

Pentecost 16 2020
Jonah 3:10-4:11 Philippians 1:21-30 Matthew 20:1-6
Faith Lutheran Worship Devotion

“Are you envious because I am generous?”
“Is your eye evil because I am good?”

In this time of COVID 19 we have been wearing our face coverings, which cover a lot, our smiles, our frowns, our fears, our hopes. So, we must learn to look into the eyes...to see the smile, to understand the facial expressions that we so rely upon in our communication.

If the eyes are indeed a window into the soul, then what do we see when we look into someone's eyes?

Do we instinctively know that there's something different in the experience; something we will intuit that we have not noticed; something we sense that cannot be determined by observation alone. What people see in our eyes is beyond what they see externally. This can be disconcerting. Even frightening. It's difficult to pretend with our eyes. There's a lot we can feign with our voice, our body and gestures, our expressions. But the eyes? That's harder. Maybe impossible. We look down, look away. There's a reason when we avoid eye contact. Because to see into someone's eyes is indeed to see into the soul. Perhaps what you see is not understandable or explainable in the moment, but you do indeed see. Something true. Something hidden. Something deep.

And what will others see that you do not want to reveal? That you have avoided? That you have tried desperately to hide? Or what is it that you *wish* people would see, if they just looked, really looked, through your eyes and into your soul? These might be some questions worth answering this week.

And, if you get a chance to look into the eyes of God? What is at the heart of God? What will you see looking into God's very soul? Well, at least according to this parable, you will see generosity. **Sheer generosity.**

This is the hard part of the parable this day, the generosity is difficult understood.

We may not even know how to respond to true generosity.

This parable is a reminder of the absolute gift of generosity that does not demand response, that does not account for reciprocity, that does not calculate metrical measures. Because then generosity is not generous. By definition... generosity is not measurable, accountable, or calculable.

Therein lies the point of the parable.

That God is about unreckonable grace is beyond our understanding. Yet try as we may, we are encouraged to tap into that sense of generosity as an extension of the welcome and hospitality and love and abundance we have experienced in God's urgent advances to be in relationship with us. Even if fleeting, perhaps we can extend generosity, not so much for the sake of ourselves, but for the sake of the other who might then get to see into the eyes of God and get a glimpse of God's very heart and soul.

Pastor Dave

With appreciation to Karoline Lewis, Working Preacher

