

Wednesday - April 8

You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever.

Psalms 16:11 (NLT)

While taking a discernment class at PUMC a summer or two ago, the following question was posed as an ice breaker: “When in the last week have you felt the presence of God?” For some reason on that particular day I stumbled with the inquiry. I couldn’t come up with a quick answer to share with the group and in the moment I felt flummoxed. In my mind and gut it should’ve been an easy question to answer...but for reasons unclear I couldn’t name it. I could not, for the life of me, pull a description from my memory bank and that made me sad. Terribly sad. Why was this so difficult for me? Surely I know God is everywhere. Our Heavenly Father is to the east, the west, in front of and behind us each step of the way. So WHY then could I not share my experience? I quickly ran through in my head all my “Christian” moments. I reflected on my early morning prayers, the Christian podcasts I listened to, the moments in my days to love others as a mom, a wife, a neighbor, a teacher, and still...I came up empty. Since that day the question and the feeling of unknowing has haunted me, causing me some anguish and encouraging some healthy reflection. What is keeping me from recognizing Him? Why am I unaware of His presence? Am I creating margin in my life to see and hear from Him? Why am I full of knowledge ABOUT Him, yet not in a relationship WITH Him?

I am quite sure I do not have all the answers, but I do know I am a step or two closer to knowing, truly knowing my friend and father. I have come to realize my faith journey requires a slower pace. Time purposefully built in for solitude and silence amidst the movement and hustle. As I slow down and simplify, the question originally asked of me has become clearer, and on most days I can say exactly where I have seen God. Today I encourage you to take some time to sit and to listen. God is longing for you to truly know Him and feel His presence.

“First, it is “me and Him.” I come to prayer conscious of myself, my need, my desires. I pour these out to God. Second, prayer becomes “Him and me.” Gradually I become more conscious of the presence of God than of myself. Then it is only “Him.” God’s presence arrests me, captivates me, warms me, works on me.”
- Stephen Verney

Heidi

Prayer: Loving Father, thank you for Your never ending love and grace. As I walk this journey of faith, grant me the wisdom to put You first. I long to live in Your presence all the days of my life. Help me to slow down and listen for Your guidance and encouragement so that I may truly know and abide in You. Amen.