



18th SUNDAY of ORDINARY TIME YEAR C – August 4, 2019

Jerry Kramer was an all-pro linesman for the Green Bay Packers in the late 1960's. He won fame not only for playing a great game of football but also for writing a best-selling book. It was called "Instant Replay" and dealt with a dimension of the game that we rarely think about. Taking the form of a diary, Jerry's book describes what goes on in the minds of athletes as they play their game week in and week out.

One entry in Jerry's diary tells how he has just seen a film called Cool Hand Luke. It starred Paul Newman, who played the part of a wild man who had no goal in life and no fear of God or man. Toward the end of the movie, Cool Hand Luke escapes from prison. As he flees, he comes upon an empty church. He goes inside, kneels down, and prays to God in these words.

"Old Man, what do ya got planned for me?
What did ya have in mind when you made me.
What did ya put me on earth for, Old Man.?"

Jerry says in his diary, "I asked the same questions. I often wonder what's my purpose here on earth besides playing football every Sunday. I feel there's got to be more to life than that. There's got to be some reason for it all. There's got to be some meaning to it all.

Twenty years later, in the 1980's Jerry Kramer wrote a second book called "Distant Replay". In that book, he looks back over his life and asks himself the same questions he asked in his first book. Why am I here? What is my purpose in life? What does it all mean?

There's one chapter in his second book called, "What have I done with my Life?" In it he talks about a book he has just read, called, "Life after life". It deals with people who have been resuscitated after being clinically dead.

Kramer writes, "One of the people who almost died recalled floating up and encountering a being of light that asked the question, "Tell me what you've done with your life." He says, he put the book down and asked the same question of himself - again.

He answered the question by listing all of his possessions - a ranch in Idaho, his many expensive cars, his boat, his bank account, everything he owned ... and then he realized he would not be able to take any of these things with him when it was his time to go. Jerry Kramer's two books fit in very well with today's Scripture Readings.

The first reading (Ecclesiastes 1:2, 2:21-23) asks, "What profit comes to a man from all the toil and anxiety of heart with which he has labored under the sun?" In the second reading (Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11), St. Paul says, "Think of what is above, not of what is on earth." And finally, in the Gospel, Jesus himself says of the man who decided to tear down his old barns and build bigger ones, "You fool, this very night your life will be demanded of you."

What have we done with our lives? It's the question Jesus sets before us in today's readings. It's the question only we can answer.

For a few moments in silence reflect on how you would answer that question. Then consider this, "What will you do with the rest of your Life?"

