



Pastor Hanke's Blog

December 2, 2018

The Lord Has Need of It

Bible Reference: Luke 19:28-40

Talking to a two-year-old might be funnier than any comedian, but add the fact that my two-year-old thinks she is a comedian, and this might be the greatest humor to walk the earth. Ok, I am biased, but from a young age Audrey began making us laugh. She has a face where she squints her eyes and we call it the “grandpa face.” Sometimes she will even make it on command. This past weekend she began to interact with her 13-year-old cousin. He was very amused when he told her his name was Bob and she would call him that. She was not tricked by his attempt to trick her though. You could see the wheels turning in her brain every time she called him Bob. When he tried to switch back to his real name later in the weekend, my little comedian was having none of it and continued to call him Bob. The crazy thing about a two-year-old is that they know exactly what they are saying, even if we don't have a clue.

This year it was brought to my attention that we easily assume that everyone understands the Christmas story. Have I been naïve to think that the Christmas story is held sacred and thus understood correctly? I often preach that the message the world gives alters the message God wants us to hear (the focus on shopping and receiving gifts is an easy example of that), and trusted that those who knew the story understood it correctly and its true significance. But as I reflect, every manger scene with the magi present gives a different message than the true story, as does every image of Mary that neglects to show her as pregnant. Elements of the true story are lost in the way our world tells it.

This week the words of Jesus from our Gospel lesson rang through my ears, “the Lord has need of it.” As a transformed people we have the opportunity to reclaim the Christmas story with the words, “the Lord has need of it.” The Lord has need of this season and this story, as it portrays His deepest love for us, His creation. It is so much more than the world has commercialized it to be, or just a cute story to read to our kids.

Perhaps this has happened, in part, because there are words in the Christmas story that, like my two-year-old, are hard to understand. These words may be out of our cultural context, or just confusing due to the mixed messages the world sends. Thankfully, Advent provides a time of preparation to clear up the confusion. This preparation has been happening with God's people since the beginning of time, and we will follow suit. As we begin Advent this Sunday, we begin preparing our hearts and minds for Jesus coming.

Our reading this week may be shocking because it begins at the end of the story. That can happen because Advent is thematic, rather than linear. Thus, throughout Advent we will move in and out of the timeline of Jesus to provide the necessary preparation to see the full picture. And so in preparation for Jesus coming, we start with the sometimes confusing words of Jesus, “the Lord has need of it.”

God's Peace,

Pastor Will