

Have you ever noticed that

things are NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM TO BE?

I've been remembering my dreams recently

AND THAT SEEMS TO BE the message coming to me over and over again.

THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM TO BE.

So I had a dream, I was doing a good job at work.

And for some reason – I was let go – Fired – with no real explanation – just that I wasn't needed anymore – my job was done

– ONLY TO FIND OUT LATER that the company where I had been employed had been sold.

The same morning the dream continues and I'm happily on my way with a friend – we're going to a celebration of the work anniversaries of some of our co-workers

(where of course I no longer work – but you know dreams – they are kind of all over the place and there is no rule that things have to make sense.)

When we arrive, we go into the cafeteria and there are only a few people AND IT TURNS OUT THE CELEBRATION is a Birthday Party for a friend of mine – a friend I have not seen for a long time.

THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM

– THAT'S NOT WHAT I THOUGHT WAS HAPPENING

And there seems to be a lot of that in our world today.

Is COVID real? Did it come from China? Masks or No Masks? Is Antifa real or just a made up threat?

Are peaceful protesters looting or outsiders infiltrating with the purpose of causing violence and destruction?

Or maybe both?

Is federal government intervention needed to control violence or a ploy to take control of states' rights?

Black lives matter – Blue lives matter

– All lives matter – White Lives matter WHAT ARE WE SO AFRAID OF?

Does taking a knee during the playing of the national anthem really mean disrespect for those who have fought in battle on behalf of our country – or can it mean something else to someone else?

THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM

WHO IS IN CONTROL? Caesar or God?

A powerful ruler of the Roman Empire who needs to save face at his extravagant party by having John the Baptist beheaded (a man Herod himself was a bit fearful of because of the possible backlash if he was killed)?

WHO IS IN CONTROL? Caesar or God?

God in Jesus Christ – who looks at the crowds of people who are following him

– who follow despite Jesus' desire to be alone and consider and grieve

– who follow despite their hunger

– or who follow perhaps Because Of their hunger for truth in a world where Caesar

– the one who held all of the power

– could not even overcome his own ego to spare someone he did not want to kill?

Or is it God in Jesus Christ who looks at the crowd and had compassion for them?

WHO IS IN CONTROL? God or Caesar?

THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM TO BE

The evening draws on

– Jesus is spending time with the crowd – healing the sick

– and the disciples decide maybe it is time to call it a night so everyone can be on their way and they can get on with the business of a bite to eat and off to bed.

“Jesus, how about we send the people off to fend for themselves – send them out into the wilderness – so they can stop at the local convenience store and grab a bite to eat on their way home?”

They ARE in the wilderness – just like the Hebrews who followed Moses through the wilderness on to the promised land

– the land that God would lead them to,

these people have found a leader in Jesus

and they are not going anywhere.

And Jesus says, “Well it’s getting dark, and they don’t seem to have much money, how about YOU give them something to eat?”

“WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT JESUS? We’ve only got 5 loaves and 2 fish – barely enough to share among ourselves. WE CAN’T FEED THEM!”

And Jesus responds quite calmly, “Bring them here to me.”

And he took the loaves and fishes – looked up to heaven

– blessed and broke the loaves – AND GAVE THEM TO THE DISCIPLES

– and the disciples gave them to the crowds.

And all ate and were filled - with 12 baskets of broken pieces left over.

THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM.

Jesus empowered his disciples to do what he asked them to do

– to do what seemed impossible.

The bread and fish are not what they seem to be

– so little and yet more than enough to more than fill these people who are hungering and thirsting for truth

- with surely enough left over for a snack in the morning.

And here today at the table – we come

– knowing – trusting

– that **the bread and cup** are not what they seem to be

– a simple piece of bread – a cup of juice.

No, they are the bread of life and the cup of salvation – prepared not for the worthy – but for all who would come.

- COME – BE EMPOWERED AS THE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST
- TO TAKE WHAT SEEMS TO BE SMALL AND INEFFECTIVE
- TO TAKE WHAT SEEMS TO BE OF NO USE
- TO TAKE WHAT SEEMS USELESS

FOR SUCH GREAT CHALLENGES OF TODAY

– COME TAKE AND EAT

- JESUS IS WAITING FOR YOU AT HIS TABLE.