**I Love to Tell the Story**

**Day 226 Jesus and the Pharisees John 5: 20 – 47**

Guided reflection:

Jesus continues his lecture to the Pharisees… he tries to help them understand that He is sent from God. They are not open to believe this. They study the scriptures and miss the point. They will not look at the works that Jesus is doing as proof he is the Messiah. They will not see, they will not be open, they are unteachable. Jesus was right there in front of them, yet they were determined that he as the enemy, instead of seeing him as a gift from God. Are you teachable? Are there things in your life that you “know for sure” and no one is going to tell you any differently? What I know for sure is that Jesus loves me and God is love.

Guided prayer:

*“Loving and giving God, open my eyes to the places where I am so rigid about what I believe. Help me to hold your truth gently in my heart. Keep me open to new places where you might be expanding my heart. Amen.”*

**Day 227 The People Seek Jesus John 6: 22-24**

Guided reflection:

The Pharisees might not have been open to who Jesus was, but the people knew that there was something special going on here! When they did not find Jesus where they thought he would be, they got into boats to cross the sea to find him! Talk about determination! What in your life has made you so determined to seek more? Has it ever been more of God? More of the stories of Jesus?

Guided prayer:

*“Forgive our complacency. We know the stories of your love, O God, and act as though it is no big deal! The God of the universe loves ME! Wants ME to be whole! Wants Me to know abundant life! Shake me up a bit, Lord! Amen”*

**Day 228 Jesus is the Bread of Life John 6: 25-59**

Guided reflection:

Jesus said to the crowd “Do not work for food that spoils, but work for food that last for eternity.” Where are you placing your energy – in things that are fleeting, or things that matter? And, by the way, is your soul hungry? Feeling empty? Jesus is the bread of life! Live! The Pharisees really had a hard time with this teaching – they did not “get” the metaphor… they made fun by saying Jesus was a flesh eating cannibal! WE know that Jesus meant that what we really need is what He can offer – God in made flesh – Immanuel, God with us, Love with and in us. Like the song says “what the world needs now, is love, sweet love.” Jesus is what we need! What have you been “feeding” yourself that is worthless? How might you “feed” on Jesus?

Guided Prayer:

*“Why do I look to things of this world to fill my life? How is it that I long for truth and light and love and yet do not pay attention to the one who is the source of that Love? Feed me, bread of life. Fill the empty places in my heart with you. Amen”*

**Day 229 Words of Eternal Life John 6: 60- 71**

Guided reflection:

Jesus must have been gathering a rather large group of disciples, but Jesus teachings were beginning to be too hard to grasp and live out. So, many grumbled and gave up on following Jesus. He had the 12 left… and he asked if they were going to leave too! Peter replied “Where else can we go? You have the words of life! We choose you!” Have you ever felt like walking with Jesus was too hard? Remember Peter’s words – to whom can we go besides Jesus?

Guided prayer:

*“I do not understand all that I need to know about loving and following Jesus. I just know that you are my source of life and love. Help me to keep my eyes upon Jesus. Amen”*

**Day 230 Jesus and his own brothers John 7:1-9**

Guided reflection:

Jesus did not want to go to Judea because the folks were out to kill him. But his own brothers – not the disciples, but his kin – did not really believe that their brother was really the Son of God – would you? They encouraged Jesus to go to the Feast in Judea so he could “show off” with a few miracles so everyone would know about him. But Jesus told them that this was not the time to go to Judea – they should go on without him. But not to worry, the world would not hate them because he was their brother… the world only would hate him because he was the one who spoke the words of truth about the world’s problems and lack of faith. It would have been hard to believe that your big brother was really a “God”, wouldn’t it? You will note that John’s gospel shows the Pharisees being ready to kill Jesus earlier in the story line that the other three gospels. Has it ever been difficult for you to follow Jesus?

Guided prayer:

*“Today I pray for those who are tortured for their faith. We are so thankful that we have the freedom to worship as we please. However, when I am comfortable, I often forget to keep my faith in the forefront of my life. I stop at this moment and ask that you show me where you want me to grow today. Amen”*

God with us, Love with and in us. Like the song says “what the world needs now, is love, sweet love.” Jesus is what we need! What have you been “feeding” yourself that is worthless? How might you “feed” on Jesus?

Guided Prayer:

*“Why do I look to things of this world to fill my life? How is it that I long for truth and light and love and yet do not pay attention to the one who is the source of that Love? Feed me, bread of life. Fill the empty places in my heart with you. Amen”*