**“Me or We”**

**Me or We? It’s a question each of us faces and answers every day as we make decisions, establish priorities, and live our lives. Do we live as insulated and isolated individuals or as a person connected to others?  Me or We is a choice we must all make every day.**

**It’s a question Solomon faced when the Lord came to him in a dream and said, “Ask something of me and I will give it to you.” It sounds like a great deal. It sounds like God has signed and given Solomon a blank check. All he needs to do is fill in the amount. Who hasn’t at one time or another wished for that? We’ve probably all played the if-you-could-have-anything-in-the-world game. But it’s not that simple. It’s not a game. It’s real life and real death. God’s question comes with a dilemma and Solomon’s answer will carry profound consequences. Solomon must decide between asking for himself or asking for the larger we, of which he is also a part. We do the same thing every day in our lives.**

**The question comes to Solomon in the night, in a dream, and it suggests that it comes from a deep interior place and that his answer will also come from that deep interior place. We are often blind to and unaware of the choice between me and we as we face the circumstances of our lives. We tend to focus on what is happening around us rather than what is happening within us.**

**When disruptions occur, something that throws our life off balance, something that challenges us, troubles us, or frightens us, we almost immediately begin thinking about a response. What will we do? How will we do it? In some way those are really secondary questions. The primary question is the awareness of others, and the interior condition from which we will respond. That’s certainly how Jesus lived and what he taught. His was not a me me me life. So, what about us? Is our awareness and response limited to me or is it a we awareness and response?**

**The answer to that question will likely determine the quality of our relationships and the extent to which we live our lives in conflict. Look at the world today, read the news, reflect on your own relationships. If there is conflict there is probably a me attitude present. This past week I saw a video of four young men laughing at a handicapped man who had fallen into a retention pond and was having difficulty keeping his head above water. They continued to yell at him and laugh at him and made no attempts to save him. They didn’t even call 911. They sat laughing and watched the man drowned. Clearly, those four young men chose the me attitude. The choice between me and we exists in all areas of our lives. Look for conflict and chances are you will see a me life to the exclusion of a we life.**

**I’m not suggesting that a we attitude fixes every conflict, ends every war, or settles every debate. It won’t. It’s not that simple. However, it may change the way we approach each other in the midst of those conflicts, wars, and debates. It opens our minds, hearts, and wills to consider more than just ourselves. It offers new possibilities and creates new options. It brings about an awareness of and concern for all, including ourselves.**

**That shift from me to we is not easy. It means we must let go of past patterns that no longer work,**[**suspend judgments**](https://interruptingthesilence.com/2014/07/21/weeding-out-judgment-a-sermon-on-matthew-1324-30-36-43-parable-of-the-wheat-and-weeds/)**, and redirect our attention to a future that will emerge in and through us. That emerging future is the kingdom of heaven that Jesus talks about in our Gospel today. The shift from me to we takes place within us, before it ever happens outside and around us. Just like Solomon’s dream.**

**What does a we life look like? In a person, it looks like Jesus Christ.**

1. **A me life is one of power, domination, and control.**

**A we life is one of vulnerability, intimacy, and self-giving.**

1. **A me life is filled with doubt, distrust, and fear.**

**A we life is filled with faith, hope, and love.**

1. **A me life clings tightly to the past.**

**A we life embodies what might be.**

1. **A me life draws lines that divide.**

**A we life draws circles that encompass.**

**So many of the circumstances in today’s world continue to remind us that a me attitude just doesn’t work. It never did. So why then do we continue living that way? People are being killed, homes destroyed, and relationships broken. The world is bleeding out and tears are flowing. Today’s me approach continues to crucify the we life Jesus lived and offered us. However, not even that can separate us from the love of God that is in Jesus Christ. Jesus’ love is what enables, encourages, and teaches us to choose we over me. But each of us must choose between me and we every day, in every situation, and in every relationship.**

**Solomon chose a we attitude. He asked for a listening heart, a heart with ears, a heart that would hear the pain of the world, the needs of his people, and the voice of God. He did not ask for himself to live a long life, to have riches, or even the defeat of his enemy. And this pleased the Lord.**

**The fact that it was a dream does not mean it was not real. It does not mean Solomon’s waking was the end of the dream. To the contrary, his awaking was the beginning of a new reality. He awoke to new possibilities for himself and his people. Those realities and possibilities would be realized every time Solomon chose we over me, every time he lived the dream.**

**Our world desperately needs new realities and new possibilities. God has entrusted each of us with Solomon’s dream. So, what will it be? Each of us must decide. Me or We?**

**When you leave church today, pick up one of these blank checks from GOD. How will you fill it out? Fill it out and put it somewhere to remind yourself of your wish. Remember, each of us must decide, Me or We?**