

Menifee United Church of Christ

Established in 1962 by God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit

SERMON FOR

February 8, 2015

“Let Go And Let God”



Reverend Bill Freeman: Senior Minister
Eckart Seeber: Music Minister
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Pastor Doree Evanoff: Lay Reader

Menifee United Church of Christ

Sunday Service and Sunday School 10 AM

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Live Life Fully Alive!

Psalm 147:1-5

Praise the LORD! How good it is to sing praises to our God; for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting. The LORD builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the outcasts of Israel. He heals the broken-hearted, and binds up their wounds. He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names. Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.

Isaiah 40:28-31

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

“Let Go And Let God”

A golfer is about to tee off, when a salesman runs up to him, and yells, “Wait! Before you tee off, I have something really amazing to show you!” The golfer is annoyed and says, “What is it?” The salesman says, “It’s a special golf ball. You can never lose it!” The golfer scoffs. “What do you mean you can never lose it? What if you hit the ball into the water?” The salesman says, “No problem. It floats, and it detects where the shore is, and spins toward it.” The golfer says, “Well, what if you hit it into the woods?” The salesman says, “It emits a beeping sound, and you can find it with your eyes closed.” The golfer says, “Okay. But what if your round goes late and it gets dark?” The salesman says, “No problem. This golf ball glows in the dark! I’m telling you, you can never lose this golf ball!” So the golfer buys it. As the salesman is walking away, the golfer says, “Just

one question. Where did you get this special golf ball?" The salesman says, "Oh. I found it."

Let go and let God. That's what I want to talk with you about today. Let go and let God. Life is like golf. The harder you try, the worse you do. At least that's true for me. If I grip the club really tight and swing really hard, I hit the ball off to the right or to the left or it dribbles fifty feet in front of me. But if I relax and swing really easy, that's when I play my best golf. And that's what life is like. Life is meant to be played really easy, not really hard. Relax. Let go and let God. "But pastor you don't understand. I lost my job. I have this health issue. My loved one has this health issue." I know. And I know it's counterintuitive. But the best thing to do is also the hardest thing to do. Let go and let God.

Stephen Fry is a British actor. I first saw Stephen Fry several years ago. He played the lead role in a movie about Oscar Wilde called, "Wild Oscar." He was brilliant. I've since seen Stephen Fry in the British TV comedy, "Extras." Stephen Fry is also an atheist. I read an interview with him recently, in which he was asked what he would say to God, if he died and went to heaven, and discovered that God exists. Stephen Fry said he would say to God, "Bone cancer in children? What's that about? How dare you create a world in which there is such misery that is not our fault? It's not right, it's utterly, utterly evil." Stephen Fry wondered why he should respect such a God.

I have to admit: I've wondered about God over the years too. I've wondered why God doesn't eliminate all darkness in the world. I've wondered why God doesn't eliminate all suffering in the world. I've wondered why God doesn't eliminate all childhood bone cancer in the world. But then I had different thoughts about God. What if, without God, there would be total darkness in the world? What if, without God, there would be

total suffering in the world? What if, without God, there would be bone cancer afflicting every child in the world? In other words: I believe God brings light into the darkness of the world (as it says in Genesis). I believe God eases suffering in the world. And I believe God is with every child in the world, including those with bone cancer. To put it another way, I believe God makes the world better than it otherwise would be. And all we have to do is: Let go and let God. (Say it to those around you: Let go and let God.)

Read the prophet Isaiah, if you don't think God can get the job done. According to the prophet Isaiah, those who wait for, hope for, trust in the Lord (depending on the translation you read), God will renew their strength, they shall run and not grow weary, they shall walk and not faint, they shall soar like eagles. In other words, whatever issue you face: Let go and let God.

I know some people see God as a mean little kid, holding a magnifying glass over us ants. I hope you don't see God that way. I don't see God that way. I see God as one who shields us ants from the sun. I know some people see God as a supreme bully. I hope you don't see God that way. I don't see God that way. I see God as a Supreme Being, not a supreme bully. I know some people see God as one to be feared. I hope you don't see God that way. I don't see God that way. I see God as love. Because the Bible says, "God is love." And because Jesus says, "Perfect love casts out fear." So I see God as perfect love casting out fear. And all we have to do to experience God's perfect love is let go and let God.

Jesus let go and let God. The night before he was crucified, Jesus spent hour after hour in the Garden of Gethsemane, praying that God would take this cup from him. Every hour or so he would find his disciples sleeping, while Jesus was filled with anxiety about his impending death. But then finally Jesus said in

prayer to God, “Not my will, but thy will be done.” Jesus let go and let God. Now granted he did die the next day. But then, three days later, all heaven broke out. That’s when Jesus learned, if he didn’t know it already, that God loves him unconditionally. God loves us all unconditionally. I believe unconditional love is the highest form of love.

Unconditional love is the love that good parents have for their children. Their children don’t have to get straight A’s in school. Their children don’t have to excel in sports. Their children don’t have to win a beauty contest. Their parents love them no matter what. Unconditionally. I believe that’s how our heavenly parent loves us. Unconditionally. How could good parents love their children better than God loves us? We don’t have to earn it. We don’t have to do anything to get it. We don’t have to say the right words or think the right thoughts. God loves us no matter what. Unconditionally. That’s why we should not hesitate to let go and let God.

Bette Midler was the last guest on Johnny Carson’s “Tonight Show.” Bette Midler said to Johnny Carson, “You are the wind beneath my wings.” It was a hit song for Bette Midler. “The Wind Beneath My Wings.” Bette Midler sings, “I can fly higher than an eagle: For you are the wind beneath my wings.” God is that for us, if we’ll only let God be that for us. Whatever your problem is, whatever your trouble is, whatever your situation is: Let go and let God.

A year ago, after I had submitted my ministerial profile to several churches across the country, and after I never heard from any of them, I decided to let go and let God. And I thought God was going to call me to go sell shoes or something. But a little while later, I got a call from Menifee United Church of Christ. The next day, I got a call from a church in Michigan. A few days later, I got a call from another church in Michigan. They were all

interested in me. (I know, hard to believe.) Again, I decided to let go and let God. And I believe God made everything fall into place. And I believe that God called me to the right church. All because I let go and let God.

Let us pray...

*God of Love,
Help us to let go and let God.
Help us to run and not grow weary.
And help us to soar like eagles.
Now and forevermore.
By the power of the Holy Spirit.
And in the name of Jesus.
Amen.*



*Meniffee
United Church of Christ*



*Whoever you are,
Wherever you are on life's journey
You are welcome here!*

*Jesus didn't reject people
Neither do we*



THE GOLDEN RULE

*What is hateful to you
do not do to others.*

Judaism

*Do to others what you would
have them do to you.*

Christianity

*None of you believes until he wishes for his
brother what he wishes for himself.*

Islam

*Do not do to others
what would cause pain if done to you.*

Hinduism

*Hurt not others in ways that you yourself
would find hurtful.*

Buddism

*Regard your neighbor's gain as your gain,
and your neighbor's loss as your loss.*

Taoism

*Do not do to others
what you do not want them to do to you.*

Confucianism

*Treat other people
as you'd want to be treated in their situation.*

Humanism