

A Sermon Preached at Maple Street Congregational Church, UCC
Danvers, MA
Rev. Kevin M Smith
August 12, 2018
John 6:35-39

Putting into the Light

[There is a story] *about a pilot who always looked down intently on a certain valley in the Appalachians when the plane passed overhead. One day his co-pilot asked, "What's so interesting about that spot?" The pilot replied, "See that stream? Well, when I was a kid I used to sit down there on a log and fish. Every time an airplane flew over, I would look up and wish I were flying... Now I look down and wish I were fishing."*
(www.ministry127.com)

I think it's really difficult to live in the present. My mind tends to wander off into things of the past that I have done or said. Sometimes the memories bring a smile to my heart, but there are many times, too, where I just cringe and say to myself, "Kevin, you idiot! Why did you have to say that? Or, why did you do that? What a goofball!"

I don't always day-dream about the past. In fact, I probably spend more time day-dreaming about the future. Ok, folks, you are probably going to think your pastor is really weird and it time for Pastor Kevin to spend a few hours on the therapist's couch, but I *just* don't day dream about the future, I come up with intricate schemes and plans imagining every little detail that will happen. In these times when I'm lost in my day-dream I also carry on very specific word for word dialogue in my mind with people. I've often thought that I should write a novel because I can conjure up such detailed dialogues between people all in my mind. Guess what, folks I've had dialogues with some of you in my mind!! Now, please don't ask me if I was dialoguing with you in my day-dream or what we said because I'm sure I cannot remember! Who knows? Maybe one day you or someone very much like you will show up as a character in my first novel!

Now, I have a confession to make that most of my day-dreaming happens when I'm shaving, brushing my teeth, or in the shower. These are my "bathroom musings," you might say. Not sure what it is about the bathroom that brings these musing on but perhaps it's because the routines

are so mundane that it's easy for my mind to wander off. Often times in the shower when I'm having one of the dialogues with somebody in my mind when I come out of it I can't remember if I shampooed and washed my hair or not. I buy a lot of shampoo!

Do you do this? Please tell me that you do or I will have to schedule some more time with a therapist, or perhaps, just wait patiently for the day when they open up the old Danvers State Hospital again! Come on...who here does a lot of day dreaming? Do you have dialogues with people in your day-dreams?

I do have to admit, though, that there have been a lot of times that day-dreaming has been beneficial to me and to my work. Often times I get epiphanies about how to make good things come true here at the church or in my life in general. Day-dreaming in such detail can help me create a step-by-step plan for how to achieve something that I want to happen. So, I guess, day-dreaming about the future is not always such a bad thing. Take my golf game. Out on the golf course, I do some day-dreaming, too. I can often conjure up a lighted pathway-way from my ball on the putting green right to the hole. The light that I envision actually follows the contour of the green and if I can putt into that light, I can usually sink the ball or come very close to it. *Remember, folks, putt into the light.*

Speaking of the light, how about the light of Christ in your life? I've always thought it was a great word for Jesus Christ—the “Son” of God, or put another way the “S-u-n” of God or the light of God. I think that Jesus is the light of God that because he was also human helps show a side of God to us that we humans can comprehend. The way or path of Jesus is also a pretty good light to follow that can highlight the contours of your life and show you the way to your goal. Remember, putt into the light.

Think back to our gospel lesson from John this morning: ³⁵*Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.*³⁶*But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe.* ³⁷*Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away;* ³⁸*for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.* ³⁹*And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me but raise it up on the last day.* Raise it up, folks! Rise up the light of God into your life!

When Jesus is talking about him being the “bread of life” that will always satisfy your hunger and quench your thirst I think he is actually telling his followers, including us, that we shouldn’t worry so much, that we should be more content and be filled with God’s light and purpose.

Jesus used the metaphor of bread, hunger, and thirst because they are the most basic essentials to life. When we day-dream about stuff we have done or said that causes us to cringe and have regret, don’t dwell on it too much. That time has passed. Learn from your mistakes and move on. If something you said to someone really makes you cringe in pain you might need to go back to that person and apologize if you haven’t already. But, don’t dwell on it, be content that God has those moments well in hand and can make a butterfly out of larva.

But, especially when it comes to the future, that is the time that we really must put our trust in God. Be contented that God has the future well in hand. There is something about trusting in God, believing in the power of the Holy Spirit, hoping for goodness, kindness, and love to win in the end that even with all the heartache, and hurt, and pain that can befall human beings and other creatures that all will indeed be well in the end because God so loved the world that he gave us love. Love in the form of a human being that reflected perfectly the image of God and the pathway to the light.

So, the next time you catch yourself day-dreaming about the past and cringing or day-dreaming about the future just don’t take it so seriously. If you get an epiphany that causes you to want to apologize to someone or if pondering the future and you have an epiphany about something you need to get done, chalk it up to God nudging you in that moment. But, most of all if you have faith, if you believe that we are not always in control of the past or the future, or even the present, if you trust that even in the midst of the pain of being human God loves you unconditionally and you are enough for God then you can live a more contented life and reduce your stress of living.

And, my friends, the greatest words of wisdom I can give, that I have ever given you is this: Remember, always, always, putt into the light on the greens of your life. Amen.

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