

Have you ever heard: (John 1:1-3) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. That is of course from the beginning of the gospel of John. This is of course our English translation. It was originally written in Greek. For example the Greek word "Logos" we translate as the English word, "Word".

In the beginning was the *Logos*, and the *Logos* was with God, and the *Logos* was God. 2 The *Logos* was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through The *Logos*, and without the *Logos* not one thing came into being. And when we hear the word, "Word", we start thinking Jesus. (John 1:1-3) In the beginning was **JESUS**, and **JESUS** was with God, and **JESUS** was God. 2 (**JESUS**) was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through him (**JESUS**), and without (**JESUS**) not one thing came into being.

This week I started listening to this history of philosophy again. You might remember I talked about listening to this "Super Teacher" series on the History of Philosophy. I mentioned that even the vocabulary is a challenge. Well I had taken a break from it for a while, because I was just getting too darn smart. This week I started listening again. The teacher was talking about Aristotle. I'm no philosopher but the teacher was saying that Aristotle that great philosopher believed that everything has a purpose. All of creation was created not just willy nilly but with a purpose in mind. Funny that's what we Christians believe.

Aristotle spoke Greek. Coincidentally, the teacher was talking about Logos but he was translating the word as *the end of it*, meaning with the end in mind, *the purpose*. All of creation was created with the end in mind. The teacher even referenced the gospel of John. In the beginning was the logos. Except he translated the word Logos as: *the end of it*, meaning, with the end in mind, *the purpose*.

In the beginning was *the end of it*, and *the end of it* was with God, and *the end of it* was God. 2 *The end of it* was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through *the end of it*, and without *the end of it* not one thing came into being.

There is a purpose to all things and that purpose is revealed in Jesus Christ and that purpose is Jesus Christ.

I know what you people are saying. Our gospel reading for today is from Luke not John. It is about Jesus healing this poor woman whose body was twisted up for 18 years. Jesus healed her and got in trouble for healing her because he healed her on the Sabbath. The leader of the synagogue was mad because as every Jewish kid knows and every Sunday school kid knows we are to honor the Sabbath and keep it holy. And since God rested on the Sabbath so should every good Jew. There are six days to do work six days you can heal. You shouldn't work on the Sabbath. It was the law. It was in the Ten Commandments.

So why in the world Pastor Arte are you talking about Aristotle, the gospel of John, Greek, logos, and the end of it all? Is it because you are at the end of it. You are at the end of your ministry here at St. Ansgars that's why you're going off on some tangent? Well yeah you guessed it. No, I think it is important, and Jesus thinks it is important to keep the end in mind at all times.

It has been said that it would be helpful to write out an obituary for yourself before you die, well before you die. Because it is hard to do after you die. So, while you're still young, like in your 50's, write down all the things you want people to say about you when you are gone. Then live your life accordingly. Live your life with the end in mind. That's why the purpose driven life is so appealing and successful, keep the end in mind, what's the purpose?

So with the end in mind, let's look again at our gospel lesson. Jesus is in trouble for healing on the Sabbath. It is believed that he has broken the Sabbath, broken God's law. This law comes from where? The ten commandments. They are not suggestions right? They are not requests, they are commands. They don't say, try not to have other gods. They don't say, if it isn't too much trouble you really shouldn't kill anybody. No the 10 commandments are "You shall", "You shall not", "do this", "don't do that". But what Jesus is making us think about today is, what is the end of it? When God gave the 10 commandments what did he have in mind? What is the purpose what is the goal of the commandments?

Let's have a quiz:

Why did God give us the Ten Commandments?

- a. He wanted to keep us from having any fun.
- b. He wanted a good reason for being mad at us.
- c. To show who is the boss.
- d. To show us how to be in relationship with him (God) and how to be in relationship with other people.

The goal is for us to have a good relationship with God and good relationships with other people. The goal is not following the 10 commandments. The commandments are tools we use, gifts God gave us show us how to live. But he gave them to us with an end in mind, a purpose in mind.

Jesus could have healed this woman any day of the week. He healed her on the Sabbath, the day of rest, and he did it on purpose. It wasn't like he healed her and then said, oops! Is it the sabbath? No he did it on purpose. He wanted to show that the point is not to follow the letter of the law. The point is to have a good relationship with God and other people. The woman's health was more important than the Sabbath.

(Mark 2:27-28) Then he said to them, "**The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath;**

If I am in tune with God's spirit and I hope I am, I came to St. Ansgars out of my relationship with God. I have served here hopefully more times than not out of my relationship with God and with all of you. I go to Urland hopefully out of my desire to serve God and God's people and because God is calling me to this new place.

What end does God have in mind for St. Ansgars? We asked that question as we began looking at our facility. We didn't just say we want to build something. We together tried to figure out God's purpose for St. Ansgars, what end does God have in mind for us. What does God have in mind for you?

As you live out your life in faith may Jesus be your purpose. Sometimes when we are trying to make Jesus our purpose we can see or we think we know the end God has in mind. Sometimes we don't have a clue. Years ago if you were to tell me that God was going to call me to be an Associate Pastor I wouldn't have believed it. If you would have told me that I would be leaving St. Ansgars to serve a country church I wouldn't have believed it. When I was younger, I not only couldn't see God leading me to be a pastor I never would have thought I would live in Minnesota. I didn't even know where Minnesota was.

God is calling every one of us to make Jesus our purpose. You might not be able to see how God is going to use you or where God is going to use you or even what the end God has in mind but that's where the faith and trust come in. God loves you cares for you and has proved it through Jesus Christ. Make Jesus your end, and don't sweat the details, they'll come.

God bless you all. amen