

COLLOQUIES with Pastor Brian

Growing Daily Discipleship

Romans 10:5-15

⁵ Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that “the person who does these things will live by them.” ⁶ But the righteousness that comes from faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷ “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ But what does it say? “The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹ because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. ¹¹ The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. ¹³ For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” ¹⁴ But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? ¹⁵ And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”



In
His
Steps

Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b

- ¹ Give thanks to Yahweh! Call on his name! Make his doings known among the peoples.
² Sing to him, sing praises to him! Tell of all his marvelous works.
³ Glory in his holy name. Let the heart of those who seek Yahweh rejoice.
⁴ Seek Yahweh and his strength. Seek his face forever more.
⁵ Remember his marvelous works that he has done: his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth,
⁶ you offspring of Abraham, his servant, you children of Jacob, his chosen ones.
- ¹⁶ He called for a famine on the land. He destroyed the food supplies.
¹⁷ He sent a man before them. Joseph was sold for a slave.
¹⁸ They bruised his feet with shackles. His neck was locked in irons,
¹⁹ until the time that his word happened, and Yahweh’s word proved him true.
²⁰ The king sent and freed him, even the ruler of peoples, and let him go free.

²¹ *He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all of his possessions,*
²² *to discipline his princes at his pleasure, and to teach his elders wisdom.*

^{45b} *that they might keep his statutes, and observe his laws. Praise Yah!*

In this week's scriptures, we have a doozy of a story and presentation. I'm referring to Psalm 105, verses 1-6, 16-22, and 45b. In it is the story of Joseph, who most know through bible stories as children OR maybe the musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber. Here's a clip for the unfamiliar: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ch_gfQiUknU.

I will never debate the power of this story because it is an amazing narrative. God uses a terrible act that cuts to the core of our basic humanity to later save a nation and feed the literal world. For those needing a refresher, Joseph is betrayed by his own brothers and almost killed, but out of convenience is instead sold as a slave. Still, they tell their father his youngest son was killed by a wild beast. Rough right? Does anyone have family dynamics like that?

When the Psalmist begins his passage with "Give thanks to Yahweh! Call on his name! Make his doings known among the peoples" we think we are going to hear an amazing story full of healings and hopes and dreams answered and powerful miracles. But it would take a deaf ear to hear someone say, "I was the favorite son of my father and my brothers almost killed me and sold me into slavery" for us to then say, "A miracle is coming. God be praised!!"

The point I am getting at is, without the opportunity for a LONG VIEW, the power of God's work in this story is lost. In the same way, if we apply a long view to every short-term occurrence, we lose our relevance AND our power to hear and see people now. Joseph's life story has both up and downs, but if read from only one perspective, we create a Pollyannish viewpoint OR a terrible "Unfortunate Series of Events". Neither has the final say in this expression of faith or in today's reading.

As disciples, we are asked to hold to both views simultaneously. This is not easy. As followers of Christ, we don't get the final word on what or how God might use a situation, but our calling is to be present with God in the moments AND to look for the light. Where do we see the possibility for Jesus to be present? Where is there the opportunity for growth, for forgiveness, and for spiritual support?

My family is trying to take specific steps to grow our daily discipleship for long-term blessings. We've agreed to practice four ways of "Loving God" (heart, soul, strength, and mind) each week and to share how we are doing each day. Each of us picked a measurable growth activity for mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical expressions, and each day at lunch we talk about how it is going.

We'd like to invite the congregation to participate. Our hope is that by building slow and measurable building blocks of faith, our later expressions could be as that of the Psalmist. Maybe we will see the long story and our current challenges through the eyes of faith; right now let us undertake to be the disciples God desires.

Please email, call or message me if you are willing to participate in a weekly discipleship group. I can be reached at 828-434-6995 OR brianjcornell@msn.com or <https://www.facebook.com/brianjamescornell>

I really hope you will join in this discipleship work together with us. Peace to you all.

Pastor Brian