

Bible Study
Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 25, Year A
October 29, 2017

[RCL]: Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8; Matthew 22:34-46

Deuteronomy 34:1-12

Functionally, this passage tells of the geographical conquest that the Israelites have achieved, and the passing of power from Moses to Joshua. However, I think the most intriguing part is just at the end – “Never since has there arisen a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.” This idea of God knowing us face to face is so appealing to me. There is an intimacy—a closeness—of looking into someone’s eyes, and I can’t help but wonder what that kind of intimacy with God was like for Moses.

Who knows us face to face in our lives? How might God know us this way, too? When someone looks at us face to face, what do we turn away from?

Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17

This psalm is all about time. It speaks of the time before the mountains were called forth, and the time that we will return to the earth and become dust. God, though, is timeless through it all – “from age to age, you are God.”

It reminds me of something Audre Lorde said – that time is not linear, but rather like an ocean. The past, present, and future all touch each other in our consciousness and our experiences. In this way, Moses is close to us – because he is held by God, just as we are. All of the Christians who have passed, all who came before, and all who will come after us, and all of us now, are held together by God, who is unchanging and constant.

What are the ways we remember God daily? How do we strive to be faithful to God as God is faithful to us?

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

There is something about many of the epistles that appeals to me. I think it is because I love to receive mail so much. I am enamored, in some ways, with the idea of churches writing to one another in encouragement in the faith – I do not always like what Paul has to say, but the idea behind it, that together we are made stronger as the body of Christ, is so appealing to me. Here, in one of the more pastoral letters, Paul talks to the community about his love for them. He talks about how dear the Thessalonians are, and how much he wants to share the gospel with them.

With whom do you want to share the gospel? Who is near to your heart?

Matthew 22:34-46

In this gospel, we see love as the greatest commandment. Those who are trying to trick Jesus are answered with love – that the greatest commandment is to love God and then one another. In this gospel, loving God and loving one another are so intricately tied to each other. I like that we love and serve God, in part, by loving and serving one another. It makes me think, too, of the way we define church. Surely, we should be loving and serving others all day long. Perhaps it is by smiling and saying thank you to the coffee barista in the morning, or maybe we can treat someone to lunch today, or maybe we can give our time and our hearts to be present with a co-worker or friend going through a rough patch, or maybe we can cook dinner for someone else—the opportunities are endless. We are in a world in need, giving us the opportunity to meet and love God wherever we go.

How did you serve God today? How did you love another?

Jazzy Bostock is a sun-loving, big-dreaming, laugh-adoring, God-praising, Native Hawaiian woman, in her third year at seminary. She believes deeply in the power of kindness, compassion, gentleness, and most of all, love. She is grateful for the opportunity God has given her to be here, and for all that God is. Mahalo piha.

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