

**THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO WINNIE THE POOH**  
**Mother's Day –May 14, 2017 –Psalm 118: 19-29**  
**The Church of the Covenant**

This sermon had its genesis when Camille Braun led the church staff in a devotional a few years back using a quote from Winnie the Pooh, by English children's author, A.A. Milne, that said: "What day is it?", asked Pooh. "It's today", squeaked Piglet. "My favorite day.", said Pooh. Today is my favorite day. Which day? Why today is my favorite day, thank you. But this sermon also had its genesis when my dear Mother would read me bedtime stories before she tucked me in and then would pray with me each night. Winnie the Pooh was my favorite. I think every family has bedtime rituals in which children are taught what is important in life and faith. How precious these memories are for me now...

It has been said that you can categorize people by the characters in Winnie the Pooh. Some people are optimists like Pooh Bear; some are negative like Eeyor; some are naïve and child-like Christopher Robins; some funny and clueless like Piglet. I remember as a child being selected to sing a part in the school play, the part of Christopher Robin. I was a blond tow-head then with a lovely little high soprano voice. The intro song began, "Little boy kneels at the foot of his bed...Hush, hush, whisper who dares. Christopher Robin is saying his prayers." And then came my solo. Don't worry; I know its Music Appreciation Sunday, but Christopher Robin isn't singing today! And I was to sing something like: "God bless Mummy and Daddy, too. Oh thank you, God, for a lovely day. And what was the other thing I had to say? I said "Bless Daddy" so what can it be? Oh! Now I remember it. God bless me." Little boy kneels at the foot of his bed. Hush, Hush. Whisper who dares. Christopher Robin is saying his prayers.

So are you an optimist? Or are you a pessimist? Are you Winnie the Pooh or Eeyor? Do you believe there is a Person of divine mercy whose hand guides the universe and is worthy of our praise and prayer? Or do you believe what you hear on cable news? What did your Mother teach you in the daily rituals of life as you were growing up? Who is the person God wishes you to be? How do your viewpoints shape your world? What kind of a world do you want this to be? I'm Christopher Robin and I like listening to Winnie the Pooh. Because today is my favorite day.

Our scripture from Psalm 118 says, "This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalm 118: 24) Whatever is going on today, this is the day the Lord has made and so we have reasons to rejoice and be glad in it. Good day or bad day, there are reasons to rejoice. God pours His grace and mercy into every day. But sometimes our negativity clouds our vision. When we expect only bad things to happen to us, then that is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Our attitude of faith or of doubt determines our view of the world. The lenses of positivity or negativity bring our life into focus or out of focus. We see what we are pre-programmed to see. God wants us to see every day as a gift. God wants to pour His grace and mercy into our lives even and especially on our worst or hardest day. Do we have eyes to see it? Do we have ears to hear it? Do we have a heart that is open and child-like and ready to see what the Lord can and will do in, around and through us today?

What's your favorite day? TODAY is my favorite day. TODAY is the day the Lord has made. Today is the day that the Lord will use me for good. Today is the day even in the midst of trial and darkness, where the Lord will shine His light of grace, if we have eyes to see it. Today is the day when we will have awesome conversations. Today is the day I can be loving and experience the love of others. Today is the day where I will meet someone new and interesting. Today is the day when the Holy Spirit will guide my steps. Today is the day I will discover new things about myself. Today is the day filled with surprises and grace. Too many people live out of the sadnesses, losses, difficulties and negative stories of the

past. Too many people worry about future problems that will never actually be. TODAY is the DAY the Lord has made. Have an attitude of rejoicing and joy within it and then in every day we will see reasons to rejoice and be glad and have joy right at the heart of who we are.

To be sure God is the God of the past. To be sure God is the God of the future. Our past and our future are held in the hands of a God who loves us. But God is especially experienced in the eternal present. In this moment. In this instant. TODAY. We can see His hand of providence at work TODAY. WE can expect Him to intervene in new and powerful and gracious ways. TODAY. We experience His blessedness in the instant and in the moment that is TODAY. But our attitudes and our dwelling on the past or our worries about the future can rob us of the rejoicing and joy God wants us to have TODAY.

*That's what my Mother taught me as she read to me those childhood stories and prayed with me each night before I fell asleep. Hush, hush. Whisper who dares. Christopher Robin is saying his prayers. And I have an unshakable belief that God is GOOD, all the time. All the time, God is GOOD. Every moment of every day, God is Good. Today is my favorite day, whatever is happening, because my Mother taught me to believe it to be so...*

Later in life she gave me a poem-prayer that I have posted on my refrigerator. Families post important things on their fridge that have meaning and this is posted on mine.

*Lord, thank you for another day  
Within this life of mine,  
Give me the strength to live it well,  
Whatever I may find.  
Bestow from your abundance  
Whatever I may lack,  
To use the hours wisely  
For I cannot have them back...*

*Lord, thank you for another chance,  
In which to try to be,  
A little more deserving  
Of the gifts you've given me.  
For yesterday is over,  
And tomorrow's far away,  
And I remain committed to  
The good I do TODAY. Amen.*

As a postscript. My Mother now lives with me in my home. And several months ago, quite spontaneously, as I would be tucking her into bed each night before she goes to sleep, I will take her hand each night, and we will pray together, just like when I was a child. Only now I pray for her, just as she used to pray for me. There is a beautiful symmetry to it all. A divine purpose greater than anything I can comprehend in life. Ending the day as it began so long ago, in trust and in prayer. Believing and trusting in a God who is GOOD, all the time. Little boy kneels at the foot of his bed...Hush, hush! Whisper who dares. Christopher Robin is saying his prayers. Amen and Amen.

*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, Pennsylvania  
IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!*