

**SERMON: “ThinkActBe: think like Jesus.”**

Rev. Geoff Ross: Sunday, April 29, 2018, St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church

[Good to be back/TY to Wayne/Rosemary.]

Like you, I was shocked/horrified by what I saw/heard/read but was also overwhelmed by the power of the love that responded. I can’t/won’t diminish the revulsion/disgust over what happen/was done to not only the 10 innocent people who died violently/tragically/senselessly but to also those 13 who were injured and the countless people who were placed into harms way by someone who wished to inflict pain/suffering on others as he sought to die to satiate his hatred. What I will do is commend those who responded to the carnage/killing on Yonge St. on Monday in Toronto – neighbour/stranger/men/women reaching out/holding hands/helping, showing love/compassion/mercy to neighbour/stranger when and where they needed it most. It was frightening – horrifying – but I was thankful that there are people who showed that there is hope/love/grace out there that can/will defeat violence/hatred/despair. Reading the stories of people simply holding a dying man’s hand so he wouldn’t be alone made me want to be a better person.

[Question:Have you intended to do/give/show something for/to someone who did/gave/offered something to you – something that changed/made/influenced you – more than you can repay? I did: my father – wanted to live up to his hopes/expectations for me.]

One thing that events like Monday’s tragedy remind me of is; we all think we’ll have more time! We put/let things off/slide thinking we’ll get back to it. We make plans then fail to follow up. We pave the paths of our lives with good intentions – but do we do them? What’re we doing with our time/lives? Are we becoming who we’re meant to be? Are we living this life/using our time wisely? My father died when I was 33: I thought that I would have more time to show/thank him; he died before I became who I’ve become. Any of you have someone in your life?

[Gardening:Pruning – cut back/remove/growth – greater/healthier. God’s plan for us to work in/through us.]

As I’ve gotten older I’ve learned that life is a process of becoming – of growing/changing/transforming into who God made/means us to be: and, as people of faith/Christians this process is about who we’re becoming like – and that’s Jesus. As we just heard from June, for this year’s faith in ACT!ON series we’ll examine how it’s God’s plan/purpose for us to become/grow into/be more like Jesus by not only thinking/acting/being like Jesus by seeing the world as God does, by responding to the lost/broken/needy as Jesus did, but by practicing the love that He preached by using the gifts given to us by God so that we might be His hands/feet/voice/body/Christ on earth – by being the Church! And by being the

Church/“Body” I mean a living/active/vital body, not one that sits passively/idly/quietly by in the face of a world of hurt/violence/need.

Like life this process of becoming takes time. God knew this about us because all of creation exists in a process of becoming. Science is confirming what we already know instinctively: *“in the bulb is a flower, in the seed an apple tree; there’s a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.”* The design is imbedded/implanted/encoded in our creation; the purpose/plan/product of our lives is to be who we were made to be, to produce the “fruit” (as Paul describes it) we were meant to, to exhibit the evidence of our growth in/through our action/deeds. And the goal/purpose/objective/inspiration of all of this becoming/growth is to become/grow into the likeness of God in the form of Jesus, the exemplifier of a life lived out by putting His faith into action.

[Young/Old:All still ‘Becoming.’ Who are you becoming? Still Time.]

Being like Jesus starts with thinking like Jesus – but it’s not enough to ‘believe/think’ something, it’s harder than that; it must be a way of life: thinking must become belief; it begins in your head but must live in your heart. Because, like God, we live in the heart: Jesus even said as much; *“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”* (Mat 6:21) [Check your spending.] If you struggle to live your beliefs you don’t truly believe them. God/Jesus knew this about us – which is why He promised us hope, it’s why He came as Emmanuel (God with us) to be one of us, it’s why He put His faith/trust/belief into action by dying for us, offering us salvation, modelling for us what God requires of us: to think like Jesus.

But what does it mean ‘to think like Jesus’? What did Jesus think about? First, Jesus didn’t think about Himself: He thought of/wanted what God thought of/wanted/desired. The Micah reading reveals that God requires of us to live/work for a “just/loving/and humble” world. The Luke reading reveals Jesus mandate – to proclaim His coming as the fulfillment of God’s plan to bring it about. As we begin our faith in ACT!ON series, as we Mark this sad/tragic/difficult week, let us responded by from our hearts, let us think/act/be like Jesus by wanting what God wants, seeing the world as God does, and striving for a world – just the way God desired it to be.

Amen.