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Great day today! Not only were we privileged to gather as a church family and worship, but we enjoyed a house blessing at Shelley Cleaves (house FULL of people!). Today our theme was "want to see Jesus"? Based on the Gospel lesson John 12:20-26, it is a question that I know gets to the heart of our Lenten Journey and our desires to use this time to draw closer to the Lord. Three takeaways today:

1. Want to see Jesus? When the Greeks in vs 20 asked to see Him, His answer, at first, seems oblique - He tells them and the disciples present (Andrew and Phillip) that they need to die to themselves (vss 23-25) --GIVE UP your lives and follow Him! Die to all else that would distract us from Him. BUT, that is how we get to see Him and know Him and live in Him -- give our lives to Him.

2. Want to see Jesus? He is the Word made flesh -- immerse yourselves in God's Word. He will meet you there and make His home in you. Between now and Easter Sunday read the Gospel of John (again) and SEE JESUS!

3. Want to see Jesus? Look around you. Look at those whom God has placed in your life. Whether it's your brothers and sisters at church OR "the Greeks" you will encounter everyday next week -- people you know and live around (neighbors, co-workers, etc) and see Jesus in them. Love them as He has loved you --with great patience and compassion. Vs 26 --love and serve others.....

I also asked the church to pray especially this week for those who are in missions reaching out to Muslims. There is a revival of sorts going on in the Muslim world. At great personal sacrifice thousands of Muslims are responding to the Gospel. Much as the Greeks in our text today, they too, now WANT TO SEE JESUS --and they ARE, in thousands of converts who report being prompted to seek Christian contacts after seeing visions of Jesus.

Reminders: 1) Wednesday night Lenten Devotions 6:30 pm. 2) Bring a friend to Palm Sunday worship this coming Sunday to begin our Holy Week together.

May the Lord bless, keep, and protect all of you in this week to come...

Pastor

Rev. Michael W. Birnbaum