

## **“Do You Know Where You’re Going To?”**

**Genesis 15:1-6; Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16; Luke 12:32-40; Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23 8-12-07**

The title for this morning’s sermon comes from the theme song for the movie “Mahogany.” The first two verses of that song are:

*Do you know where you’re going to?  
Do you like the things that life is showing you  
Where are you going to?  
Do you know?*

*Do you get what you’re hoping for?  
When you look behind you there’s no open doors,  
What are you hoping for  
Do you know?*

I could not help but think of this song as I read the scriptures for this morning.

There was poor Abram, later to be known as Abraham, not knowing where he was going to and not liking at all what life was showing him. He had no heirs and his worldly possessions would pass out of his hands. He certainly knew what it was he was hoping for, and he and Sarah eventually got it in the package of a son, Isaac.

Abram saw things with human sight. God had plans for him, plans that would make him a father late in life and make of him a nation. While he could not see God or even try to see the future that lay before him, he stepped out in faith and followed the claim God had upon his life. With no tangible evidence he moved forward.

The little Letter to the Hebrews has a wonderful reading about such faith as his. It says: “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old received divine approval.”

Having a sense of faith means that people are able to look beyond where they are in life, never truly knowing where they are going to, yet finding the ability to journey on to a place that they hope will be better than where they are at present.

This is not the same thing as “the grass is always greener” syndrome. If we think the grass is greener in another place it is because we have given into the desire to flee where we might be to try out something new, something that can be grasped and seen. This is not the same as journeying on in faith mentioned in our reading.

Often a journey to find grass that is greener leads us nowhere that is better. A new job, a new home, a new relationship proves to be just the same old thing again, because we forget that we are taking the same beings we are with us to a new place and repeating our same old patterns. We also seem to forget, as my mother used to remind me, that, “the grass is always greener over the septic tank.” What appears to be so wonderful, exciting and full of promise might be something that is based on something else that is not quite so grand. When we are able to see beyond the glory of the surface we discover just the plain, old, common stuff.

Faith, instead, is defined in the story Jesus told of servants waiting and watching for the coming of the master. Never knowing when he will appear, yet always at the ready. The need to lead lives that are based on the teachings of Jesus is essential to our well-being and to finding life which will be eternal for us. We are told in Luke that our Creator wants us all to be joined to

God in eternal life. God's intentions for us are good. But, we always need to remember that we have great responsibility in finding our way home.

We are responsible, as was Abraham to set out on journeys of faith, never being able to fully grasp the outcome. We cannot live like J. Alfred Prufrock in that famous poem by T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." J. Alfred's sad life was an endless circle, day in and day out. It was so controlled and contained that he says:

*Do I dare  
Disturb the universe?  
In a minute there is time  
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.*

*For I have known them all already, known them all—  
Have known the evenings, mornings afternoons,  
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;  
I know the voices dying with a dying fall  
Beneath the music from a further room.  
So how should I presume?*

I know people who live their lives measured out by coffee spoons, every bit of time is scheduled so that they follow the same pattern over and over again, never wanting or daring to alter it, to take a chance on life and on faith in a God who sustains us in our decisions whether they be wise or a bit foolish. There are decisions and revisions they might make that will bring them into greater fullness of life, that might bring them love and joy. But they are afraid to make them, afraid to move one coffee spoon out of place in their plan to live life in the blueprint of faith. They even get a little crazy when things do not go exactly as they believe they should and act in ways that only embarrass them.

There are times I think it might be nice to live such a tightly controlled life, but then I see how little joy people who choose to remain in their boxes have; how very seriously they take themselves, and how sour they may be. How little fun there is for them.

Jesus came to show us the way to have life, and to have it abundantly. This does not mean to collect a bunch of money or power or control. Let's face it, we really have very little power or control over what life may bring us. Having an abundance of life means that we have the ability to really take the time and smell the roses, to appreciate those we claim to love, to clearly see each little butterfly that flutters up to kiss each little buttercup at dawning. It means to take a chance and to move forward in faith, knowing deep in our hearts that God will carry us forward as God has carried so many others through to the final end where they discover where their true treasure has always been.

*Do you know you're going to?  
Do you like the things that life is showing you  
Where are you going to?  
Do you know?*

Amen