

The Road Less Traveled – May 1, 2020

I was going to bed the other night when it hit. It started as a low rumble that was barely perceptible inside the house. Then the lighting started, lighting up the window shades. By the time the rain hit, the thunder and the lightning created a dramatic concert across the night sky. The rain and hail provided the rhythmic background for the show, which brought with it the promise of cleansing and new life.

I don't usually reflect all that much on an evening thunderstorm. But the storm blew up as I was reading the 29th Psalm. In it the Psalmist hears the voice of God in a thunderstorm. "The voice of the Lord is over the waters," he writes. "The God of glory thunders, the Lord, over mighty waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty." And as the storm raged outside, those ancient words touched a chord deep inside me.

They reminded me that for all the talking we do in the church about listening for God, about hearing the voice of God, about seeking God and God's will, we all live in the awesome presence of God every moment of our lives. The very world around us bears constant witness to the majesty and splendor of a Creator who creates a reality that is in perfect harmony. The same grass that dried and withered under the brutal sun of the summer greedily soaked up the rain, and the circle of life continued. I watch as my cat leaps effortlessly from the floor to the table – where she is forbidden to be, incidentally – and marvel at the fact that God created her to do that, which for me would be like jumping to the top of a two-story building. I still remember holding my children for the first time and marveling at the absolute perfection of the design -- and realizing that only God can do that. For all of our technology and knowledge, we still can't do it. We can imitate and manipulate, but we can't create.

In short, the awesomeness of the world in which we live is a constant reminder of the awesomeness of its Creator. I think American poet and early Civil Rights activist James Weldon Johnson put it best in his 1927 poem, "Creation":

Then God reached out and took the light in his hands,
And God rolled the light around in his hands
Until he made the sun;
And he set the sun a-blazing in the heavens.
And the light that was left from making the sun
God gathered it up in a shining ball
And flung it against the darkness,
Spangling the night with moon and stars.
Then down between
The darkness and the light
He hurled the world;
And God said, That's good!

See you Sunday.