, and not to make the conditions of our lives, good or bad, what really matter, make them the one thing we would asked of God!

Looking at the conditions and circumstances of our lives today and compare them with last month, what really matters? What is the one thing you would as of God? Did it change? Is it possible that what really matters

does so precisely because of our ever changing circumstances and ever changing conditions? Is what really matters calling us from within the shifting circumstances and conditions in our lives?

I think "it" does and this voice belongs to the unchangeable, everlasting God ... this voice calls for a respond from us all. And when we respond irrespective of our circumstances and conditions we become an echo of this voice. God's word is given flesh in the the uniqueness of each of our lives for the sake of the world as we respond with what truly matters.

Your friend

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