

Genesis 14:18-20
Psalm 110
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
Luke 9:11b-17

On this Sunday, there is a number of things calling for our attention. This is Father's Day, this is a national holiday, Juneteenth, and this is the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ. We pray for our fathers, we celebrate with our African American brothers and sisters, the end of a tragic part of our national history. And perhaps our focus on Eucharist might help us move closer to becoming the human beings God intended from the beginning.

Let me share with you a few lines from the poem, *Sermons We See*, by Edgar A. Guest. The poem is dated, first appearing in 1919, yet I think relevant to us here this day.

*I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day;
I'd rather one should walk with me than merely tell the way.*

*The eye's a better pupil and more willing than the ear,
Fine counsel is confusing, but example's always clear;
And the best of all the preachers are the men who live their creeds.
For to see good put in action is what everybody needs.*

*I soon can learn to do it if you'll let me see it done;
I can watch your hands in action, but your tongue too fast my run.*

*And the lecture you deliver may be very wise and true,
But I'd rather get my lesson by observing what you do;
For I might misunderstand you and the high advice you give,
But there's no misunderstanding how you act and how you live.*

The message I want to convey this Sunday is that Eucharist is meant to impact how we act and how we live.

The first two lessons certainly call our attention to the bread and wine of Eucharist. While the feeding of the five thousand calls us to action. Here in Luke's account, Jesus has taught the people about the kingdom of God. He then moves to his inner circle of disciples and he teaches them what it means to be Eucharist. Jesus intended that his disciples contemplate his teaching, but he also called them to action. Do this in memory of me, only appears in this Corinthians lesson and Luke's gospel account. What does that mean? Certainly he must have meant come together and remember what I have done. Through this gospel lesson, Jesus is also saying, provide for the need of the people, get involved in their lives, and let them get involved in your life. Even though the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus calls for contemplation, more than anything that contemplation must lead us out the door to be involved in the community.

Jesus became fragile like the bread that is broken and crumbled. Jesus teaches us that the aim of life is self-giving ... the aim of life is to serve. Jesus knows that we are sinners ... we make mistakes .. but Jesus does not give up on joining his life to ours. Jesus knows that we will at

times become self-absorbed, that we will harbor resentment toward those who have done us harm, that we will distance ourselves from others and feel sorry for ourselves. And so, Jesus heals his disciples with his presence in Eucharist. Jesus heals rigidity and transforms our rough edges into docility. We reach out for Eucharist, for Jesus, so his life might come to us, be more visible within our lives. As he has loved us with all our short comings, he challenges us to become more loving toward others. More than anything, I would suggest, *do this in memory of me* means, as I have broken by body and poured out my blood for you, so you must break your body and pour out your blood in this difficult world.

We are here Sunday after Sunday to hear the sacred word and receive Eucharist. We then go out the door to put into action what we hear and what we receive. You and I are to be broken pieces of bread.

Sermons We See

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*And the lecture you deliver may be very wise and true,
But I'd rather get my lesson by observing what you do;
For I might misunderstand you and the high advice you give,
But there's no misunderstanding how you act and how you live.*

*When I see a deed of kindness, I am eager to be kind.
When a weaker brother stumbles and a strong man stays behind
Just to see if he can help him, then the wish grows strong in me
To become as big and thoughtful as I know that friend to be.*

*And all travelers can witness that the best guides today
Is not the one who tells them, but the one who shows the way.
One good man teaches many, men believe what they behold;
One deed of kindness noticed is worth forty that are told.*

*Who stands with men of honor learns to hold his honor dear,
For right living speaks a language which to every one is clear.
Though an able speaker charms me with his eloquence, I say,
I'd rather see a sermon than to hear one, any day.*

Edgar A. Guest, "Sermons We See," *Collected Verse of Edgar A. Guest* (Chicago: Riley & Lee, 1943), 599. First published in *The Boy Agriculturist*, vols. 12-13, Illinois State Training School for Boys, 1919.