

Message for August 23, 2020

“Where are you going?” I’m sure we’ve all been asked that question many, many times over the course of our lifetime. And there are a wide variety of possible answers: to work, to school, the store, for a walk, to the doctor, etc. etc. Then there’s also “it’s none of your business!” That answer might be a little impolite, but not inappropriate under certain circumstances. There are also times when we haven’t quite made up our minds where we want to go. Perhaps our choices conflict with one another, as when two attractive events are occurring at the same time. It can be difficult. But in reality, within our natural world we generally know where we’re going. Our choices and plans for the future dictate that. Whether it’s the store, a vacation, a job change or move, out to dinner, or to see the fireworks on the Fourth of July, we know where we’re headed.

But just like a coin, our life has two sides to it. One is the natural, where things are fairly clear in terms of direction, and the spiritual, which is a whole new ballgame in and of itself. In that realm the question is a little different. It’s more like, “Lord, where are you taking me?” Quite often we don’t have a clue! And that’s by design. Think of Abraham, whom God told to leave his country and family to go to.....where? There was no direction given, like north or south, it was just go -- “to the land that I will show you.” It’s not recorded, but I wonder how many times Abraham might have asked God “Which way do I go?” Perhaps he didn’t ask at all, but rather just trusted God to get him safely there, wherever “there” was. Maybe that’s one of the reasons Abraham is called the father of faith. He couldn’t answer the question “Where are you going?” because he didn’t really know. Or even why he had to go. But he knew Who was sending him and that’s all he needed in order to walk in trusting faith.

How about your life? Do you know where God is taking you, or why? Probably not. Like you, for almost all of my 46 years of walking with the Lord, I didn’t have the foggiest idea where I was headed, or why I had to experience the things I went through. I understand some of it now, but not then. Over time I’ve come to believe that God purposely withholds clarity of purpose from His workings so that we have no choice but to cling to Him in faith. So I don’t worry anymore about whether I understand or not. Because He’s proven Himself trustworthy and faithful, I just trust that everything will all work together to bring about good in my life and in the lives of those around me.

So be encouraged. God is good. He knows what He is doing, and where He wants to take you. Be assured, it’s a good place full of blessings. As the hymn says, “Trust and obey, there is no other way.” Just like Abraham did. And you will be a child of faith too.

Blessings of grace, wisdom, peace, patience, and love,
Pastor Joe

Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you.” – Genesis 12:1

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. – Hebrews 11:6

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. – Romans 8:28

THE HAND OF GOD

God's gentle Hand is guiding,
But it doesn't push or shove,
Instead it clasps our human hands
And leads with Grace and Love.

We find within this Hand of God
A heavenly Strength indeed,
And as we follow, God provides
For what we truly need.

—Peggy Ferrell, Prayers and Poems

WHERE GOD LEADS

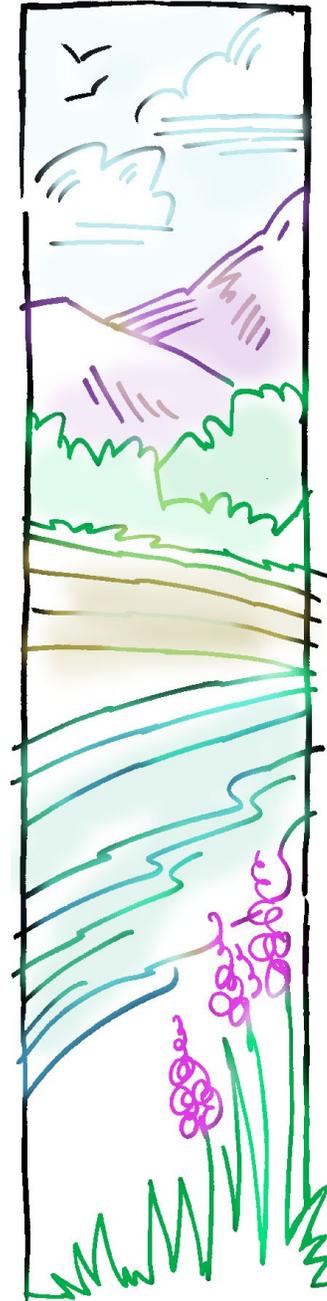
My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you does, in fact, please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
And I know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always, though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.
I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

--Thomas Merton, monk and author

OUR AWESOME GOD

When our lives are focused on God, awe and wonder lead us to worship God, filling our inner being with a fullness we would never have thought possible. Awe prepares the way in us for the power of God to transform us, and this transformation of our inner attitudes can only take place when awe leads us in turn to wonder, admiration, reverence, surrender and obedience toward God.

—James Houston, The Transforming Power of Prayer



And we
know that
all things
work together
for good to
them that
love God....

Romans 8:28

"The Little Church That Could"
"Believing is Seeing"