



The Rev. Alan Sutherland, Rector

October 7, 2007

Pentecost 19
Children's Sermon

Who knows what a complaint is?

What have you complained about?

Let me tell you a story.

A man was complaining about his shoes one day; how old they were, how they did not fit, and when he walked they felt uncomfortable.

Then he saw a man who had no shoes at all.

How do you think he felt?

Ungrateful? Thankful for what he had?

How could he help the other man?

Then the man with no shoes was going a little further and in his mind he was complaining. First he had seen somebody with shoes and he was envious. He wanted shoes.

Then he saw a man in a wheelchair with no feet. How do you think the man with no shoes felt?

Ungrateful? Sorry for the man with no feet? How could he help?

In all of these we have someone who complains about what they have until they see someone who is worse off than them.

Sometimes it takes seeing someone else's situation to just realize how fortunate we are.

What that means though is that we are not very good at being thankful for what we have.

In this morning's Gospel we are told a story by Jesus about 10 people who were healed. All of them had their life changed but only one came back to say thank you. All got the same but only one said thank you.

In the church when we say thank you we call that stewardship. We give of our time talent and treasure in thanksgiving for what God has given to us.

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Established in 1847

210 North Main Street Versailles, KY 40383 859.873.3481 info@stjohnsky.com www.stjohnsky.com



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We are not called by God merely to BE thankful but to SHOW our thanks in ways that make a difference.

What are some of the ways that make a difference?

We say thank you for when somebody does something for us.

We make a picture for your mom and dad to tell them how much you love and appreciate them.

We do our chores with a smile.

We do our best at school.

We give thanks for all that we have and share it.

When Jesus was asked how much we should share, he said everything. But he also said he came to fulfill the law and the law was 10%.

Let me show you.

I have a pack of jelly beans for each of you. Would you be hurt at giving one away? How many does that leave you? How many does God have?

That is called Tithing. It is a spiritual way of giving.

It is a spiritual way of saying thank you to God by giving back 10% of your time talent and treasure.

When we are not thankful we are really complaining that we do not have enough, we are fearful that it is not going to work out, or we are envious of what others have.

When we are not thankful it has an impact on us and the community.

There was a village in France and every family grew grapes to make wine. In the town hall was a huge vat of wine and it was used for communion at church and for social gatherings. Every year each family would put 10 percent of the wine it made into the vat which was used for the village.

One year a family had not done so well so the farmer thought that instead of putting wine into the vat he would put some water. After all, his was such a small amount that no one would ever notice.

When it came to the time for the vat to be opened everybody would gather for a ceremony. The Mayor spoke and the Priest prayed a prayer of thanksgiving. When the time came for the spigot to be opened, what came out

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of the vat was not wine but pure water. Everybody thought they had had a bad year and everybody gave water instead of wine because everybody thought that their contribution would not make a difference.

We are called to be thankful because all of us have much to be thankful about.

Amen

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