Where Have You Been?

"Have you entered the springs of the sea? Or have you walked in search of the depths?" - Job 38:16

It’s a simple question, but it almost always evokes complex responses. The answer is also affected by the person asking the question. Think about a mother asking one of her children where he or she has been. If it is someplace the mother doesn’t want the child to be, or if it is going to promote greater scrutiny, that child may struggle producing a clear answer. If it is a case of some friend asking, a short and simply answer will generally suffice.

There is a secondary story in 2 Kings 5 that addresses the question at hand. Naaman returned to Elisha after dipping in the river and being healed. Elisha has sent the army commander on his way, refusing to accept a gift or payment. After a very short time, Elisha’s servant, Gehazi, pursues Naaman to gain what Elisha had refused. As he then returns to his duties, Elisha asks, “Where did you go, Gehazi?” Not wanting to disclose his actions, he responds with a lie, “Your servant did not go anywhere.” Did he really think he could get out of his deceit so easily? Such stories remind us that where we go, and the reasons for going are important parts of the display of character in our lives.

It is not always where we have been that identifies our development and knowledge. The familiar Three Dog Night song, “Never Been to Spain”, illustrates concepts of places that have not been visited. According to the lyrics, the person involved has never been to Spain, England, or heaven. In each case there is an alternate thought. There is an appreciation of the music from Spain, the Beatles from England, and a birth in Oklahoma as a replacement for heaven. Again we are reminded that not having been to a
place leaves us at a disadvantage in trying to address it in a responsible way. I mean, how can you describe heaven if you’ve never been there? Still, it is not uncommon to think we can. As another song states, “Heaven, I’m in heaven, And my heart beats so that I can hardly speak …”

In the wandering story of Job and his critics, there is a sense that they have made personal determinations of how everything in the world, and beyond, ought to be. When the Lord finally intervenes, he addresses that kind of arrogance and misrepresentation. The Lord doesn’t address the things of the spiritual world, but does question them about the broader concepts of the limited physical world. “Have you been to …?” It is a reminder of our limitations and our tendency to stretch our intellectual coverage over things we do not know. While we may have some thoughts and mental pictures of places, processes, and powers, our concepts may well be far from accurate.

So, as you pause and think about it, there is not competition in the question. There is no need for pretense. No one needs to be impressed. Hopefully, there is the honest look, and real understanding. Where you have been or not been is as it is. Of course, the contrast is found in God. He has been and is there.

— Russ

**Upcoming Events**

**For the Ladies**

- This year, instead of having a cookie exchange at Christmas time, we will be putting together Holiday Baskets. These will be shared with those in our Southern Ridge family who need a little extra TLC. — There will be a meeting in September to discuss the details. — Come bring your creativity and help us plan!
- Also, take note: There will be a “Ladies Night Out” on Saturday, September 21, please sign the list on the bulletin board. It will be an enjoyable time for the ladies of the congregation. If you have any questions, see Kari Dyer.
- The next All Church Dinner is today, following the morning worship. It is a great time to be together.
- There is a VBS Meeting today following the dinner. We will move forward in our planning for a great VBS in 2020.
- The Ladies’ Coffee — The Ladies’ Coffee has resumed. The next meeting will be September 20, at 10 am.
- The Men’s Breakfast — The next men’s breakfast is September 28 at 8:00 am.
- Real hope never disappoints!

**Happy Anniversary**

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<tr>
<td>Dale &amp; Rhonda Crews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Russ &amp; Paula Dyer</td>
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**Happy Birthday**

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<tbody>
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<td>Dennis Dodd</td>
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<td>Joe Denney</td>
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<td>George King</td>
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**Sympathy:** We offer our loving sympathy to the Hatfield family in the passing of Rae Hatfield. Rae passed on Saturday, September 7, and a funeral was held at Southern Ridge on Thursday.

⇒ A Special Thank-You: to Josh for leading the singing and handling the sound as well as the projection, to the cooks providing the good food, to those who decorated, and to those who served during the dinner for the Hatfield family. You always do a wonderful work, and it is appreciated more than these words express.

⇒ Youth: The Area Wide Teen Gathering is this evening at 5:00 PM at the Blanchard Church of Christ. See Brian Huff for more information.

**Keep In Your Prayers**

- Teah Ausmus had surgery last Monday and is home with the Randy and Linda, as she recovers.
- George Holmes is in the Healthplex with serious lung issues.
- Donna Myers, cousin of Fred Babbit is having surgery to remove a brain tumor on September 18.
- Riley Baldwin—had another throat surgery last week.
- Debra Ruminer is undergoing chemo treatments. It was his 117th surgery.
- George King has moved to the VA Center in Norman. He is in room D-202.

**Also remember:**

Wayne Haynes
Joan Keenan
Letha Meador
Wayne Reynolds

**Daily Bible Reading**

15) Lamentations 1-2; John 6
16) Lamentations 3-5
17) Amos 1-3; John 7
18) Amos 4-6
19) Amos 7-9
20) Ezekiel 1-2; John 8
21) Ezekiel 3-4; John 9
22) Ezekiel 5-7

Then let our songs abound!