

June 7, 2009 Our Savior's Lutheran Church Hermosa, SD  
John 3:1-17; Is 6:1-8; Psalm 29 and Romans 8:12-17

“Full of It”

**Barbara Brown Taylor story @ searching for meaning of life**

- Wants to discover meaning of life
- Reads religion, history, philosophy, psychology
- Finds smart people and talks to them – lively and long discussions, but no agreement
- Belongings in storage and travels around the world – South America, India, etc.
- No one knows, but talk of one man who does, searches for him
- Deep in Himalayas, hears of the man and climbs to his hut at tree-line of particular mtn
- Cold, exhausted and knocks on door and asks, “What is the meaning of life?”
- The little old man responds, “Please come in and have some tea.”
- “No. I mean no thank you.” But he insists and she goes in and talks nonstop @ her search while tea brewing
- Doesn't notice when tea cup is full and keeps pouring until overflows in a steaming waterfall and burns her hand
- “Why didn't you stop? What are you doing? It's full! Can't you see that?”
- “Just so,” the man said to her. “You come here wanting something from me, but what am I to do? There is no more room in your cup. Come back when it is empty and then we will talk.”

**My story @ being in Grand Marais, MN restaurant, Sven and Ole's Pizza and being surrounded by a group (NOT by a great cloud of witnesses!) and asked, “Are you born again?”)**

- Are you born again? How do you know that you will be saved?
- They were full of what they knew and they pointed fingers at me, knowing since I called myself a Lutheran, that I was a lost soul that they needed to judge and save
- All those around us – what a witness we were – NOT!

**Nic at night – coming so full of ideas and information and looking for a particular answer from Jesus and getting something completely different**

- Several thousands of miles away and several thousands of years in the past, Nicodemus came to Jesus at night and he was “full of it”
- “We” know that you are a teacher who has come from God; no one can do these signs that you do apart from him – he comes full, “knowing” so many things – what does he want to find out about Jesus? Is it an attempt to check out the new guy in town and challenge him, to see if he's one of them or is here to shake things up? Is he curious about who he is and that maybe he is who they've been waiting for?
- He's too full of his Pharisaic life to understand what Jesus is saying and he misses its meaning.

- Being born again – born from above – of the Spirit is about God’s spirit working in us NOT about our human achievement and doing! It is the action of the Son of Man offering life to us! It is love reaching out to the unlovely through the gift of the Son and the Spirit.

Isn’t it funny, how we can be so full w/so many things that we miss what is right there in front of us! We try so hard to do the work ourselves that we miss that the work has already been done for us. We fill ourselves up with so much information that we miss the very Spirit that is reaching out to fill us up w/o our doing! We stand in a circle and face off against each other over when WE decided that WE saved ourselves from God, when in fact, it’s about God reaching out to us the whole time through his Son to save us!

Don’t believe in yourself. Believe in me. That was Jesus’ dare to Nicodemus. Turn your cup upside down. Empty yourself out and be born anew.

“How can this be?” Those are Nic’s last words in this particular passage (although it is very interesting to see where he shows up again in the gospel of John and what he does!).

To be less “full of it” and recognize our openness to being filled by God.

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”