



A few years ago, National Public Radio told the tale of St. Albans Episcopal Church in Davidson, North Carolina which had erected a statue of Jesus on its property in an upscale neighborhood not too unlike the one here around Incarnate Word.

This is not an “old school” statue of Jesus for it depicts him not with arms outstretched looking down on us from above, but huddled under a blanket with his face and hands obscured; only the crucifixion wounds on his uncovered feet giving him away.

As you can guess, the reaction was immediate. Some loved it; but many did not. Thinking the statue was actually a homeless person, one woman from the neighborhood called the police the first time she drove by. That’s right, someone called the cops on Jesus! (As if that’s never happened to him before).

Another neighbor wrote a letter to the editor saying that the statue “creeped” him out. Many more complained that such a depiction of Jesus was insulting to God and that it demeaned the neighborhood.

So, what would Jesus think of a statue depicting him as a homeless man? Would he be insulted or would he tell us that how we treat the least of these is how we treat him? Would he take his toys and go home claiming we had disrespected him or would he tell us to love one another *(especially the marginalized and those at the bottom of the heap)* as he first loved us?

Clearly, St. Albans Church has stirred up its neighborhood by challenging folks to not only see Jesus in a new way – but to love in a new way as well. Could Jesus be issuing this same challenge to us? What would you think if we commissioned such a statue at our East Avenue entrance? *(By the way, I know the name of the sculptor and where he lives).*

What would the neighborhood think? What would this statue say about us? What would this statue say about Jesus? Perhaps it would say that Jesus takes this love-thing seriously – and so do we.

Peace and Love,  
Pastor Doug