

21st July 2024.

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-14.

Theme: “God is Still Speaking”

Introduction

It was a three-hour journey on a trailer of a pick-up truck pounding a bumpy dusty road to a youth prayer camp. Like the casual usual of many young teens, I attended the camp just for fun and possibly to meet a new girlfriend. One night the preacher man preached a good reflective sermon which caught me thinking about my ways. I resisted the divine call for prayer but could not with it resulting in giving in to prayer. One day night at home, I had a dream that God was calling me to the ministry of preaching. The dream spoke to my conviction and through affirmation by other people. **Friends**, my personal experience convinces me that God is still speaking and present with the people. I want to assume that you have heard and uniquely experienced the voice of God speaking.

Explanation of the Pericope

David had divine visitation while in his house which was later confirmed by Nathan the prophet to build a special house for the Ark of God to sit in. This happened at the time when Israel was experiencing peace with her neighbors allowing David to build a temple for God. God's divine visitation also happened to Nathan at night, when God said, “Go and tell David my servant to build me a house to dwell in.” **Friends**, God is

inviting all people to a mutual fellowship to build a spiritual temple to house the ark of God in this world.

Theologically, the temple of God is significant for worship as a symbol of God's presence where all people are protected. The temple has special characteristics to influence people when approaching God in worship through songs and readings. **Friends**, when we enter the doors of this sanctuary, something significant happens that transforms us into a worshipping community. Worship is a spiritual event that become our lifestyle that we would not do without. Our belief in God informs what we become in society and react to things by the same dictate. Building a spiritual temple is progressive rather than belonging to the physical temple which has limitations. The invisible church welcomes people to share in God's love without human-created barriers.

The Jewish worship tradition represented the physical church and demanded that the priests needed to offer sacrifices to God from the altar as a way of communication between the people and God. These sacrifices were to be made in the temple at specific times of the year to show restoration from evil. This process helps us to think of temples without walls that focus on ideals rather than absolute ideas.

Friends, our bodies are in Christ transformed into the temple of God where worship continues to occur every day. The apostle Paul in the letter to the Corinthians noted that the followers of Jesus Christ have been called

with their bodies to a life of transformation into temples of the Holy Spirit and to make life beautiful through changed lives. Let us worship God from within ourselves to the world outside us. Worship happens from the soul to influence our mind to perform rituals of worship as a celebration of the call of God in adoration and praise.

Colleagues in Christ, let us reflect on the spiritual importance of the temple of God and that the creator is ever present with us. This perspective will assure us that the spirit of God is actively involved in our world to bring life to the creation. Truly, our bodies are the holy site of worship and service for reconciliation into the broken world. God has set apart people and has given out the spirit to be the temple to those seeking God's love and called to the work of discipleship.

We are called to create opportunities for others to be able to see the doors to the temple. Let us not stand in the way of other people who want to seek the mercy of God. God calls people in unique ways to encounter his goodness and to experience mercy to invite others. God spoke with David through Nathan to remember how he was called from the pasture and appointed to rule over God's people.

Friends, God is with us and those outside the temple, yet the nuance is in the downward spiral between those in the temple and those not. The urgency to build the temple of God requires us to think less of ourselves and more of those outside the temple of God. Our outreach activities help

open our temple doors to everyone, including those forgotten by society. The desire to be involved in meaningful outreach reciprocates our intention to share in the love of God with those called to us.

Biblical Lessons

1. God is still present with the people

In this world of many challenges and troubles where our hearts are filled with fear, grief, and worry, God is assuring us of divine presence. God's faithfulness remains as true as before the foundation of the earth. God hears our different conversations, feels the pain of our suffering, and works to bring healing to our broken lives. The Challenges we encounter sometimes lead us to brush away our belief that God is present with us and to entertain thoughts of doubt. Friend of God stay in God is with you.

2. God is still equipping people

In the brokenness of our thoughts and hope, God awakens others to bring comfort and healing to us. Every Sunday we come to the sanctuary of God to interact with colleagues whom God has called to be part of our faithful journey. Those God has called have been given the grace to help us come to the love of God. **Friends,** let us be a blessing to each other as we all strive to become the people God wants us to be. God wants us to be brothers and sisters keepers. Our Christian service should aim to go beyond our closed church walls to break barriers that hinder others.

3. God is still speaking to People

One critical area of the discernment process is to distinguish the voice of God from self-conviction. Self-conviction is directed by one's thoughts, conviction, or confession. The humanness in us runs towards self-conviction without opening to other possibilities in life. We enjoy living in a closed mindset without considering other voices that might represent the voice of God, yet God is speaking through people and the creation. God continues to speak to us using the effects of climate change to change our ways of handling Mother Earth. Let us search for the divine by discerning the voice of God from what we could not consider worth and to remember that God is present with his people.

Amen.

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