



Everyday Epiphanies: Bible Study with Pastor Hetrick

WEEK ONE: "Possibility"

The season of Epiphany began with Isaiah's "Arise, Shine, for your light has come!" We celebrate not only a day, but a season of Epiphany.

Opener: Walter Brueggeman poem, "Epiphany."

Can be found online at:

https://www.journeywithjesus.net/PoemsAndPrayers/Walter_Brueggemann_Epiphany.shtml



The Gospel of Luke presents stories that can either be stories of Epiphanies (AHA! Moments) or Tales of Missed Opportunities. Showing up in the midst of what seems like the everyday. Luke's gospel was written to those who were not the chosen and focuses upon awareness of God's presence and what is possible when incarnation is reality.

Reversal and joy. Luke gives us Jesus reading in the temple and telling people that today Scripture is fulfilled, but they respond in anger. Luke also tells of fishermen who fish all night yet come up empty, but when Jesus appears, they have more fish than they can imagine. They drop everything to follow Jesus. These stories seem to call to mind the singularly epic.

But what about our every day? How can we experience God's epiphanies, participate in them and even pursue them?

These weeks we'll go deeper with readings from Luke that we have heard, or will before we reach the end of the season of Epiphany.

As we explore God's word, perhaps we will deepen our capacity to expect Everyday Epiphanies and participate in God's moments of opportunity wherever they arise;

BACKGROUND: Remember Luke was written for Gentiles- not the chosen. Hold that as we hear the gospel each time. A message for those who are "not the chosen."

to share what we have seen; and embrace God's revelation for ourselves and God's world.

Hi's and Lows: Take a moment to think about a high and low in your past week. Share it with someone if you can. Where have you seen light? Felt God's presence, or grace when we have an empty tank?

The first reading is a story about believing what God's presence in Jesus and God's power make possible 4:21-30.

The lead up is these verses:

14 Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. 15 He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. 16 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: 18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

"Today this is fulfilled."

For a moment, there must have been a suspended animation moment. Those in the synagogue should be expecting the Messiah.

Can you imagine being there?
Would this be an AHA moment?

OR

Would we doubt? They know him, they think. It's just Joseph's son. How can they know?

Jesus responds: (VOLUNTEER)

"Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself!' And you will tell me, 'Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.'" 24 "Truly I tell you," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown. 25 I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. 26 Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. 27 And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian." 28 All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. 29 They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. 30 But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

They thought they were just coming to the usual everyday worship. And now this!

Why are they so angry?

What is Jesus getting at when he says, "Others could have been healed. Other widows could have been spared"?

This is Jesus' way of calling out the missed opportunities to care for others already before them.

And they are furious. You have the nerve, Jesus!

And yet our lives are so full and busy, can we see gospel happening?

Jesus is also saying, "And you can embrace this or not." Because **Scripture IS fulfilled** is not dependent upon us.

TO PONDER: Why might those in the synagogue not been attuned to God's work or presence?

Perhaps we face things in our own lives that block our capacity to encounter Christ in our midst:

Compassion fatigue, personal struggles, indifference, ignorance, fear

Maybe there is something to this idea- You can embrace it or not.

CLOSING PRAYER

Seek prayer requests and then Read Walter Brueggeman's " Epiphany" again.