

Sermon: August 3, 2008

**“Entitled to what??”**

As I walked “out – back” this morning ... I realize anew ----- one of the things I miss the most about my mom and grandma ... well, they were “delightfully ditzzy” ... is there such an expression??

My mom was so naïve and innocent.

The door of our house --- always open and un-locked.

My grandma? ---- she could never find her purse. In her assisted living place ... I would ask her: want to go for a walk? I can't, Donnie ... I don't know where my purse is.

Grandma ----- it's where it always is: ON YOUR LAP!!

When I was younger ... I would ask my mom ----- can I have some friends over tonight?

Sure, Donnie ... I'll run out to the grocery store.

Mom ----- you have 50 pounds of lunch-meat in the 'frig ... 4 gallons of milk ... enough is enough!!

(It was then I realized ... of all Jesus' miracles ---- the feeding of the 5000 is no big deal!!)

My mom would forget stuff ... say funny things.

I would make fun of her .... but now ----- I'm getting more like her and my grandma everyday.

My favorite cup of coffee is the one I take out the front door ... when I get into my pick-up truck ... to come to church in the morning. The other day I'm driving down my street ... and I wonder: WHERE IS MY COFFEE?? As my neighbor is laughing at me ... I realize: I left my coffee cup on the hood of my truck!!

Oh, well ... this reminds me of a little vignette ---- a true story ... it happened just the other day.

A lady is stuffing her kids and all her goods into the car ... after shopping.

She gets home and realizes ----- “I left my purse on the car in the parking lot!!”

The main reason she is upset ----- she had \$1000 in cash in her purse.

Later that day ... there is a knock on the door.

It's a homeless man. He found her purse. When he saw the \$1000 ... well, he was tempted for about one minute to keep the cash. But --- NO. He saw her address in the purse ... and returned everything.

She offers him a generous reward ... he refuses to accept it.

Later ... at the homeless shelter ... he is asked ---- My gosh, you are homeless ... life has been tough.

Why didn't you keep the cash, or at least accept the reward?

His response: IT DOES NOT BELONG TO ME!

I've been thinking about something a lot lately ----- the word is ENTITLEMENT.

It's easy to live life, as if we are “entitled” ----

\*I'm 16 ... I'm entitled to my own car.

\*I'm homeless ... I'm entitled to keep the money I found in the parking lot.

\*I'm a minister ... I'm entitled to all kinds of privileges because of “my higher calling.”

\*I'm the board president ... so I'm entitled to spend other peoples' money any way I want.

\*I'm a believer ... so, I'm entitled to a little good fortune.

It's kind-of like the gospel for this morning.

The 12 disciples feel “entitled.” So, at the end of a long day ... they tell Jesus ----- SEND ALL THESE PEOPLE AWAY TO GET THEIR OWN FOOD. THERE IS NOT ENOUGH FOOD FOR EVERYONE.

In Jesus' eyes, everyone is special.

He sees the 5000 people ... he looks at the humble gifts of 5 loaves 2 fish ... and instead of complaining about the big crowd and how “little” there is ----- HE BLESSES AND GIVES THANKS FOR WHAT HE HAS BEEN GIVEN. When you share what you have ... there is always enough!!

You see? ... “entitlement” means: WHAT IS IN IT FOR ME????

“Entitlement people” want to make sure they get their share.  
When you live a life of entitlement ... there is never enough ----- enough food, enough time, enough  
stuff, enough money ...

Jesus never looks at “what is not there” ... that’s “entitlement thinking.”  
He looks at what is there ----- people, his people, gifts ... big and small.  
Jesus blesses what there is ... embraces the moment of now ... and shares what there is.  
And what happens? --- THERE IS ENOUGH ... maybe not lots, but enough.

It’s a crazy world “out there.”  
We spend so much time trying to survive, making ends meet.  
And when we live like this ... well, we can get a bit selfish. We forget to reach-out ...  
we keep “to ourselves.”  
But, you see? ... life is not about how much we have ... it’s about WHO WE ARE!!  
It’s about reaching deep-down within ourselves ... and using what we have and who we are  
to make a difference.

The prophet Isaiah says ...in our first lesson:  
*“Everyone who thirsts ... come to the water.  
You who have no money ---- come, buy, and eat.  
Come, buy wine and milk ---- without money, and without price.  
I will make with you an everlasting covenant.”*

Each of us has a journey ... each of us has 24 hours a day.  
Let’s make a covenant ----- don’t put your “time in a bottle” .... use it, share it.  
Whether you are the governor or a board president ... homeless or looking for work ...  
artist and electrician ... laborer and company president ...  
living at a nursing home or in a fancy house ... whether you find yourself cutting grass  
or cutting expenses ...

Life is about 5 loaves and 2 fish.  
It’s about left-overs in your refrigerator.  
It’s a cup of coffee on the dashboard ... a purse you can’t afford to lose ...  
it’s finding \$1000 ... but knowing in your heart ... it doesn’t belong to you ...

It’s knowing ----- we are entitled to very little.  
But in more ways than we’ll ever know ----- we’ve been given a lot!!

Don Borling  
All Saints Lutheran Church  
13350 LaGrange Road  
Orland Park, IL 60462  
August 3, 2008  
[www.allsaintsjoy.com](http://www.allsaintsjoy.com) [allsaintsjoy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:allsaintsjoy@sbcglobal.net) 708-448-2939