

10/7/2011

Brothers and Sisters,

Yesterday as I got out of my car I stepped into a pile of leaves left there by the wind. Autumn leaves remind me of many things: that snow is just around the corner and it is time to wax my skis; of children tracing leaves on paper with crayons; of the simple pleasure of watching leaves fall from the trees; of the piles they make when we rake the yard and the games of Hide and Seek we played as kids. **Did you ever play Hide and Seek when you were young? Ask Larry Lillo the Executive director of the Robert Russell Eastern Star Retirement Community and if he is not too old to remember, he will tell you of the games we played.** Robert Fulghum wrote a short story about Hide and Seek. He said that a kid was hiding in the pile of leaves under the window where he was writing. The other kids became frustrated when they could not find the kid in the leaves and so they yelled “**Olly-olly-oxen free**” to tell the kid to come in so they could start over. Finally Fulghum yelled out his window “**Get Found Kid!**” and that scared the kid out of his hiding place.

Many years ago, when I was teaching an adult Sunday school class, I told that story and then I asked this question: “**If we were to play Hide and Seek here in Church today, where would you hide?**” In the Balcony, under the altar, under the seats, in the cry room, on the playground, in my car, in the book store were some of the responses I received. I told them that in life, most people hide in plain sight - behind a new dress or a new suit; behind their title, career, success or failure and that list could go on and on. As human beings we wear masks as if every day were Halloween. We don't want to be found out, so we hide in the leaves to cover our insecurities. I must confess and those who know me well could tell you that I spent many years hiding in plain sight. It is easy to make the world think you are smarter, richer and more together than you really are, but when you look in the mirror, you know the truth and God knows the truth too. God made us to be who we are, not someone or something else. This hiding began in the Garden of Eden when Adam & Eve covered themselves with fig leaves and hid from God.

In Psalm 139: 7-24 David, while speaking to God, wrote these words: Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; ... For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. ... Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. NIV

True freedom comes when we realize that God has a better way and He does not make junk. The Bible says we are God's workmanship, His Masterpiece and when we understand that He is calling “Olly-olly-oxen free”, which means we can be ourselves and in forgiveness we can begin again, free from all the guilt and insecurities we have been hiding from the world. Only then are we free to be all that God intended us to be. This is all true, I know because it happened to me and maybe it is time to “Get Found Kid!”

If you are in Denver you are invited to the Robert Russell Eastern Star Chapel this Sunday at 6:30 PM. On the 2nd Sunday of each month we serve Communion and the freedom that comes with it.

**I pray God will bless you and yours,
Rev. Steve Schroeder PM
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