

Great and Encouraging Truths
JOB 12:22-25
January 31, 2010

Our text for today is taken from the book of Job 12:22, “God discovers deep things out of the darkness...” the Hebrew word we translate as “discovers” is “galah”, and it literally means “to open up” and “to uncover”.

The new revised standard version of the Bible translates this verb as “uncovers” as it says, “God uncovers the deep hope of darkness, and God brings darkness light.”

Just as our God knows the deep and great things of life, so God wants us to discover those deep and great things. And throughout civilization there have been many great discoveries.

Greek history tells of how Archimedes, a Greek mathematician inventor, finished his bath one day. As he watched the displaced water drain out of the tub, he suddenly understood how metals could be weighed.

He was so overwhelmed by this realization; he streaked out of his house rushing down the street crying, “Eureka! Eureka!” This means, “I found it! I discovered!”

Yes, there have been many great discoveries throughout the history of civilization. In 1492, Christopher Columbus, under the flag of Spain, claimed a new land in the name of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella.

There was a great discovery in the spring of 1892, when a vein of gold was struck in the Klondike region of Alaska, and, overnight many people became instantly wealthy.

It was a great discovery when Henry Ford invented the mass assembly line for automobiles. It was a great discovery when Dr. Jonas Salk discovered his polio vaccine, and he gave to the world this miracle drug.

It was a great discovery when Dr. George Washington Carver tapped into the chemical secrets of the peanut and the sweet potato.

Yes, there have been those great historical discoveries and those great personal discoveries.

When I was growing up we lived near the Seven and Mack shopping center right on the Grosse Pointe, Detroit border. It was a great shopping center. It had a Kresge's at one end and a Woolworth at the other. In the middle was a Sander's.

That was back in the day when Kresges, Woolworth and Sander's all had soda fountains. On Saturdays we would ride our bikes up to the Wood's Theater to see a matinee. I remember the movie costing \$.35.

After the movie if we had money left over we would go into the Woolworth to get a Coke. That was back when they made a fountain Coke from scratch: from Coke syrup and carbonated water.

One Saturday I discovered that one of my friend's income had changed. He ordered a hot dog, potato chips, and a chocolate milkshake with whipped cream on top. I was even more impressed with the way he paid for it .

When the lady at the counter brought the bill, my friend said, "Charge it". I asked my friend: "what do you mean charge it?" He said it was very simple. His father had a charge account at Woolworth's.

Not to be undone, I asked the lady at the counter; does my dad have a charge account? She asked me his name, looked it up; came back and said yes. So, I too ordered more food and some dessert.

That was the great discovery of my adolescence!
Then I made another great discovery. I discovered there comes a time when the account must be settled.

I discovered there comes a time when my dad got the Woolworth's bill.

And then I made another great discovery. When my dad got his monthly bill I discovered he was not pleased with his oldest son. As a matter of fact, I never charged another dinner until I had graduated from seminary and had a full-time job.

We all make those discoveries that are not so great. But today, I want us to think about some great encouraging discoveries in the spiritual realm. Perhaps you have already made these discoveries, and if so, then we will rediscover them a new.

In this message I want us to discover or rediscover:

One. the mystery of grace.

Two, the mastering of pride.

Three, the meaning of forgiveness.

(1). The Mystery of Grace.

To be complete people we all need this sense of mystery in our lives.

Albert Einstein said in his work: Ideas and Opinions: “the most beautiful experience we can have is the mysterious. It is the fundamental notion that stands at the cradle of true art and true science.

Whoever does not know it can no longer wonder, no longer marvel, is as good as dead, and their eyes are dim.”

It is interesting that the Bible several times speaks of the mystery of this gospel of grace. Several times in the Scriptures we find this word “mystery” and its many implications.

In I Corinthians 2:7, Paul speaks of the Mystery of the wisdom of God. In I Corinthians 14:1, Paul speaks of our stewardship and ministry as a mystery. In I Corinthians 15:41, Paul says, “I will show you a mystery.”

The Greek word we translate mystery is the word *Musterion*, it is a word we translate from the Greek into the English. In this text it is a noun that is acted upon by the verb, "show".

Paul says, "I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."

When I read this verse, I thought to myself, "that would be a good Bible verse for the church to hang up in our nursery: "I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep. But we shall all be changed."

In Colossians 4:3, Paul speaks of the mystery of preaching, and I am sure you agree with Paul that some preaching is a great mystery. Maybe sometime, listening to a sermon you thought that sermon was very mysterious.

You were not sure how it got started, were even less sure of where it was going, and had no idea what the preacher was trying to say. Yes, preaching is a great mystery.

With this mysterious gospel of grace Paul says we do see through a glass darkly and while we may not be able to completely understand this mysterious gospel of grace we can by faith accept it and believe it and embrace it.

We can discover the great joy for our lives today.

With the simple faith of a little child we can sing with assurance and confidence: Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound. That saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now I'm found; was blind but now I see.

Yes, we need to discover the mystery of grace.

(II). The Mastering of pride.

Our greatest insight into the problem of pride is found in Proverbs 16:18 which says, "pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall."

Proverbs 13:10 says, “only by pride comes contention.”

Now, if pride can cause us to stumble and fall; if contentiousness can not only destroy us but can hurt the ones we love; and if all contentions are caused by pride, then it stands to reason that we should learn to master the pride within our lives.

Pride is mastered when we have the spirit of our servant savior. Remember when the disciples were pridefully clamoring over who was the greatest; Christ got a basin of water, a towel, and got down on his on His knees and washed their dirty feet.

Pride is mastered when we have the attitude of John the Baptist who said, “he must increase, but I must decrease!”

Pride is mastered when we understand what Martin Luther meant when he said, “we are nothing until we see ourselves as nothing and until we see ourselves as nothing, then God will be able to make something of us”.

Pride is mastered when we are able to pray along with Mother Teresa as she worked in a leper colony in India, “Precious Lord, make me nothing so that in you and through you and for you I can become all things for your children everywhere!”

(III). The Meaning of Forgiveness.

And parenthetically let me say here that the reason many people cannot forgive, the reason many people will not forgive; (and we all can forgive); is because of pride.

It takes a strong person to forgive. Mahatma Gandhi, that great little man who courageously led India to independence said, “the weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.”

Page 6

The Old Rugged Cross.

Do you know that hymn?

“On a Hill faraway stood an old rugged Cross, the emblem of suffering and Shame; and I love that old cross where the dearest and best for a world of loss sinners was slain.”

The author, George Bennard said the inspiration came to him one day in 1913 when he was staying in Albion, Michigan.

He said he first completed the melody. The words that he first wrote were imperfect. Then the words of the finished hymn were put into his heart in answer to his own need.

Bennard had served with the Salvation Army before being ordained in the Methodist Church. The hymn is now known worldwide. A marker stands in Albion, Michigan on the spot where the hymn was written.

Just for a moment, I want you to imagine yourself standing on that hill beneath the cross. I want you to look up and see the very form of Christ. I want you to hear Christ say, “Father, forgive...”

This is the meaning of forgiveness. This is what forgiveness is all about. Because we have been forgiven, we can forgive. For it is at the foot of the cross that we truly discover the mystery of grace.

It is here that we discover the mastering of pride and it is here alone that we discovered the true meaning of forgiveness.

Is there anybody in your life who you are unable to forgive? Could it be that you have not really discovered the mystery of grace? Could it be that you have not truly mastered your pride?

Page 7

Could it be that you have not truly accepted God's forgiveness in your life? Right now, I will challenge you to do that. Please do it today.

Amen!