

Sunday, September 14, 2025

I believe God had a dream, hope when he created the heavens and Earth that his people would always remain faithful to him just as he remains faithful to his people.

In our psalter reading today, Psalm 14, The psalmist calls unfaithful people fools they are foolish in their heart saying there is no God, they chose to oppose the will of God. The psalmist writes of hopelessness of humanity without forgiveness yet emphasizes that with God there is always hope. This hope is present and active, where we can find forgiveness and restoration through our faithfulness.

It was written by Moses as far back as 1200 BC in the book of Exodus After God had freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt with “signs and wonders” they had seen with their own eyes the deliverance of the LORD. They have passed through the waters of the Red Sea on dry ground. They have heard the voice of God from the mountaintop and have been chosen as God’s “treasured possession” out of all the nations on earth—called to be “a priestly kingdom and a holy nation” And they have received the Ten Commandments, the first one of which is, “You shall have no other gods before me” ¹

Moses actually went up on Mount Sinai several times to meet God. Moses climbed Mt. Sinai about eight times to meet with the Lord, this particular time, the people waited at the foot of the mountain waiting for Moses to return. Well apparently he took too long for them, so they

went to Aaron asking him to make “gods” to go before them, Aaron complied without argument by making a calf idol out of gold.

The story of the Golden calf is a kind of fall story similar to the Fall in the Garden of Eden, both stories immediately after the establishment of a relationship between God and humanity , humans begin to disobey In the case of Exodus 32, God forms Israel as a new creation and they immediately fall into sin, What was God to do? Where was the hope for faithfulness? For both God and Israel, the hope of faithfulness and forgiveness was in Moses.

God told Moses on the mountain top, “Go down at once! He had seen his people acting perversely , they were quick to turn away from the way God had commanded them, they cast for themselves an image of a calf and have worshipped and sacrificed to it, he said,” Now let me alone so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them and of you I will make a great nation.

But Moses implored the Lord, his God to change his mind to turn from your fierce wrath change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. He reminded God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel and was said to them, The Lord God changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

God spared his people because of his covenant faithfulness, because of his promises to his servants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And it is the same with us today. God spares us, forgives us, and looks on us with favor because of what Jesus Christ has done for us. God is still the God who is faithful to his covenant. He does not forget his mercy. And he has provided us that mercy at the greatest cost to himself, for Jesus was

even more than a faithful servant of God like Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. He was God's own Son, whom God gave on our behalf to save us.

In Luke 15:1-10, we encounter two powerful parables shared by Jesus: the Parable of the Lost Sheep and the Parable of the Lost Coin. These stories are not merely narratives, but profound teachings meant to illustrate God's boundless love and the immense joy in heaven over even one sinner who repents. Jesus, in addressing the Pharisees and scribes who criticized Him for associating with sinners, challenges their narrow view of righteousness and reveals the heart of God towards those who are lost and in need of redemption.

The Pharisees and scribes held a position of religious authority and influence in Jewish society, and their disdain for sinners and tax collectors reflected the prevailing attitude of the time. By welcoming and dining with those considered outcasts, Jesus was challenging societal norms and demonstrating God's inclusive love for all people, regardless of their past mistakes or societal status.

These parables remind us that no matter how insignificant or lost we may feel, God values each and every one of us. He is not willing to let even one soul perish but actively seeks out those who have strayed. This demonstrates the immense love and care that God has for everyone, regardless of their circumstances or past actions. The parables serve as a powerful reminder of the importance of every person in the eyes of God, highlighting His relentless pursuit of reconciliation with all who are lost and God's love knows no bounds and His joy over one repentant soul is immeasurable. Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

The concepts of **hope, faithfulness, and forgiveness** are central to Christian beliefs and personal growth, emphasizing the interconnectedness of these concepts as all three can be found in each other.

This cycle illustrates that as we experience hope through God's forgiveness, we are called to live out that faith in our relationships,

- Hope is rooted in God's mercy and grace, as seen in the Old Testament and New Testament promises of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Faith is demonstrated through the belief in Jesus Christ, who offers forgiveness and transformation.

Forgiveness is a central theme, reflecting God's grace and the importance of extending love and mercy to others.

When I asked Joyce why the cross outside was draped in green, she answered as she told us last week for the flood victims and that we are living in ordinary times and in ordinary times there is hope.

Ordinary times are the times when there are no large celebrations like Christmas or Easter, it is the longest season in the Church

Hope is not just for difficult times or extraordinary circumstances but also a constant element present in everyday life. Joy can co-exist with

pain and that better possibilities for a better future exist in the present rather than being reserved for a dramatic change in circumstances.

We have a taste of it now and here as we come into the House of the Lord. That is the source of our hope, the promise we live every day.

This equips us not to ignore the foolishness of the world around us, but not to fall into despair because of it. We call upon the Lord of hope.

That is how we navigate the current foolishness, we live in Hope.