

The Fifth Sunday after Epiphany  
07-02-2021  
St Cuthbert's Anglican Church – Tweed Heads

Isaiah 40: 21-31	God is the creator of all, Those who's hope is in Him will not grow weary.
Psalms 147:1-11	The Lord delights in those who put their Hope in Him.
1 Corinthians 9: 16-23	Paul tries to be all things to all people, so that by all possible means some might be saved.
Mark 1: 29-39	Jesus heals Peter's mother in law He heals others, prays and preaches in Galilee

### Introduction

Today I would like to look at two aspects from our bible readings.

Firstly, I would like to look at how the readings from Isaiah and Psalm 147 tell us about the enormity of God.

And secondly, I would like to look at how the readings from 1 Corinthians and Mark's Gospel tell us that the way to know God, is in Jesus.

### The Enormity of God

As affluent westerners, I think we often miss the enormity of God. We pigeon hole God if you like. God's out there somewhere, someone we pray to if we're in trouble. We spend an hour a week worshipping with others. We go about our daily lives, not necessarily ignoring God, but sometimes not necessarily acknowledging God that much either.

Sometimes I think we make the big mistake of making God too Small. I think someone even wrote a book once, entitled "Your God is too Small."

The Old Testament readings today remind us that God is anything but Small.

Isaiah Says –

"Have you not known? Have you not heard?" Isaiah is basically saying "God has Created the Lot" – everything there is to see and know has been brought into being by God. Isaiah makes the comment "to God we're mere grasshoppers".

The Psalmist tells us –

He determines the numbers of the Stars.

God is so BIG. God is so much BIGGER than our brains can even begin to understand.

So, if God is so big what about us? Do we even matter to God?

Isaiah (40:31)says:-

<sup>31</sup> but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

The Psalmist (147:11) says:-

<sup>11</sup> But the Lord's delight is in those that fear him:  
who wait in hope for his mercy.

We exist to Praise God. That is how we should live our lives. If we seek to do this then we can be assured that we will know and feel God's love for us back.

### Knowing God in Jesus

Let us turn now to the New Testament, and how we might know God in Jesus.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul is letting them know he will do everything he can so that others might come to have faith in Jesus. For Paul, this was not just a nice thing to do. It was critical. It was a matter of life or death. Knowing God through Jesus is not some sort of optional extra for life. It is the way to life itself, as we are meant to live, in a relationship with God.

In Mark's Gospel, we're still only in chapter one, and yet it's packed full of action from Jesus.

We hear how Jesus heals Peter's Mother in law and others. It seems to me he does this for the following reasons:-

- Show his power
- So people would believe by what He said and did.

We also hear how Jesus silenced demons so the Messiah could be revealed in God's time not Satan's.

Then we hear how Jesus retreats to prayer. From this we can learn that:-

- Jesus found renewal in prayer
- Jesus made time to pray
- We also need to make time to pray

Then we hear how Jesus travels and preaches:-

<sup>38</sup> He answered, 'Let us go on to the neighbouring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do.' <sup>39</sup> And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Jesus came to point people to Himself. Yes, he healed many as a sign of who he was, but his main purpose was to proclaim who he was, and that, through his life, death and resurrection, all of humanity might be drawn to God. Jesus' ministry included physical healing, but it extends so far beyond. In him there is the offer of not only being healed physically, but also spiritually, fully, entirely. In Jesus our whole being finds its rest. In him we are healed of everything.

Today in the stories of Jesus, we hear not only of his miraculous power to heal. But of the balance he displayed.

Balance in caring for people and telling them of himself.

Balance in working and praying.

If balance was important for Jesus it should be important for us. We are called firstly to spend time with God in prayer, so that we might be strengthened to do God 's work in the world.

### Conclusion

So what might we take into our lives this week as we dwell on the readings we've heard from Scripture.

Well, firstly we should be reminded of the enormity of God, and our need to worship God.

And secondly, from the New testament readings, and especially the gospel passages of a Jesus in action, is that Jesus is the way for us to know God.

How did the people of his time realize who Jesus was?

It was by his words and actions. By what they saw in him, they came to realize that Jesus was God. How do people know we are Christians?

We know because of our faith, because of what we believe. We know that salvation is only available by faith in Jesus and through God's grace.

Those around us who aren't Christians may not know this. The only way they might know we are Christians is by what we do and what we say.

The only way they might see Jesus is in us.

This week when your family, your neighbours, or your work colleagues see you? What will they see? Will they see the healing power of Jesus in you?