

## Lent V

*“Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, ‘Sir, we wish to see Jesus’.”*

Jesus has been at the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus in Bethany and as it was nearing the time of the Passover, Jesus begins what would prove to be his final trek to Jerusalem that he too might go up to worship in the Temple. There are large crowds moving toward Jerusalem, some of whom seem interested in Jesus, but most of them are Jews going to make their pilgrimage to the holy city. St. John tells us that amongst those going up to Jerusalem were some Greeks, most likely Gentile converts to Judaism. They came to Philip, one of Jesus’ disciples, and said, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” St. John offers us no explanation for their request; they simply say, “We wish to see Jesus” but one can imagine that these Greeks had heard something about this man Jesus and for various reasons were seeking him out.

I believe Jesus is the Messiah of God. He is the comforter of souls, the sustainer of lives, the challenger of minds, the vehicle of healing and personal growth, the messenger of peace and the pathway to oneness with God. I believe every human being at one or more times in our lives has the need to seek out someone who will fulfill the roles in our lives I just delineated. While it may seem an arrogant statement, I believe Jesus is the one humanity seeks because of all the needs humanity has; this person Jesus, more than any other messenger from God, fulfills those needs. Humanity makes the request, “We wish to see Jesus.”

It falls upon each of us who claim Jesus as the Messiah to be the instruments of allowing the world wishing to see Jesus, to see Jesus. While God may choose Jesus to be seen in any way God chooses, my experience of seeing Jesus is encountering him in the lives

and moments that surround me. The way we live as people of God is the filter through which others see this person Jesus. The reality is that sometimes we present a picture that is not very wholesome; but when, by the grace of God, are healthy and creative, a magnificent and life-giving image of Jesus is presented to be viewed. The way we become a creative witness for Jesus in this life is to be attentive to the moment in which we find ourselves. The military has a phrase used in change of commands ceremonies among other instances in which an individual calls out "Attention to Orders" and everyone stands at attention and listens with some intensity. There is a sense in which that is the kind of witnessing moment expected of us. Wherever we are and whomever we are with provide the opportunity for us to be attentive to the needs of the person or the situation before us.

The Gospels make it clear that wherever Jesus was he observed, listened and acted in ways that enhanced the lives and the moments surrounding him. Those Greeks wanted to be in the presence of Jesus because they had heard that lives changed when in his presence. The world still needs to see Jesus, and it is we who present him--whether it is in the manner we relate to our families, our friends or change acquaintances; whether it is in the marketplace or school or in recreational moments. We seldom know with certainty what the person before us might need from us but the way we observe, listen and respond provides the opportunity for them to see, through us, Jesus the Messiah and by that viewing become, even if it is just for that moment, a healthier person who feels as though they have been caught up in a special moment. Indeed they have, because they had a chance to see the Lord.

Amen