

I hope this letter finds you well as we begin our summer activities: family outings, vacations and travel. These help us reconnect with others as we enjoy the freedom of good weather and opportunities to build relationships.

I was blessed to be a part of the Highschool and Junior High Cove Christian Camp as the fireside counselor this last week. Each year is different from the others, and this year was no exception. We average 20 to 25 campers most years, but this year we were blessed with 36 campers. You could instantly feel the difference; I walked into the multipurpose room the first night and experienced energy not felt in years. An additional 13 students doesn't sound like much, but just the noise level of those happy voices was heart stopping. The responsibility of reaching this many more searching hearts quite frankly was daunting. Especially as four of them had come for the first time and were not attending worship anywhere. Funny as we get older, we start evaluating the task ahead and what it will take to complete it. Do we choose to run away from or towards the opportunity to serve?

Often when we are put into a situation much bigger than expected, we panic and only see the limitations of what we have to offer. Like Peter stepping out of the boat, we don't step out on our own. Peter called to Jesus to be taken out of a seemingly safe place (the boat) into the stormy sea and Jesus beckoned him to do so.

I too was in a storm. Working with a relatively small number of students like I was used to was manageable. My expectations of noise, energy and chaos levels changed when I opened the door. I felt instantly dragged out of the boat of the same ole, same ole into a surging sea of turmoil and pressure. My first prayer was, God how are we going to make this camp a success? Then Jesus took my hand and said, you of little faith, I have a plan. Those words let me see that I had been limiting God. He had called each child there to experience His love, and I was a part of that plan of love.

The very theme of the camp that week was love. Each day with two devotions, love was brought to life. Not one person in attendance had an excuse of not seeing, hearing and experiencing God's love. We too must reflect, take a moment and visualize the enormity of God. Understanding His character as brought to life in the stars of the sky and the warmth of the sun; the very

essence of nature is to glorify the Creator. All of this allows us to just minutely understand the unlimited greatness of God.

The four students who had no church relationship came because of an invitation from a friend. Last year's ending camp message was for the campers to pray for this year's camp and those to come. They took it to heart when asked to invite a friend. This answered prayer encouraged each person to see the power each possessed through the Holy Spirit. Faith in action revealed the harvester heart needed to bring the Kingdom of God here on earth.

These youth have challenged us to pursue those God has called. We struggle to know what to say that might cause curiosity and desire to those we talk with. The following scripture instructs us to reveal God as a God of enormity, so beyond our understanding, and yet right in front of us.

Romans 1:20

²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

Those who truly search for God will find Him. We are the chosen ones to reveal the path to a merciful and gracious God. Living our faith and speaking it brings the characteristics of our Heavenly Father to life, especially in the storms of life. Jesus calls us and others out of the boat directly into the surging sea so that we will grasp His life-giving hand. And then offer our hand to others.

By faith, the stormy waters do not have the power to pull us down into the depths. Our hope in eternity brings calmness to others as we come alongside and share the love of our Heavenly Father.

1 Corinthians 13:13

¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

If we exercise nothing else in our Christian walk than these, God is revealed.

Your Brother in Christ,

Archie

Call to action: What does it mean in Romans 1:20 that people are without excuse? Read Psalm 19:1-6. What do these verses tell us about how God is revealed?