

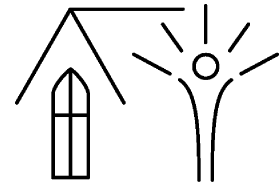


ROSELLE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

206 S. Rush Street
Roselle, IL 60172
(630) 529-1309
www.roselleumc.org

Our Mission Statement:

*“To Know Christ,
To Grow in Christ,
To Show Others Christ”*



February 19, 2006

Sermon: “Carpe Diem”

Mark 2:1-12

Reverend Thomas Kim

A young and successful executive was traveling down a neighborhood street, going a bit too fast in his new Jaguar S-Type Sedan. Who could blame him, with his Jag boasting a 3-liter, 6-cylinder, 240-horsepower engine, with 5-speed automatic transmission? He was watching for kids darting out from between parked cars, however, and slowed down when he thought he saw something.

As his car passed, no children appeared. Instead, a brick smashed into the Jag’s side door! He slammed on the brakes and spun the Jag back to the spot from where the brick had been thrown.

He jumped out of the car, grabbed a kid with a buzz cut and wearing tattered cargo pants and pushed him up against a parked car, shouting, “What was that all about and who are you? Just what the heck are you doing?”

Building up a head of steam, he went on. “That’s a new car and that brick you threw is going to cost a lot of money. Why did you do it?”

“Please, take it easy. I’m sorry, I didn’t know what else to do,” pleaded the youngster. “I threw the brick because no one else would stop.” Tears were dripping down the boy’s chin as he pointed around the parked car. “It’s my brother,” he said. “He rolled off the curb and fell out of his wheelchair, and I can’t lift him up.” Sobbing, the boy asked the executive, “Would you please help me get him back into his wheelchair? He’s hurt and he’s too heavy for me.”

Deeply moved, the driver tried to swallow the rapidly swelling lump in his throat. He lifted the young man back into the wheelchair and took out his handkerchief and wiped the scrapes and cuts, checking to see that everything was going to be okay. “Thank you,” the grateful child said to him.

The man then watched the little boy push his brother down the sidewalk toward their home. It was a long walk back to his Jaguar ... a long, slow walk. He never did repair the side door. He kept the dent to remind him not to go through life so fast that someone has to throw a brick at you to get your attention. Sometimes when you don’t have time to listen, God has to throw a brick at you. There are people who work as God’s brick to the world.

Listen to another story: It’s found right here from today’s Gospel lesson from Mark. Mark describes the incident, where some friends go to extraordinary lengths to get help for a friend, risking embarrassment and (if this were America) a possible lawsuit.

There are three kinds of people in the story. Examine yourself what group you might belong to. There were the crowds. The passage opens with Jesus “at home” in Capernaum. Suddenly, the house is full — so many that “there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door” (v. 2). Another group of people were the four men who had brought with them a “paralyzed man” (v. 3), carrying him on a mat. The other group was of course, the scribes who criticize the healing ministry of Jesus.

There are people love Jesus but do nothing like the crowds. And they occasionally block the way to Jesus without knowing what’s going on. There are people who are doing their best to win the world for Christ. And of course there are people who are standing and judging what is right or wrong. What group do you belong to before Christ?

The friends of the paralyzed man from the Gospel lesson tell us a strong message. The crowd being too thick, they move immediately to Plan B. They dig a hole through the roof of the house and go deep in order to help, lowering their friend right in front of Jesus regardless of embarrassment, cost or the perception of the others around them. They did not stop there, nor were discouraged by the circumstances.

In the movie, *The Dead Poets Society*, Robin Williams plays an English teacher who takes his class into the hall to the trophy case. There he shows them pictures of past heroes of the school. "All of these young men were as you are today," he tells them, "starting life with great promise. All of you will someday be as they are. They're all dead and so will you be. What do you think they would say to you? Get up close to the glass." As the class leans toward the glass, Williams, in a raspy voice, says, "*Carpe diem...carpe diem.*" Seize the day!

The friends of the paralyzed man made the most of the present. They seized the day to help their friend, and ultimately for the glory of God, and their friend was healed. Do you make the most of the present to the world for the Lord or are you just standing like the crowds? *Carpe diem!*

When I told her about my mission trip to North Korea, Gail asked me, "What if they caught you for accusing you as an American spy and did not allow you to come back to America?" I replied to her, "I am useless to them. It costs more for them to keep me there. Even if they did, I would be the first missionary to N. Korea. It would be my honor. I can not ignore the starving children. If I don't go, they may not care for them. Who knows, I may help any of them I meet during the trip to find Jesus." And I shared a story I heard during a conference.

Some years ago, the director of Evangelism and Church Growth for the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church shared the story about a man from Malaysia who presides over the work of The Methodist Church in his country.

This man felt called a few years ago to go into the Malaysian jungle area to win converts to the faith. Friends and family members warned him not to go. Too many villagers had disappeared into the jungle area never to be seen again. But he felt compelled to "go into all the world making disciples." All went well for while. In fact, he established churches among several tribes and baptized a fair number of first-time believers. One day he was driving his Jeep back home a bit later than usual. Rounding a corner on a dirt road, he was stopped by a dozen of pirates. They searched him and his car and found little of value—with one exception. He happened to be carrying an English book. The leader was impressed. He wanted to learn English in order to seize advantage over the increasing number of English-speaking travelers who passed that way. They took him to their campsite at gunpoint and by night they would do their work of thievery. By day they would sit and listen as he read them stories from the "English book." What they did not know, of course, was that every English lesson was the English book which was the Bible.

At the end of six months, the gang leader ordered him, "Pack your things." Outside the hut were the other pirates. The leader announced, "We're going home with you so you can teach us more of this man named Jesus." The man and the pirates returned to the village where all had long since assumed his death; they had even performed his funeral.

Today those former pirates are residents of the village, and each morning they rise early, dress, put Bibles under their arms, and walk into the jungle area. For they know where the other pirates live. Daily they go to those people, risking their lives, to tell them of the Christ who they found in the Book.

There are so many spiritually paralyzed people in the world who don't know Jesus. Are you making the most of the days God has given you to help and save them? **Carpe diem!**

Someone has noted that the average American disposes of about 40.1 hours of leisure time per week: 15.2 hours are spent in front of the TV. If the same time were invested in walking, during one year you could walk across America from coast to coast. If the same time were invested in education, you could earn an MBA in two years. If the same time were invested in a part-time job that pays \$20 per hour, you could earn \$47,424 in three years. (PERSONAL SELLING POWER, March 1994, p. 41.) Are you making the most of the days God has given you? Carpe diem — seize the day!

John Wesley gave these Rules for Living:

**Do all the good you can,
By all means you can,
In all the ways you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.**

They could be summarized in two words: *Carpe Diem*. Are you making the most of the days God has given you? There are so many spiritually paralyzed people in the world without knowing Jesus.

You will be satisfied and filled when you serve the Lord and the needy since we are created to serve God, and to serve others. *Carpe diem!* Seize the day for Christ.