

Scripture: Psalm 8 & John 1:1-5

Meditation Title: "A Grounded Faith"

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While growing up on my parent's farm in Central Pennsylvania, it became very clear to me, from an early age even, that farming was not my calling in life. But, you know, when you are born as a farm kid, you will help work the farm whether you really want to or not and so I helped out in a variety of ways, helping to care for the animals and for the land, but again, I always knew that it was not my calling in life. And so, when I went off to college and then to seminary as I followed my calling to ministry, my connection to the earth became distanced as I threw myself into study and into the search of finding my sense of calling.

Nevertheless, after 7 years of college and seminary were drawing to a close, I felt the strangest sensation – I felt a need for my faith to be grounded. What do I mean by that? I felt the need for my life to be connected again, as it was all those years on the farm, with creation. And in the moment, I couldn't explain where this need was coming from but I knew it was a need that must be filled. And so, for my first summer after seminary, I joined a friend of mine as we spent the summer landscaping and it was just what I needed. I needed to feel the ground in my hands once more. I needed to feel the sun beating down on me. I needed to feel the breeze and the occasional raindrops. I needed to feel the aches of a body that worked the land long and hard. I needed to have my faith reconnected with creation. I needed to marvel at the miracle of growth. I needed to see the water nurture flowers and to witness the sun encourage growth. In short, I needed to be surrounded once again, like I was for all of my childhood, by creation which, at its very core and by its very existence, proclaims God's glory.

As we heard in Psalm 8 today, the Psalmist sees the glory of God as they look upon creation – up to the sky, to the stars, to, as they put, to the "work of God's fingers". And when the Psalmist sees all of these things they are led to wonder, why us? Why is humanity given such an honor and responsibility to have dominion over it all? And, in

the end, the Psalmist doesn't give us an answer to that question, but the fact remains – that all that is around us, we have the honor and responsibility to have dominion over it all.

So how shall we rule? How shall we care? How shall we treat this creation? In the gospel of John, as he begins with this very poetic understanding of the Word, the Truth revealed in Jesus, we are reminded that, in essence, Christ was there from the very beginning. That the Word was part of creating – not just you, not just me, not just humanity but in creating the earth: the seas, the sky, all that crawls upon the earth and flies above it. And so, when we celebrate the glories of Easter and the unending and eternal love with which Jesus rules in our hearts, we are shown the way in which we should also love – love each other, love all of creation – creation which was nurtured into existence through the Word. And so, shouldn't the ways in which we exercise dominion over creation mirror the love shown to us in Jesus? Shouldn't we cherish the gift of the earth as Jesus cherishes us? Shouldn't we strive to nurture new life in creation as Christ nurtures new life within us? Shouldn't we strive to share the gifts of the earth as we strive to share Christ's love?

Sometimes, we just need our faith to be grounded once more. We need to marvel at the miracles of creation. We need to express the care that God extends to us as we care for all that is around us. We need to hear the praises from creation in ways that only the earth can proclaim. We need to be reminded of our role and reminded of the great gift that the earth is – a gift for generations passed and generations yet to come. And we need to be reminded of God's love – a love that created the world and breathed life into our very being. Will you join me in sharing God's love as we live our grounded faith? Amen.