

SERMON AUGUST 9, 2020

ARE YOU ONE OF THE TEACHABLES?

What is a teachable? It is a person that has a desire to learn new things or a new way to do things.

Are you willing to change the way you live your life and learn a new way?? Does it upset you to have your daily routines turned upside down?

The Covid virus has forced us to change our lives, hasn't it? What used to be a normal way of life doesn't exist at this time. We are asked not to leave our homes unless it is truly necessary. We are told we should wear a mask when we leave our homes. We are to wash our hands often to prevent spreading this disease. For a while, only necessary stores were allowed to operate. We could go to the grocery store or a Dr appointment. While in a store we had to remain at least 6 feet from each other. Schools were closed. Churches were closed. Our church services were taped so we could see them on our computer monitors. Copies of the services were mailed to those who don't have a computer. We became isolated in our homes. These were new rules we had to live by. We had to be taught how to live. Restaurants and stores are now reopening. People are less careful about maintaining a 6 foot distance, some have given up wearing masks. Along with the relaxing rules is a surge in new virus cases. So, what have we been taught from all of this? That this horrible virus is easily spread and until it can be eradicated we will have to continue this new way of living. Like it or not. So what have you learned so far in this new life? I have learned that I can go shopping less often for groceries. Whoever thought we would be excited about being able to buy toilet paper?? I have realized I can wear the same clothes for 2 or 3 days in a row, as long as they stay clean. Which means less laundry. I have learned how very important my church is to me. I have really missed our church family. I have an affection for each and every one of you. And I truly miss singing with the choir and the Praise Team. I have been more attentive to keeping in touch with my family. I have called some of my cousins just to keep in touch. We have reconnected with some our Air Force friends. My calendar is quite empty. I guess you could say I was filling it with things that really didn't matter. And I have learned to be more in touch with God. I have time to walk and be in tune with nature, and I find myself reading the Bible more often - I had gotten away from that habit, I am ashamed to say. How about you?

When I was preparing this service, my mind went to Biblical times. I thought of Moses. He was just a normal person, tending his father-in-law's sheep, and ended up delivering the 10 Commandments to people, because they were not living the way God meant them to do. We are not doing a very good job of following all of those rules today, are we? What happened to working 6 days and resting on the Sabbath? And the one about false idols? We sure do worship that almighty dollar, don't we?

And I wondered about Noah. The Bible says he was a humble man - he had blameless piety. Yet he built the Ark, according to God's directives, and sailed away with his family and lots of animals to repopulate the earth. It couldn't have been very pleasant on that boat with all the quacking and mooing and braying and chirping of the animals. But he was doing what God taught him.

And how did Jesus teach his people and his disciples? Often times when they asked him a question he would sometimes answer them with a parable. Why? I think it was because he wanted them to think about why they were asking him something, and how to figure out the answer themselves. Pick up your Bible and read in any of the Gospels, you will see what I mean.

I have often wondered about the cave drawings we have discovered. They are thousands of years old. Who taught them how to draw? Our daughter went to college to be an art teacher. Those genetics come from my mother-in-law whose ancestors lived in Bavaria in the 1700's and traveled from church to church to paint the naves(that's the area behind the altar that is often decorated) in the winter time, and were farmers in the summer months. Every generation in that family has artists. And our Elizabeth is one of them.

It is up to us to teach our children how to be better people, isn't it? Children learn not just by spoken words, but also by our actions.

Do you gossip about others? You know kids are listening.

Do you say please or thank you to each other?

If you have a spouse, when was the last time you gave them a hug in front of your children? And how about hugging your kids, for no reason, just because. Even teenagers can be hugged you know. It may make them wonder why you are doing it, but let them wonder! When I was living at home, I got a hug every single day from my father and he always told me he loved me. Every single day. My Daddy grew up with 6 sisters, he was the only son. I think he knew how to appreciate women.

Do you say grace before your meals? Do you even have meals together as a family? It's important to stay in touch with your kids.

How about smiling? Although wearing a mask has certainly prohibited that in public. But you can still say thank you to the person that bagged your groceries, or a cashier. Bake some cookies for a neighbor, leave some out for your mail man. Say thank you to Pastor Clarissa just because of who she is. Say thank you to Gil or Tom Calenberg or Latham, or John Abuya for always being there for us. And do this in front of your kids! Let people know they are appreciated.

Don't be shy about obeying God. Read Matthew 6:9-14. It's a great way to start your day. And, most important, say thank you to God when you pray. Our prayers are usually in the form of a request. Sometimes the only time we pray is to ask for help for someone, or yourself. We seem to forget about thanking the one that created us and all that surrounds us.

Recently Howard and I were watching a Nova show - these are science shows usually seen on PBS. They were talking about the Voyager 1 and 2 satellites that were sent up years ago to study the solar system. They beamed back pictures that were taken of the rings of Saturn. Saturn is the 7th planet from the sun in our solar system and we are the 3rd. It was fascinating. While the scientists were viewing the pictures a small dot appeared. One of the scientists thought it was a speck of dust on the screen and then realized it was actually the earth, taken from billions of miles away. The earth, where we live was just a small dot. Wow. It really made me think of all the times I was worried and frazzled about my life and daily details. How inconsequential can you get? Ladies and gentlemen, we are just tiny blips on a small dot in the sky. We are all creations of God, as are the planets. God is our father and he loves each and every one of us. Even among the dot of earth, He knows each of us, and knows our life paths and who and what we will become. It just gave me a case of the warm fuzzies.

So, teach our children well, and be kind to others, for our loving and caring God, is always watching us.

Amen