

Menifee United Church of Christ

Established in 1962 by God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit

SERMON FOR

January 18, 2015

“God Sees And Knows You”



Reverend Bill Freeman: Senior Minister
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Menifee United Church of Christ

Sunday Service and Sunday School 10 AM

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Live Life Fully Alive!

Psalm 139:1-6

O Lord, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.

John 1:47-51

When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, he said of him, 'Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!' Nathanael asked him, 'Where did you come to know me?' Jesus answered, 'I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.' Nathanael replied, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!' Jesus answered, 'Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.' And he said to him, 'Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'

“God Sees and Knows You”

God looks down and sees that Adam is all alone. God decides to create a companion for Adam. God says to Adam, “Adam, I am going to create for you the ultimate companion. She will worship the ground you walk on. She will wait on you hand and foot. She will obey your every command.” Adam said, “That’s great! What will it cost me?” God said, “All it will cost you is an arm and a leg.” Adam said, “Well, what could I get for just a rib?”

God sees and knows you. That’s what I want to talk with you about today. You are not shunned by God! You are not ignored by God! You are not forgotten by God! You are noticed by

God! You are recognized by God! You are remembered by God! God sees and knows you and your struggle with health issues! God sees and knows you and your struggle with relationship issues! God sees and knows you and your struggle with money issues! God sees and knows you.

I went to see the movie “Selma.” “Selma” is a wonderful movie. “Selma” is a horrible movie. The writing, the directing, the acting: wonderful. The story it tells of America’s disgusting past, of racism, bigotry, and hatred: horrible. (And unfortunately, racism, bigotry, and hatred are not just in our past.) In one scene Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is in Selma, Alabama, telling the mother of an African American young man, who was killed by a white police officer, “God was the first to cry.” “God was the first to cry.”

If Dr. King were alive today, I believe he would say to the mothers of African Americans, killed by white police officers, “God was the first to cry.”

If Dr. King were alive today, I believe he would say to mothers of those killed in war, “God was the first to cry.”

If Dr. King were alive today, I believe he would say to mothers of children killed in school shootings, “God was the first to cry.”

If Dr. King were alive today, I believe he would say to mothers of those killed at a satirical magazine in France, “God was the first to cry.”

If Dr. King were alive today, I believe he would say to homeless people, “God was the first to cry.”

If Dr. King were alive today, I believe he would say to hungry people, “God was the first to cry.”

If Dr. King were alive today, I believe he would say to hurting people, “God was the first to cry.”

If Dr. King were alive today, I believe he would say to all people who are victims of injustice, “God was the first to cry.”

The reason I am a clergy person is because I believe, “God was the first to cry.” The reason I am a Christian clergy person is because I believe Jesus cries too.

Jesus sees Nathanael coming toward him. Jesus says Nathanael is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit! Nathanael wonders how Jesus knows him. Jesus tells Nathanael he saw him under the fig tree. Nathanael is shocked, since Jesus was nowhere near the fig tree that Nathanael was under. Nathanael tells Jesus that he is the Son of God! Jesus asks Nathanael: Why because I saw you under the fig tree when I was nowhere near it? Jesus tells Nathanael: Hold onto your hat, I’m going to do greater things than that. This story is in the Gospel of John because John likes to demonstrate to us that Jesus is just like God. Just like God, Jesus sees and knows you.

Just like God, Jesus sees and knows you as you truly are: A holy, sacred, and divine soul trying to Live Life Fully Alive! Just like God, Jesus sees and knows you as you truly are: A holy, sacred, and divine soul, trying to Live Life Fully Alive! and helping other holy, sacred, and divine souls trying to Live Life Fully Alive! Just like God, Jesus sees and knows you as you truly are: A holy, sacred, and divine soul, trying to Live Life Fully Alive! as you travel with other holy, sacred, and divine souls, trying to Live Life Fully Alive! also, on a spiritual path from somewhere under the rainbow to somewhere over the rainbow.

The Psalmist shows you that God sees and knows you, because God sees and knows the Psalmist. The Psalmist says to God: You see me and know me. The Psalmist says to God: You see me when I sit down and you know me when I get up. The Psalmist says to God: You see me when I lie down and you know all my ways. And if it's true for the Psalmist, it must be true for you. God must think you are worthy to see and know and care about.

I know there are preachers, teachers, and theologians who say you aren't worthy to be seen and known and cared about by God. They say: You aren't worthy to receive God's goodness! They say: You aren't worthy to receive God's kindness! They say: You aren't worthy to receive God's compassion! They say: You deserve to receive God's condemnation! They say: You deserve to receive God's punishment! They say: You deserve to receive God's wrath!

That's a lie! Those are all lies! Told by preachers, teachers, and theologians who don't see God as a Supreme Being, but see God as a supreme bully! They must have hearts filled with fear, despair, hatred, and sadness! It's my prayer that one day they will have hearts filled with faith, hope, love, and joy! I say: You are worthy to receive God's goodness! I say: You are worthy to receive God's kindness! I say: You are worthy to receive God's compassion!

Christmas songs are no longer on the radio. No more, "Joy To The World." No more, "White Christmas." No more, "Blue Christmas." No more, "All I want for Christmas is You." But I want to remind you of one Christmas song. Because it speaks to our topic. "Santa Claus is Coming to Town." Granted that song is a bit manipulative of children. "He knows if you've been bad or good: So be good for goodness sake!" At least one part of that song, though, applies to God. "He sees you when you're

sleeping. He knows when you're awake." God sees you when you're struggling. God knows when you succeed. God sees you when you're helping. God knows when you need help. God sees and knows you. All the time. And God loves you. All the time.

Wherever you are and whatever you are doing, God sees and knows you. Because you are God's child! God created you in God's own image! God did not create you to hate you! God created you to love you! God sees and knows you! And God loves you! That's not a lie! That's the truth! That's the eternal truth!

Let us pray...

*God of Love,
Help us to believe that you see us.
Help us to believe that you know us.
And help us to believe that you love us.
Now and forevermore.
By the power of the Holy Spirit.
And in the name of Jesus.
Amen.*



*Menifee
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