

Pastor Jordan Gades 12.6.20 Isaiah 40:1-11, Mark 1:1-8

We enter into this month as a month of meditation, as a month of reflection. As a way of centering ourselves before the storm of the new year, before the upheaval that comes with the coming of the Son of God. And that's really what we should be coming with the coming of God to any place and any time. God brings about God's plan through God's actions. And so rarely do those align exactly with what we want or think we need. Oh no they don't.

I think of the various comings of God into my own life. I think of God entering my life through church or being dragged by the scruff of my neck far too early in the morning to church. But there finding friends and eventually extended family that I knew I could trust and would be there for me when I need them.

I think about confirmation, doing all those inane memory verses, those hours and hours with the pastor and the pop quiz in front of the whole congregation to be confirmed. Geez, but also that knowledge that sparked something deeper within me. That held on and I was surprised to find again and again was still there when I needed it.

I think of my own journey to becoming a pastor, fumbling in the darkness until God turned on a light, or maybe it was always there and I just finally trusted God enough to open my eyes.

I think of the birth of my daughter, long awaited with so much anticipation. And yet I was forced to wait and only watch as she lay in the nicu for what seemed like an eternity. But God was there. God was my Rock. God was strengthening me when I had nothing else to give. God was there.

And in none of these did God do what I asked. How dare he. What kind of God is that. A God who never abandoned me, who will never abandon you. A God coming who will change how we understand the world.

The prophet Isaiah says, and John echoes in our Gospel.

Comfort, O comfort my people,

says your God.

2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,

A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,

make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

4 Every valley shall be lifted up,

and every mountain and hill be made low;

the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.

5 Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

Our God comes and everything is changed.

We hear this verse and we think this is a good thing. And it really is meant to be, but can we stop for just a second and think about the last time that you really wanted a whole valley filled in? When was the last time you stood before a might of a mountain and thought “You know what would just be swell, if this wasn’t here at all?

Now I know there aren’t huge sweeping views and mountains and deep valleys right around here but even just driving up the north shore, the summits and bluffs rise right out of the water to touch the lower clouds.

We actually want those there, we want to see the wilderness, God creation raw before us. We want those as inspiration for ourselves and as many others as can and will see them.

And yet there is one time when we might forsake all those thoughts which we hold dear. When we have to go through them, when we are forced to take those hard paths. Then we are praying those words of Isaiah and Hoping the Lord comes down.

We are a strange people waiting on our God aren’t we. And we are so lucky that our God loves us so much. We don’t know what we want and flip flop on what is important. And yet God remains true. Maybe just maybe it is not our God that doesn’t make sense to us. Maybe it’s that we are not making sense to ourselves.

And that is where the most important gift from God comes in. Faith. Last week we spoke about hope. Today we speak about faith. About trusting God. About building this trust in God. So, whether we think we are the ones going crazy or whether we think God’s doing it all wrong we come to this central place of trust in our God.

I know that’s what I need in my life and I think it’s what you might be needing in yours. We need this trust, we need this faith to be able to hold onto when everything else is shifting sand. We need our God and our God is here.

So now we sit and wait and ponder some more. We wait through this season of Advent, we wait upon our lord. And we have faith that our Lord and deliverer will come through again. Let us hold onto this faith together. Amen.