

Gaines Congregational United Church of Christ

October 24, 2021

Old Testament Reading; Job 42: 1-6, 10-17

Responsive Reading; Psalm 34: 1-8

Epistle Reading; Hebrews 7: 23-28

Gospel Reading; Mark 10: 46-52

Sermon Title:

Let Me Receive My Sight

By Re. Jim Gardner

Summary; Hear Evil, See Evil, but Speak Jesus

We are all familiar with the three monkeys representing; Hear No Evil, See No Evil, and Speak No Evil but unless you live in a cocoon it would not be possible not to Hear Evil and See Evil. Evil is all around us so we have to hear it and see it but because God is also all around us, we do not have to Speak Evil. Indeed, we can proclaim God.

In our Old Testament reading Job has been beset with all kinds of troubles. He has lost his children, his fortunes, and his

health. Job had been calling out God, demanding a hearing so he could find out why these things had happened to him. Job had three well-meaning friends that were certain that if bad things were happening to Job then God must be punishing him for his sins. These friends insisted that for Job to turn around his circumstances Job would have to confess his sins and repent.

God responded to Job's petition with a scolding rebuke informing Job that Job was not in a position to challenge the wisdom of God. God had gone on to say that while Job was in the wrong to challenge Him, Job's friends were in a much higher degree of disfavor because they had accused God and Job of things that simply were not true and were gloating over their superior attitude.

God basically told Job that unless Job prayed for the friends, God was going to subject them to the ultimate punishment.

To make a long story a little shorter, Job did as God had asked and God gave Job credit for proclaiming Him truthfully and restored the fortunes of Job twofold.

A side note here. Part of the turn around came as all of Job's friends and family pitched in to help by renewing their relationships with him and giving him pieces of silver to help him get back on his feet. God had used Job's friends just as He still uses us to get His will done on Earth. Any who.

In our Psalm Reading the psalmist expounds on all the greatness of God, much as God had done in His rebuke of Job. The psalmist makes it abundantly clear that God is above reproach and that we can never overpraise God.

In our Epistle, Paul one-ups the psalmist by saying that God is so great that He gave us His own Son to be our “High Priest”. The High Priests of the Old Testament had the disadvantage of being human. Being human they sinned, so they had to waste valuable prayer time asking for forgiveness for their failings before they could pray for others. And if that were not bad enough, they would up and die, and a new High Priest would have to start all over. How rude! Jesus, being immortal, could be an uninterrupted blessing to us and help us to stay the course. There are no cracks in His coverage.

I am eternally grateful for this because I could defiantly slip through the cracks if they were there.

I am a little like the blind man in our gospel lesson. I too know that I always need help and that it is only Jesus that can do the job.

I am also a little like the crowd. I don't want to bother Jesus, or bother Jesus as represented in people around me. As we get older many of us worry that we will be a bother to those that we love and so sometimes we do not let Jesus work through them. This is not doing Jesus any favors so maybe we would be

kinder to Jesus by being more willing to accept, "a little help from our friends." But the Beatles and I digress.

Jesus asked the exact same question to the blind man as He had asked James and John when they wanted to sit beside Him in His kingdom. Jesus asked, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight." Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight AND FOLLOWED JESUS ON THE ROAD.

Did you catch that last line? This happened just days before Jesus would enter Jerusalem for the last time and be crucified.

This man received his sight so he could see his Lord and Savior and benefactor suffer and die.

Think about it. When we receive our sight, whether it be physical like the blind man, or intuitively like Job, we will see bad things. We will, see evil and we will hear evil, but what will we do with it? Will we become bitter or will we become better? Will we become whiners like the followers of Moses or will we become proclaimers like the disciples of Jesus?

Be like the Psalmist and the disciples and become proclaimers. Hear evil and see evil but always speak Jesus.

Hallelujah and Amen!