

My name is Sarah Boonstra. I'm a wife and a mom of three. I consider myself a professional volunteer, investing time in the rising generations. The most important thing to know about me is that years ago God walloped me over the head with the message to read my Bible every day and that has forever changed my relationship to Him. That practice has also impacted on every other relationship in my life. I live in Colorado but am connected to the River CRC through my brother Scott, who has been kind enough to believe that I have good things to share.

Fasting

Thursday, February 19

Prayer to begin:

Lord, we invite you into this space, turning our attention towards you. We are already missing the things we have given up. Help us to turn back to you as many times as it takes to know who you are. We do not want to miss the gifts that you have for us. Please speak to us as we turn our hearts towards you.

*Read Exodus 34:5-9*

Moses set aside intentional time to be with God and God was present there. The text tells us that "The LORD came down in a cloud, stood with him there and proclaimed his name, "the LORD." God then taught Moses about His character. Moses' response? Worship and a request for forgiveness.

I wonder how long God stood there with Moses. Was it momentary or did He linger? I also wonder how God proclaimed His name. Was it a booming voice? Were there trumpets? Or was it proclaimed in Moses' knowing internal voice? The reason I wonder about these things is that after this whole experience, the standing and the proclamation and the description of God's character, Moses fell down in worship. And it causes me to think about what that must have been like to elicit such a response. All of which makes me consider my response when God meets with me.

We live in a world where wonder fueled worship is hard to find. It frequently feels like cynicism rules the day. A beautiful sunset? How can AI edit the photo to make it more dramatic? A text from a friend at just the right time? Must be a coincidence. Prayer revival on a local campus? How many kids are faking it? God moves all around us every day and how many of us see it? More importantly, are we looking for it?

The reason God invites us to set aside intentional time is so that we tune our antenna to what He is already doing. It gives him an opportunity to teach us about Himself. Those two things should cause us to worship. If we are moving about life without seeing God move and responding in worship, it may be a hint that we are distracted. Which is why fasting at Lent serves us so well. It removes those distractions to help us see.

As we fast, looking for God and realizing that God meets us, fasting also exposes the ways we've filled up on the wrong things. This is where the request for forgiveness comes in. Moses went up on the mountain and experienced the presence of God. He realized how much the Israelites stood to lose, so he asked for forgiveness.

God really can meet our every need. If we can make space to be with Him, to know Him, we will see what we risk losing if we don't fall on our knees in humility and worship. Thankfully, the season of Lent ends at the cross and so we know that forgiveness is ours. We need only to ask in Jesus' name.

Consider the ways in your life that you've filled up on things that aren't from God. Today can you reflect on what a gift it is that God loves us so much that He sent *Jesus' to pay for our "stiff-necked ways"*? *God knew we would need a savior, and He filled the need before we even saw it for what it was.*