

Wind the clock back. Me: 23 years old. Acting in New York, but realizing New York was not a place I wanted to live in forever, and acting did not pay the bills.. I loved it, but I needed to start acting —no pun intended-- like an adult. I didn't even know what I wanted. Been there?

So I was inundated with advice from well-meaning and loving friends and relations. Seems everyone knew what I really wanted-- what I should do. Some suggested changing my career path to something more steady, something more lucrative. And of course they always knew just what I would like.

They were just trying to be helpful. Someone suggested banking. I don't know why—I mean, come on-- you have only known me for a year and a half. Would I like banking?

A couple of friends, both male, suggested I find a nice man and settle down. I suspect that was their dream, though I doubt with me.

One suggested the peace corps. Interesting, considering I hate flying, I'm easily homesick, and I can't even imagine not having a hot shower every day.

On and on it went. Kind, if misguided advice. Lots of answers for me.

Even today there is no shortage of people offering their suggestions to us—sometimes helpful, sometimes not. Watch TV for 3 1/2 seconds and they'll tell you not only what you want and NEED, but where to get it.

That's why I love Jesus. When people ask him for help, he doesn't just assume he knows what they want, and that he has all the answers. In every healing story-- he asks a question.

Jesus said to the blind man, "What do you WANT me to do?"

Not: "Here's what I'll do-- I'm the Son of God. I *know* what you want!

Nope. He always asks each person what they want or what they want him to do.

This is--after all-- their journey, their experience. And I don't know about you, but when I pray to Jesus I rarely hear: I know exactly what you need. It's this.....

Many people have shared with me that this is a very frustrating part of prayer: there is no easy answer. Maybe we're asking the wrong questions. Maybe Jesus

is waiting for us to really define what it is we want, what it is we would like him to do.

It is our journey. Our experience. Perhaps Jesus isn't interested in thinking for us, or trying to guess what we want. And many times a guess would be necessary, because sometimes **we** don't even know what we want.

What do you WANT Jesus to do? Think big.

When I was a senior in high school we had to submit quotes to go along with our senior pictures. The point was to pick a quote that might become your life' goal--- to kind of pretend your life was a QUEST, and your quote was the motto you hoped to live your life by.

I knew I couldn't put something simple. That would be too easy. (This IS me, remember.) I had to think big. So I wrote: "The less of routine the more of life."

I put it out there and God delivered.

Be careful what you ask for. Sometimes I regret ever saying it.

Sometimes it blesses me far more than I ever intended. Quests, and life, can be surprising that way.

Jesus is asking YOU, "What do you WANT me to do? It's always been up to you, " he says, "not me. Think big."

Bartimaeus asked to see again. Seems he had once seen, but had lost his sight at some point.

I've often wondered if this healing story is a metaphor. "Lord, I know I have eyes, but really give me eyes to see the world as it is, to see people the way you see them, to not be blinded by my own preconceptions of the way things are.

Lord, give me vision, not just eyesight."

What we ask from Jesus is important.

What are you looking for? Think big.
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Jesus can show us the meaning of our lives. Jesus can show us what humans are capable of. Jesus can show us whether life is about how much we need to hold on to-- or how much we need to release!

What we ask of God can be as unlimited as God is: we can ask for our vision to be unblinded, we can ask to follow him, we can ask for healing.

The options are endless, but be prepared for Jesus to always ask US: "What do you WANT from me? "

And before you answer, take a breath, and think big. Amen.