

**09/10/17 @ BUCYRUS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
PRAISE IN PARK SUNDAY – 8:30 SERVICE**

“WHERE’S GOD?”

Pastor Mike Corwin

Text: Psalm 19, 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19-20

I – WHERE’S GOD?:

In the late 1980’s the world was introduced to a cartoon character invented by a British children’s book writer. It started a craze and a catch phrase which lasted well into the 90’s and I think is still around today....“Where’s Waldo?” Do you remember this guy? He was tall and lanky, wore a red and white striped shirt with a matching bobble hat, had glasses and carried a walking stick. They would take this character and place him somewhere in a picture, which was filled with people, cars, buildings, animals, and other things and you were supposed to find him in the picture or go cross-eyed trying!

When you stop and think about it, that’s the way we are with God sometimes, isn’t it? Our lives are like those big “Where’s Waldo” pictures. They’re full of people, places, and things that clamor for attention. We spend our days trying to juggle our responsibilities to our home, our employer, our family, and our friends. It seems that someone or something is always clamoring for our time and attention. It’s in this chaos we call life that we sometimes lose God. We lose our focus and God gets lost someplace among all the other things that fill our schedules and we end up thinking, “WHERE’S GOD” when we need him or take the time to look for him.

The good news I want to share with you this morning is that God is a whole lot easier to find than Waldo. You don’t have to go bug-eyed to see Him. God is all around you if you just know where to look. This morning let me share with you how easy it is to spot God in your crowded life. You just have to look. Maybe we all need those oversized glasses that Waldo wears.

II – GOD IS OUTSIDE:

Psalm 19:1 -14 (NLT)

¹ *The heavens tell of the glory of God. The skies display his marvelous craftsmanship.*

² *Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known.*

³ *They speak without a sound or a word; their voice is silent in the skies; ⁴ yet their message has gone out to all the earth, and their words to all the world. The sun lives in the heavens where God placed it. ⁵ It bursts forth like a radiant bridegroom after his wedding. It rejoices like a*

great athlete eager to run the race. ⁶ The sun rises at one end of the heavens and follows its course to the other end. Nothing can hide from its heat. ⁷ The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. ⁸ The commandments of the LORD are right, bringing joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are clear, giving insight to life. ⁹ Reverence for the LORD is pure, lasting forever. The laws of the LORD are true; each one is fair. ¹⁰ They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even honey dripping from the comb.¹ They are a warning to those who hear them; there is great reward for those who obey them. ² How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart? Cleanse me from these hidden faults. Keep me from deliberate sins! Don't let them control me. Then I will be free of guilt and innocent of great sin. ¹⁴ May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be pleasing to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

The belief of the ancient Jewish culture was that no one should even have to tell you that God existed. You should be able to look outside and see the beauty of Creation and know that there is a God. That everything before you was put together by design. It didn't crawl out of primordial swamp. It was created and made beautiful by the One who created it.

Look at the sky at sunrise or sunset and you should know that an artist better than Rembrandt was at work. Look at a tree in the fall and know that all the colors of the rainbow not only exist but were used to testify to the love and artistry of that creator. Look at the images sent back from the Hubble Telescope and you have to realize we are just an insignificant spot in the galaxy we live in, which is surrounded by millions of other galaxies. Yet God loves you and cares for you. We talked last week about that love that caused him to create perfection and it was created for us.

And then we see that even the Psalmist knew of that love. That the Creator tried to give us guidelines to live by. Rules to stay out of trouble with. Yet he also knew that sin lurked in our hearts and was just below the surface.

We know in this day and age that he even took care of that problem by sending his Son to die on a cross so we could be forgiven and find the perfection he desired when we are finally with him in heaven.

Yes – The outside testifies to the glory and greatness of God. I think you need to ask yourselves the questions...

- Where have you seen God outside recently?
- How has God blessed you outside recently?

III – GOD IS INSIDE:

But God is found not only outside, but inside too. If God is outside, then I think it would be safe to say that he is inside too. After all he is omnipresent, which means he's everywhere. As I say that it would be easy to think about seeing God through the walls and decorations / furnishings in your house or in your church. That's not the inside I'm talking about. The inside I'm talking about is you. If I look, I hopefully can see God and Jesus in each and every one of you.

Paul gives us two passages in his first letter to the church at Corinth that back up my statement:

1 Corinthians 3:16 - 17 (NLT)

¹⁶Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you? ¹⁷God will bring ruin upon anyone who ruins this temple. For God's temple is holy, and you Christians are that temple.

and

1 Corinthians 6:19 - 20 (NLT)

¹⁹Or don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, ²⁰for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.

As Christians you are supposed to be God's representative to everyone on earth. When people look at you they are supposed to see God in all you say and do, in both your words and actions. God lives in you, he has placed his Holy Spirit in you. God doesn't live in the church - God lives in you. You are the church, the Temple of God.

Mother Theresa knew this. Once when she was asked why she went all the way to Calcutta, India to do her work among the poorest of the poor and the outcasts of her society she said that every time she held one of them in her arms she saw Jesus. I'm guessing as they were dying and being cradled in her arms, they saw him too in her face.

So I think we also have to ask ourselves the questions:

- Where have you seen God through the words or actions of someone recently?
- How have you been blessed by God through the words or actions of someone recently?

IV – CHANGE THE QUESTIONS:

As we continue to wage our war against the darkness of the community I think perhaps we need to change these questions a little.

When we are looking at the outside we need to ask ourselves how are we treating the glory of God? How are we showing our awe and thanksgiving over the creation we have been blessed with? How are we being good stewards of what he has blessed us with?

And when we are answering the questions about seeing God in others we need to ask...How have others seen God in me? How have my words or actions been a blessing to God by the way I've used them towards others? Hard questions, but deserving of thought and answers.

V – PEEK-A-BOO:

When you put all of this together it's easy to see that God can be found anywhere and everywhere. If you're paying attention and looking you can see God in every part of your life. All you have to do is look. Whether you are inside or outside you can find God in the things and people around you.

There is another child's game that was around long before "Where's Waldo" was ever even thought of. I remember playing it with my children and grandchildren. I'm sure all of you have done the same. The game is "Peek-a-boo." I would hide my face behind my hands and as I opened my hands and they could see my face I would say "peek-a-boo" and they would laugh and giggle with excitement.

I want to suggest today that you should play peek-a-boo with God. As a child of God he wants you to find him. He wants to reveal himself to you each and every moment of each and every day. As you look through the clutter of life and see him, you will feel his presence and I pray you'll feel like laughing and giggling with joy as he reveals himself to you.

And then...share that joy with others as you help them see God too.

AMEN