



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen- December 22, 2022

The Lord be with you.

Immanuel, God is with us. That has been the daily theme of our Advent devotional this year. As the Gospel of Matthew opens with that wonderful Christmas time prophecy of Isaiah that says, Behold, the Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Immanuel, which means God is with us. And the same Gospel of Matthew actually closes out with the last verse of the Gospel as Jesus promises us, Remember, I am with you always to the end of the age. And I think that Jesus asked us to remember because Jesus knows that you and I can be prone to forget. So Jesus says, Remember, remember, I am with you always. I'm with you when you're facing trouble. I'm with you when you don't know what to do. I'm with you when you're struggling with temptation. Jesus Immanuel is with you right now. Jesus is always present to us, but we're not always present to him.

And so that's why today I want to share with you what has become one of the most important spiritual practices in my life, a spiritual practice that has made a big difference in my daily walk with God, a spiritual practice that helps me to live more and more in the awareness that God is always with us.

The spiritual practice is the daily God hunt. And I learned the daily God hunt from David and Karen Mains in their book *Daring to Dream Again*. And actually, what they call the daily God hunt is a modern version of what is an ancient spiritual practice. You see, some people hunt for treasure. Some people hunt for gold. Some people hunt for deer and people hunt for all kinds of things. But I like to hunt for God. And here's how the daily God hunt works. It's really pretty simple, but very powerful. The daily God hunt begins first thing in the morning before my feet hit the floor. It begins with a prayer, something like this. Dear Lord, I'm going to be looking for you today. I'm going to be hunting for you in my day. Please give me eyes to see you. Amen.

The prophet Isaiah in Isaiah chapter six, he says that the whole earth is filled with the glory of God. So that means that God is right there for us to see him in his glory. The apostle Paul in Acts chapter 17, it says of God that in him we live and move and have our being so that our lives are immersed in, our lives are surrounded by the very presence and glory of God every day of our lives.

And so I like to begin the day asking God to help me to see him in my day. And then with eyes wide open, I'm hunting for God in my day. I'm looking for God to show up, looking for God to show up in ways like, well, I hunt for God in an answer to prayer. I hunt for God as he shows himself in his creation. It might be a beautiful sunrise or, you know, just the other day, my wife and I were out for a walk and we just had to stop and look at the amazing beauty of a flower. I couldn't help but say to my wife, you know, God is really showing off today. In addition to hunting for



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God's presence in an answer to prayer or his presence in his creation, I like to hunt for God as he is present in another person. It might be a phone call from a friend or a special Christmas card with a note or it might be the wise counsel from a friend that is God's presence to us in another person. I hunt for God's presence as God helps us to do his work in the world. God gives us the words to say to a hurting friend or God gives us strength to keep on going in time of trouble. I hunt for God in synchronous events, you know, those coincidences that things just come together at the right time. And I know that's God. Or I hunt for any evidence of God and his love and care throughout the day. Any sense of God's presence during a time of trouble, God making a way in a rough economy. It all means just stopping to pay attention to pay attention to the God who is always present to us. And we seek to be present to him.

Well, I bet you could probably add to my own list of ways in which you find God in your daily God hunt. So the God hunt begins in the morning asking God to to give you eyes to see him during the day. You know, God will do that. And then throughout the day, as you're hunting for God, you're you're paying attention for those ways in which God is always with us. OK, now something really important for the daily God hunt, and that is as you end your day. As you end your day, take a few moments to think back over your day and note your daily God sightings. That's what I like to call them. God sightings. That's what they are. Note the God sightings that you had during the day. And I find that as I do this, I am often surprised at how many times God shows up in my day as I'm hunting for him. And besides giving me the joy of thinking back over God's presence in my day, I find that by noting my God sightings, it actually sharpens my spiritual vision for the next day to help me to be more alert to God's presence with me in the day. So the last thing that my wife and I like to do at night before we turn out the light, we we think back over the day. We share God's sightings. We share God's sightings and and that helps us in paying attention to God. And we find that in sharing our God sightings, we're actually encouraging each other in God. And I find that people, young and old, that they really catch on to the daily God hunt. And you know, I will say that I, as I speak to people say 20 years ago about the daily God hunt, that they mentioned to me today, God sightings.

And so I often begin a Bible study or begin a class, asking people to share their God sightings. And I find that people look forward to sharing their God sightings. God's presence becomes more and more real to us and becomes encouraging to others so that God is more than just a deduction to a logical argument that God exists. God is more than just an idea up here in our heads. But God is really with us, loving us, caring for us, wanting us to know that he is really with us. And I find that makes a big difference in my life. That truly he is Immanuel. He is God with us. That's why Jesus came. That is the good news of Christmas.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thank you for listening until next time.