

**Who Me?**  
**From the Bible: Luke 7: 36-40**

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I think it started for me in my 3rd Grade Sunday School class.  
On the bulletin board in the room where we met was a large piece of oaktag divided into squares. Our names were listed down the left side and dates listed across the top. Every Sunday, we began our class with each of us standing in front of our friends and reciting the Bible verse we had memorized for that week. If you had memorized a verse and could recite it, you received a star next to your name for that Sunday. If you didn't...no star. And, we all know how important gold stars are to Third Graders.  
The first verse and star was easy.  
At least in the version of the Bible we used then.  
John 11:35.  
Only two words. *Jesus wept.*  
It got harder after that.

All of that is to say I have had a lifelong interaction with the Bible.  
Memorizing verses.  
Reading it on my own.  
Studying it in college and seminary classrooms and here around a table with some of you.  
For all of that, I am grateful.  
What has happened to me or in me over the years is that particular verses and passages from the Bible have lodged themselves somewhere in my memory. Always there, but not always thought about. Until that unexpected moment when a particular verse will push its way up to the surface of my awareness.  
As my Dad was dying I found myself repeating the words of Psalm 23.  
*Even though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death you are with me.*  
When I am outside at night and look at the stars and think about the immensity of the universe, I remember the words of Psalm 8.  
*When I look at the heavens, the work of your fingers  
The moon and the stars You have established;  
Who are we that you are mindful of us;  
Mortals that you care for us?  
Yet, you have made us little lower than God and crowned us with glory and honor.*  
And, sometimes it happens as I am trying to sort out something in my own life.  
More often than not, when I find a verse running through my mind, it has pushed its way there as a reminder of what is important or what I value and need to remember or what I believe about life and love and community and God.

The verse from today's reading from the Bible falls in that last category.  
I am not even sure what it is I have been trying to sort out in my life, but I have found myself thinking about this one verse where Jesus says. *"Simon, I have something to say to you."*  
But, of course, when the verse runs through my mind the name is not Simon, but Paul.  
*Paul, I have something to say to you.*

Maybe I am remembering this particular verse at this particular moment as a reminder that in the midst of my busyness and all that has been a part of my life the last couple of months, there is something there for me to learn or to understand. Something I have overlooked or need to be mindful of. Something that will come into focus for me as I pay attention and take time to listen for that still, small voice of God which waits to be heard.

Maybe.

I am not sure.

So, I allow the verse to linger.

And do my best to find the will and a way to say the words found in the next verse.

*"Teacher, speak."*

And, because this verse has been pestering my life recently, this morning it also gets to pester yours. At least for these few moments. And, so I wonder...

What if you inserted your name into that verse?

Jesus speaking to you saying...

*I have something to say to you.*

And, what if you made an effort to live with those words for a whole day?

What if you reminded yourself of those words when you wake up tomorrow morning.

And again when you send your kids off to school.

And, then again when you walk into work.

And, when you meet a friend for coffee.

And, what if Simon's response became your response?

Teacher, speak.

Jesus, speak.

God, speak.

And then you do your best to pay attention and to listen.

Not necessarily for some James Earl Jones voice booming out of the sky and stopping you in your tracks, but to listen and to pay attention to that which you know is God as it brushes, often unnoticed and unnamed, up against your life.

The opportunity for gratitude and to say *Thank you*.

A moment to pause long enough to take a deep breath and to acknowledge the gift of life which is yours. The day which you have which was not promised to you, but which is so full of promise. The moment in which you are called upon to do your best to do what you know to be good and kind and generous and faithful.

So, what do you think?

As you know, the Bible is never just about then, but also about now.

And never just about them, but also about you and me.

In the end, today's reading from the Bible is not about Simon and Jesus,

But about you and Jesus.

So, what if it is to you that Jesus speaks?.

Your name here.

Then, *"I have something to say to you."*

What do you think Jesus might say?