

Pastor Jordan Gades sermon, Matthew 1:18-25, 12.22.19

Lets make a Christmas wish list -

Write your letter to Santa, make your list of things you want from Santa

Same thing but from God

What made your list? I did this list activity on Wednesday night. Came up with a wide variety of answers.

World Peace, Fix the planet with climate change, for people to respect each other. A remodeled bathroom. More money. A sandwich, and bear in mind this was right after we had finished eating.

Did those things make your list? Any others? Maybe a new car? New home? A perfect cup of coffee?

Now when was the last time you asked God for those things?

The things that you want most important, the things you call most precious or needed?

Why aren't we talking to God about these things?

Let's talk about one of today's readings for just a second - Reading
explain

Assyria big bad - Syria and Northern Israel think that if Judah will join them they can take them. Ahaz, king of Judah says no, other 2 attack to force him to join them. Everyone is getting a little freaked out. Everyone can see they are between a rock and a hard place. And they are starting to wonder if this is the end of Judah. The end of the promise that God made with God's people. So, God says to Ahaz, name anything, anything from the depth of Sheol to the heights of heaven, as a sign that the "I Am" is here with you. And Ahaz doesn't do it. So, then Isaiah tells him the prophecy of Immanuel, the Prophecy of God with us.

Why doesn't Ahaz Ask God for something? Fear? We might remember now Jesus Famous words to the Devil "you shall not put the lord your God to the test" Disbelief? Does he just not believe? Or perhaps our minds not able to think large enough? This is the power of God, Spark of creation, the mover and shaker of all the heavens and the earth, the driving force behind the movement of the cosmos and my little pinky. And he can't think of one little thing? I would say that Ahaz doesn't want to lose control, doesn't want to admit that he's not in control of the situation. He is the king in his castle, the ruler of his empire. What he says goes, but to admit something else will make him seem weak.

Is that why we don't talk to God and Ask things to God? Do we want to avoid that sense of not being in control?

But for all the reasons that might exist for us not to talk to God, to ask God for anything and everything, none of them hold true from God's point of view.

This is our creator. The one who formed us and molded us, who knew us before we were born, our God who loves us, loves you as you sit here today, this very minute, with all of your folly's and foibles.

That God, whom we worship today, wants nothing more to be in a beautiful mutual relationship with you. God wants that so much that God shows up again and again and again and says here I am, rely on me, reconnect with me, receive new life with me. God went so far to show that to come to us, us who push our God away every time we think we can walk our journey alone. Our God came to this world to bridge this gap between us. Our God came as a little tiny baby, so that we might know the depths of God's embrace of us.

Let's talk about Joseph

- Never said a word, but I bet he said more than a few prayers
- Mary is carrying another's child, humiliating for Joe, bet he asks God why!
- Mary could be stoned, she broke the law, Joe looks out for her
- Angel Shows up with a huge revelation; are you joking? gonna need some help here
- Joe's gotta get his very pregnant wife to Bethlehem because Caesar wants a census, Little help here God
- Joe's gotta find a place for this baby to be born, really you could even keep a place reserved for your Own Son God?
- Even after the child is born, Herod is trying to kill the Son of God, flee from everyone and everything you have ever known and go to Egypt
- Oh yeah, you are raising the Son of the most high, don't screw up.

We know that Joseph and Mary got through their struggle by relying on God. By asking and praying to God in the midst of their hardships, by complaining to God about the hardships they had and rejoicing with God for the wonders that they got to experience. In all these things with God.

As you made that list a few minutes ago, I bet there are more than a few things that should be on that list that you wouldn't share with anyone else. Maybe life is getting harder with age, maybe there are medical issues you don't want to think about, maybe there is that someone you work with or are teamed up with that is making life more difficult, maybe there is someone in your life which is making your life miserable, or maybe you feel completely alone. For all those things in your life I would ask that you make a new list. A List of the things that truly matter to you, the things that need the most in your life, and talk with God about them.

God didn't create all of this, didn't go through all of this to watch us suffer. God wants the best for us. God wants that loving living relationship with us so that we know we are never alone through any of this. So, can you try that out? Good! Amen!