

Isaiah 40: 21-31

Psalm 147: 1-12,21c

1 Corinthians 9: 16-23

Mark 1: 29-39

Lord, may the words that I speak be the words that you would want spoken. Amen

Who is this God that we worship?

Have we come here to worship God, or to be comforted by God? Isaiah writes, “Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told to you from the beginning?” We are probably here for both of the reasons I stated, as God’s word does give us comfort. But we also need to take the time to worship God, giving God the praise and glory for our lives. Isaiah writes again; “Have you not understood from the foundation of the earth?”

From these writings in Isaiah, we are reminded again that God is over all things and the power of everything. The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. Knowing all this, we still have difficulty in turning our lives over to the will of God. How do you really get to know God and understand God’s power?

It is by total commitment to God, knowing that everything you do and say is with the help of God. We cannot be in charge of our destiny and completely know who God is, because if we take charge we are taking total control, which allows us to do many things that are against God’s wishes for us. That is the place where we open ourselves up for some of the worst sins that could and will do.

Many of you have been involved in Room in the Inn program this year and in the years past. Have you sometimes pondered how can the people that are our guests on Saturday night handle so well the condition that they find themselves in and how can they possibly cope with such problems? If you have been in the Bible study classes that Beth has held along with her many volunteers, you would have heard from our guests that God is the mainstay in their lives and they have turned their life over to Gods' will. They don't spend time in worry, but spend more time in thanking God for what they do have, and they are grateful for the people around them that through God's help they can be better off in life. This last Saturday night, one guest who had been in our program before asked me if a particular person that volunteered from our church would be there that night, since she had been very helpful to him the month before. I told him that she was not scheduled to be there that night, but asked if there was a message that I could give to her. He then pointed to his right ear and showed me his hearing aid and -- beaming from ear to ear -- told me the story about her helping him to obtain his hearing aid. He was so proud now, because he would be able to hear all that went on during the bible study time. This is the hand of God working through people to help those in need. Thanks be to God.

So you want to know God better and you want to commit more of your life to allow God to be in control. You can begin that immediately -- or whenever you desire -- by getting a better understanding of God's son Jesus Christ. The most efficient way is to realize that God loves you more than you can even imagine, and God wants you to know that no matter what takes place in your life, if you will let God help you, all will turn out for the good.

That may mean that your life takes a different turn; one that you never thought would be part of your life, but actually it will be the path more in line with the life of Jesus Christ. It can be a little scary, but the joy will far exceed your expectations.

In the Gospel lesson this morning, Jesus entered into the house of Simon and Andrew and found Simon's mother in law sick in bed with a fever. He came over, took her by the hand and lifted her up and her fever was cured. One of our parishioners took the time to see that one of our guests in Room in the Inn was able to receive a hearing aid. This is God working in this world through our hands.

We have dentists and other parishioners that give of their time to help on the Ada Jenkins Dental Van, which offers dental care of all types to the homeless the first Friday of each month. We have volunteers in this congregation that give many hours in Loaves and Fishes, not only packaging the food, but offering a loving smile to those that find themselves in a temporary bind. We have parishioners in this congregation who, last Sunday, donated into the soup pots \$1080, which was given to the St. Peter's soup kitchen, where soup and sandwiches are served to the homeless 364 days a year. These are just a few of the ways that God is working through our hands and hearts.

This is what I mean by giving things over to God. Taking the time from your busy schedule to say *I am going to heal this person from deafness, offer dental services, feed people who are down on their luck*, all of this with the help of God. There are countless stories of healings that take place all over

the world, and there is no doubt in my mind that these healings are through the grace of God working through people in this world. Over 150 people lived through a plane that ditched in the Hudson River. One of our parishioners is in the hospital being taken there close to death that is recovering and almost ready to be taken from ICU into a regular hospital room after an almost four week battle for his life. Thanks be to God.

All this being said, there is one more important thing that you must remember to do so that you might continue to be able to bring God more into your life and to help those around you. It is necessary to do just as Jesus did and go off to a deserted place to pray. You need to always begin your efforts by praying to God to help you to do what is right and then, when God has been involved, you need to go off to a deserted place and give God thanks and praise for giving you the ability to help someone. When you cook at the shelters, bring vegetables to feed people, work in loaves and fishes, give money to make sure programs continue to help others, help to set up beds in room in the inn, you have helped heal the hurts in this world.

Thanks be to the God that we know so well and that God is in control of all that we do.

Amen