

Sermon: "Who is God? Part1: Creation and Exodus"

Transfiguration Feb. 26th, 2017

(Genesis 1:1-13 ; Exodus 2:23 - 3:15)

Prayer: May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our strength and our redeemer. Amen .

1. Scan:
2. Two Engaging Questions:
 - a. Has anyone here ever sensed the presence of God, in the beauty of Creation? (Put your hand up please.) **THANK YOU**
 - b. I know that the creation speaks very powerful to me of the mystery, wonder and awe of God Looking out over a beautiful mountain range, listening to the ocean surf pound a beach or rocky shore, watching a humming bird remain motionless at a feeder. All amazing.
3. Give name/ Name of Presentation: I am Allan Warren.
4. Acknowledgement: ... Thank you.

And we are going to begin today watching a short video clip of some scenes in creation. ... The following video link is entitled "The Secret - Planet Earth HD"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_urxI9L5Ak&index=2&list=FLDziTtqTXeypIB8zxS1nYvQ

[Start at 1:16 (coastline shot just before dolphin jumps out of the water) to 2:50 (end with words Earth Forever goes black at 2:50 before Secret logo appears. Fade out when music appropriate)

5. State Change

This morning, I want you to take a moment to think of a time you have sensed the presence of God in creation. ... Then describe the picture or moment to a person around you. Go. Please stop. ... **TY** ...

6. Message/ Info: (remember "suggestology")

I hope you were able to picture the scene described to you and capture the moment. As I said earlier, creation has always spoken to me of God's presence when I take the time to notice and soak it all in.

The Exodus story, of the release of the Hebrew slaves from Egypt, also tells you a lot about "Who God is." ... Verse 23 reads, "... The Israelites were still groaning under their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry went up to God, who heard their groaning and remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

Hearing the cry's of those who suffer and remembering God's covenant of love and faithfulness are, two fundamental characteristics of God.

Listening to people prayers and in vs. 25 God sees the slavery of the Israelites and was *concerned for them*. Concern that comes from the act of Remembering not only the covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but a covenant with the whole creation when God says 6 X's in that first creation story, 'And God saw that it was good'. And then on the 6th day, after surveying everything that was made, God declares it not just 'good', but 'very good'. Do you remember what God did after God asked Adam and Eve to leave the garden last week? (God clothed them) ... **TY** ... as an expression of God's ongoing care and concern for this new human family.

[I did say, in this Lenten series of sermons, I was going to give you a brief overview of the Bible. Do you remember what I called the first 11 chapters of Genesis last week? (Pre-History. ... before history). ... **TY** ... Those chapters include the flood with Noah, and the Tower of Babylon. ... In Genesis chapter 12, we start the story of Abraham and Sarah. ... Our great, great, great grandparents of the faith whose pictures come first in the family album, sort to speak.

Do you know what 3 great world religions, trace their ancestry back to Abraham? (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) ... **TY** ... Don't you find that interesting, that in

a sense, we are all related? We are all God's children and what a blessing it will be, when we all learn to get along at the family reunions.

If you remember, last week we read the tail end of the first creation story in Genesis where it says that men and women are created equally in the image of God. ... Then it went on to say what the woman and man's job description was. ... "To have power over, or some translations say 'dominion over', the fish, the birds, and all animals domestic and wild, large and small." Please notice one thing that is absent from that list. Human beings are not to have 'dominion' or 'power over' other human beings.

What is slavery? (Isn't it when one group or race of people have power or dominion over another group of people.) ... **TY** ... So a defining characteristic of God, is to hear the cries and see the suffering when one group of people have "dominion" over another. This 'mission statement' of God, is summed up in an often repeated phrase in the Old Testament, remember the widow, the orphan and the foreigner in your midst. Who are you to remember? (can you say it with me please) ... the widow, the orphan and the foreigner in your midst. ... **TY** ...

So today, you are learning three characteristics of God.

#1) God hears the cries of those who suffer. ...

#2) God remembers God's covenant of care and concern, mercy and compassion, for all that God has made.

Now I want to ask you another question today. Can you remember a time when you experienced some of the dismay, anger, sadness (I would add 'of God') when you looked out and saw an injustice. A person, or group of people, not treating someone fairly. It could be on the evening news, or maybe you experienced it in person. I want you to tell a person beside you please. Go. Please stop. ... **TY** ... Does anyone want to share what they said? ... (incident at work) ... **TY** ...

So God ... hears the cries and sees the suffering of people. God remembers God's covenant of care and concern (vs. 25 in our story for Exodus today), or God's faithfulness. Then you know what else God does?

#3) ... I said you were going to learn 3 characteristics of God today, ... God NUDGES someone to do something about it. ... Who does God 'nudge' in our passage of scripture today? ... (Moses) ... **TY** ...

Have you ever noticed that when God nudges someone, and it could be you, that person often objects. Most of us have a long list of ready excuses why God should ask somebody else. ... I'm a nobody, ... in Exodus ch. 4 Moses gives God half a chapter of excuses before God finally loses God's patience with Moses. ... Some of Moses excuses were I'm not a good speaker. ... I won't know what to say. ... Nobody will listen to me. ...

I'm sure some people have said, "Maybe if I quit going to church, God will quit 'nudging me'. ... Have you ever tried that one? Well, good luck with it because it doesn't work?

Because God will keep 'nudging you', until God hears what the prophet Isaiah said, "Here am I Lord. Send me." (Isaiah 6:8)

Did you notice how this all started with Moses? ... What was there out on that mountain side? ... (A burning bush.) ... **TY** ... The scripture says, "Moses saw that the bush was on fire but that it was not burning up. This is strange," he thought. "Why isn't the bush burning up? ... I will go closer and see."

Do you know what Moses was expressing in that moment? Curiosity. Remember last week I talked about human characteristics "Who am I?" ... One of those characteristics was _____ (curiosity) ... **TY** ... Bush was on fire but it was not _____ (consumed) ... **TY** ... or it was not burning up?

What are you 'curious' about? What might God be calling you to do? And as you think about that, remember the words God said to Moses. "I will be with you." Thanks be to God. Amen.

Offering is Next !!!! see bulletin