

This morning in Sunday LIFT, we talked about a Bible Story you may have heard before. Jesus is walking with his disciples one day and asks them, “Who do people say that I am?” Some answered, “John the Baptist, Elijah, a prophet.” Jesus asked them again, “But, who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.”¹ Peter spent a lot of time with Jesus before he came to this conclusion. Peter had to work through a lot of doubt and anxiety before he opened his heart completely to Christ. But, when he did, God revealed to him who Jesus is. God’s Word warmed Peter’s heart to faith.

At some point in our lives, as we walk along our faith journey, Christ asks us the same thing: Who do you say that I am? To you, personally. Not what others have answered. But, who is God to you? How do we make your faith personal?

We see in this Psalm some very important tools to use when finding out for ourselves who God is to us. The heavens tell us who God is. We see, hear, and feel God in nature. Scripture says, “Unspoken truth is spoken everywhere” (v.4). Nature doesn’t use words, but shows us the glory of God everywhere we turn. The miracle of something growing when it hasn’t rained. The metamorphosis from a caterpillar into a butterfly. The rising and setting of the sun and moon each day and each night. Creation shows us who God is in all God’s glory, even in silence.

We can also read scripture to find out who God is. David writes in this Psalm that “the law of the Lord is perfect, reviving our soul” (v.7). He is referring to the Torah, the Law that Jews lived by. They based their lives on these commandments because God delivered these words to Moses to share with His people. God wanted to give them wisdom and guidance, so they could know

God, be joyful, and find their way. A loving God warned them of danger and directed them to a hidden treasure through scripture.

This hidden treasure, God’s Word, comes to earth -- “the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.”² God reveals himself to us through Jesus. It’s as if we didn’t get it from the heavens or scripture, so God poured his eternal love into a human, in order to show us up close and personal who God is. Jesus, the face of God, came to earth to love us, to reconcile us from our sin, and to be in relationship with us. This tells us so much about God, and who God is.

There are many ways for us to find out who God is for us personally. As they work together to reveal God’s glory in our lives, this “revelation of God pulls our lives together” (v.7). God reveals the divine’s presence, so that we can find our way and be whole.

Many times, people think that Christians have everything figured out. People are intimidated about coming to church because they think the church is full of good and righteous people. But, I can honestly tell you, that the most I have been hurt was from church people. I too had this expectation that we all are supposed to love our neighbor despite our differences or our stumbling blocks. The Bible teaches us that the church is the body of Christ and should be a loving space for us to gather to praise God and to encourage each other to grow our faith. It should be, and it is what we should strive to become, but the church is full of sinners. What do sinners do? They sin.

The church and the hospital have a lot in common. Sick people go to hospitals. They come together in a building and form this community of sick people who are trying to get better. They go to the hospital

¹ Mark 8:27-38

² John 1:14

because they need something that they can't give themselves. They need just the right treatment to cure their illness. The reason they are there is because they are sick and need to get well. They need to find something that makes them whole again.

The church is no different. We are all sick and broken and need God to heal us. We have this huge gaping hole in our hearts that only God can fill. God is the only one who is capable of melting our icy hearts to faith, that warns us of the danger we are heading in, that directs us to the hidden treasure. This hidden treasure, Jesus Christ, heals us of our brokenness by loving us to wholeness. Don't think I'm exempt. My hospital bed is right here next to yours. God shows us how to find our way and how to be whole every day that we wake up. We get a fresh start every morning to reach out and receive God's grace that plugs the hole in our hearts.

The way to receive this grace is to start seeking an answer to Christ's question: Who do you say that I am? Look in the heavens and all around you to see God's glory. Read scripture. Get to know who Jesus is by praying, exploring spiritual practices that open your heart and mind, share in conversations with others. Look in your lives and see where God has loved you, forgiven you, and restored you. If we seek, God will reveal himself to us. And, once we know who Jesus is to us, then we experience all of God's glory in grace and truth.

Is Jesus your rock and redeemer, like in this Psalm? Is he your Savior, your Sustainer, your friend, your hope, the Light of the World? There are many ways and names to personalize Jesus, and once we do that, once we figure this out and work out our faith, our hearts are warmed and truth is known. When we finally get it, we find our way and we become whole.

The words and meditation of our hearts join in with the heavens to proclaim

God's glory. We sing praises to worship God and to let everyone know who God is. We make this hidden treasure known to all who seek it because we know God's grace is what plugged the hole in our heart and that makes it more precious than gold.

If you don't know the answer to Jesus' question, if you just aren't sure who God is, now is the time to open yourself to God's presence all around you, in scripture, and in the person of Jesus Christ. Keep coming back to the hospital to get well. We can help each other to heal and receive God's grace from the great Physician.

Prayer:

You have called us, O God, and we have refused to listen. You have stretched out your hand, and we have not taken it. We have refused to be open to your presence or receive your grace. Forgive our inability to recognize you and the work you do to warm our hearts to faith. Give us the insight to know you. Be bold with us. Show up in a big way, so that we know without a doubt, it's you. Overwhelm us with your presence, so we can find our way, each and every day. O Lord, our Rock and Redeemer, show us who you are. Amen.