

Sermon 5/24/20 – Surviving the End of Everything (Sort of)

This quarter we are practicing the spiritual discipline of listening prayer. However your group meets this week, spend the first few minutes of your time together listening to a worship song. Without straining or striving think about what word or lyric captures your heart. Repeat the words to yourself. Hear Jesus speaking these words to you, over you. After the song is over, write these word(s) down. Read what you wrote down and let your heart be quieted as you move through your week.

Read Acts 12:1-17

God of the aardvark and the otter.

My favorite and the most relatable part of the above Scripture is “He (Peter) did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision”. Peter had surely prayed for this moment of release and deliverance...prayed desperately, angrily, silently. But, because Peter reasoned that his release would only come through rulers and judges and guards, when his actual release was taking place he thought he was in a dream.

Jeff mentioned that our God, who is holy and righteous and omniscient, is also whimsical and enchanting and creative. We can get so blinded by the way things are, and even more so by “the how” in which our situation may resolve, that we almost miss the surprising mystery of how God IS on the move. We, just like Peter, are invited to fully participate (Acts 12:8) in our deliverance and if we don’t remember God as the Creator of both the bug eating aardvark and the playful otter, we may be blinded to God’s mystery and surprises entirely.

- 1) How do YOU intentionally notice God?
- 2) Is it possible your life and circumstances are in full deliverance right now and you don’t even realize it? Describe or write out your current circumstances and practice noticing where God might be at work.

What you believe matters.

As a people and a world right now, we are going through a trial and it is affecting us all in different ways. Our individual reactions in this trial reveal what we truly believe. What we believe about God determines how we act towards others, how we pray, and what we are putting our trust in.

But, when we intentionally notice God, when we read our Bibles, and when we get quiet, we can be reminded that the Holy Spirit is always whispering “remember, remember, remember”. Remember that you are God’s special possession (1 Peter 2:9). Remember that He is doing a new thing (Isaiah 43:19). Remember God delights in you (Isaiah 62:3-5). Remember your present suffering isn’t the end (Romans 8:18).

God doesn’t expect us to be perfect or even believe perfectly in order for us to be delivered. God is simply inviting us to notice His presence and participate in the mystery.

- 1) What prayer are you tucking away and hiding as if it’s too unbelievable for God to deliver?
- 2) What Scripture reminds you the “remember, remember, remember”?
- 3) What could God be saying over you today that you are struggling to see about yourself?