Dear Lexie,

"Are We There Yet?...Lessons From A Backseat Passenger"

Three women were traveling in a car to attend a meeting. It was a three hour trip and the roads, previously snow covered and icy, were now basically clear. They were colleagues, but really did not know much about each other. Circumstances caused them to be traveling together and one of them-the one in the back seat - wondered how the long day and road trip would be.

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Wonder of Worship:
The Heaven's Declare
As a little girl on Long Island, I spent many evenings stargazing. I would look up into the sky and imagine what it was like on the moon or in the vast unknown of outer space. In the quietude of the cosmos...

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Are We There Yet?...Lessons From A Backseat Passenger

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As they journeyed, they talked about their families, work places, worship experiences and, of course, the weather. You see, it had been bitterly cold and the schools in which they all served as Principals had been closed earlier that week due to a snow storm and freezing temperatures. The person in the passenger’s seat mentioned that she was from the Caribbean, so the weather was not something she enjoyed. The passenger in the back commented that although she had previously lived in the Midwest and was accustomed to the snow, she really did not like it being so bitterly cold. However, the driver’s voice filled with joy as she said, “I love this weather! It feels great to me! ” (The other two ladies should have gotten a clue from the fact that while she had on a sweater, she did not wear a jacket or seemed to be bothered even as she pumped gas in the frigid weather!)

They smiled, continue talking, and when the conversation moved to their camp meeting experiences, the passenger in the back seat shared fond memories and even felt a bit warmer as she reminisced about the hot summer weather. But guess what? The driver said, “Now, why in the world would anyone choose to go to a place where it is very hot, and the bathrooms are usually not the best? That just makes no sense to me!” The passenger in the back seat said, “I loved it, and when I was in high school and college, I was one of the “chosen” ones that had to clean camp meeting bathrooms!” They all laughed.

Continuing on, they discussed school issues, listened to hymns and commented on the wonders of nature and how beautiful the snow and ice-covered trees looked. Soon they reached their destination, met with other Principals for several hours, and then returned home. The one who traveled in the back seat was grateful. She felt blessed for the opportunity to spend six hours in a car with spiritual, caring and intelligent women who were brought together by circumstance, yet who took the time to share and become better acquainted.

No, we are not in heaven yet, but the journey is much better when we open our hearts and minds and travel the long road together. I challenge you to look for opportunities, that circumstances place you in, to get to know others. You may, like me, the back seat passenger, be blessed with times of laughter and the joy of new friendships.

Tagged with →
The Wonder of Worship: The Heavens Declare

Cheryl Bridges

As a little girl on Long Island, I spent many evenings stargazing. I would look up into the sky and imagine what it was like on the moon or in the vast unknown of outer space. In the quietude of the cosmos, the heavens declared such awesome beauty and endless tranquility. It wasn’t until I went on my first camping trip that I realized my starry skies were dim in comparison to the brilliance of the night skies viewed from a mountain’s peak. From my bedroom window I could see the heavens, but the view was hazy. I was happy at home until I saw a summit which made me realize how much I was missing. I wanted more. So to fulfill my desire, I began to search pictures of astronomy. As I viewed stars and galaxies I soon realized that even the best pictures were unsatisfying. I wondered, how can I understand this marvelous mystery when my best view is still so obscured?

From his mountain view as a shepherd, the psalmist David also proclaimed that the heavens reveal God’s glory.

In Psalms 19:1 (NIV) he writes, “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech and night after night they reveal knowledge.”

In a world that celebrates sin, our ability to be members of the body of Christ and part of God’s Church is an absolute mystery (Eph. 5:32). Yet, just as my desire to see into space was unsatisfied, our revelation of God can only be fulfilled as we deepen our knowledge of Him (Eph. 1:17). This happens as we gaze on the life of Jesus Christ through the study of God’s Word and the infilling of the Holy Spirit that transforms us.

So worship is an intimate relationship with God in which we marvel at the mystery of His majesty. In worship, we respond obediently to the knowledge of God in our lives. In worship, we humbly accept God’s goodness, grace and love. In a lifestyle of worship we see our circumstances as a journey in which each mountain peak, winding path, low valley or rocky road is a lesson that shapes us for salvation. Worship, whether public or private, is our time to declare God’s glory. Worship is how we confess to our Creator that we value, love and cherish Him. Yet even the Apostle Paul declares that we will never fully understand the perfection and sovereignty of God here on this Earth.

In 1 Corinthians 13:12 (NKJV) Paul writes, “For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.”

Then how do we worship? How do we show love to a Holy God when we are sinful and our best view of Him is still so dim? How can we obtain worship unity when each experience with God is unique? The solution to our problem is found in our praise! You see, praise provides the individuality that allows us to glorify God in our own unique way. We respond to God’s presence by offering Him prescribed forms of praise. Whether we pray in silence or out loud, testify in church or at work, sing hymns or choruses, play music with violins or guitars, stand or kneel, dance or clap, meditate in silence or shout for joy we can offer ourselves as a sacrifice of praise. When pleasing God is our focus and we praise Him in the way that He prescribes, we can see God’s salvation (Ps. 50:23). Then our assortment of praise is acceptable and unified in its singular purpose to offer God glory. We worship where praise practices are similar. This does not make one group wrong and the other right. This makes our praise diverse, just like God’s universe.
Like the heavens, we can declare that worshiping God is a wondrous mystery. Our praise provides a glimpse of glory, where God’s worship is eternal (Ps. 61:8; Rev. 5:14).

Tagged with → • • • • • •
“Love and Other Things”  8 Week
PREPARE/ENRICH Relationship Workshop

sligochurch.org/ministries/prepare-and-enrich

March 1 – April 19, 2014 1pm Sabbath Afternoons Location to be determined by size of group

His First and Last Name

Her First and Last Name

Preferred Email for Him

Preferred Email for Her

Preferred Phone Number for Him

Preferred Phone Number for Her

Address (Optional)
Are you:

Dating  Engaged  Married

Number of years in relationship

You are a:

Member  Guest  Friend  Family of Member

Additional Information: PREPARE/ENRICH inventory is a customized couple assessment completed online that identifies a couple’s strength and growth areas. It is used for marriage enrichment, marriage counseling, and dating couples considering engagement. It is also one of the most widely used programs for premarital counseling and premarital education. As part of the 8 week workshop each couple will receive a Couple’s Report based on the PREPARE/ENRICH assessment. The assessment will take 30 – 45mins to fill out. After you register you will receive information from Pastor Fielder with directions on how to complete the online assessment. The price per couple, paid directly to PREPARE/ENRICH, is a onetime fee of $35.

If you have any questions, please email Pastor Fielder at pfielder@sligochurch.org.