

March 6, 2016 – Fourth Sunday of Lent

The God We Worship: Some Byproducts of Knowing God

Hebrews 11:6

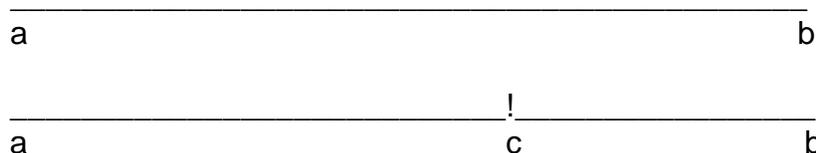
And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.

I want to show you this beautiful drawing by James Berger. He has attended our church over the years. He is the same artist of the painting that you see as you go downstairs to the Fellowship Hall (the painting of our church in the hands of God). I remember when he had the idea for that painting and told me about it, then some time later gave it to us.

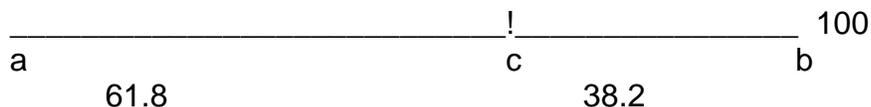
Last week he was here and gave me this print of perhaps one of his most inspired drawing. God gave him the idea for this work of art. It represents peace: on the left is an olive tree, the olive branch is a symbol of peace. Then there is the dove, another symbol of peace; And, of course the lion lying down with the lamb another sign of peace. But also symbolized in the drawing is the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, the Father and the son; for our ultimate peace comes from God.

I spoke to Jim to thank him for this wonderful and beautiful gift. It was during that conversation that he asked me if I had ever heard of the Golden Ratio. I said I hadn't and he gave me a quick lesson, and then mentioned that he had used the Golden Ratio in his drawing. He told me to look it up on the internet. So I did.

Golden Ratio is also known as Golden Section or Divine Section. Let me attempt to give you a brief explanation of what it is. Take a look at this line.



You will see that the full line goes from a to b and I marked a point on the line (c). It looks pretty good there – don't you think? At the place where I put point C the bigger part (from a to c) divided by the smaller part (c to b) is equal to the whole line (ab) divided by the larger part (ac). (Did I lose you yet?)



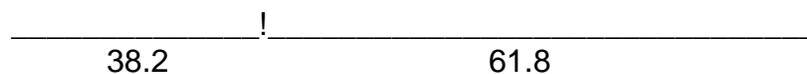
Let's say that line is 100 (inches, feet, miles whatever) inches. The larger part of the line where I put my mark (from point A to point C) is 61.8 inches and the section from C to B is 38.2 inches. If you add $61.8 + 38.2 = 100$. [Take out calculators on phones, I know you have them.]

$$\frac{61.8}{38.2}$$

The bigger part divided by the smaller part = 1.618 (And yes not exact number goes on infinitely, but we'll round up)

Now divided the whole line $\frac{100}{61.8}$ by the larger part and what do you get? It also = 1.618

That number, 1.618 is what is known as the Golden Ratio. I could break that line at any other point but only at that precise point (c) [or of course if I switched the larger and smaller points & had 38.2 on the left and 61.8 on the right]



only at those points would this equation come out right. Only then would the bigger part divided by the smaller part be equal to the whole line divided by the larger part.

This is the Golden Ratio or the Golden section and is considered the most aesthetic place. So I wasn't just joking with you when I said where I put my mark looked pretty there. James Berger used this principle as he placed the images where he placed them on this rectangle drawing.

Even the shape of this picture, uses this concept of the Golden Section. This shape is the most typical shape of framed paintings. Even look at most signs on the street they are this shape as well. This is because it is believed to be the most pleasing to the eye. And the ratio of the difference between the width and the height of this shape is 1.618.

The Golden Ratio was discovered mathematically while striving toward beauty and completeness. The Golden Ratio or the Golden Section is believed to be the most pleasing and beautiful. Many works of art as well as buildings have Golden Ratio in them. The Parthenon in Greece was shaped this way – though we don't know why.

But Golden Section goes beyond drawings and buildings. When plants grow new cells they grow them in spirals (such as the beautiful Sunflower – note the spiral design in the middle of the sunflower). The spiral happens because each new cell is formed by a turn. A new cell forms, then a turn, then another new cell, then a turn. This doesn't happen only with the sunflower, but pine cones, leaves, branches, even pedals of other flowers, why? In order to prevent new leaves or pedals from blocking the sun from older leaves and so that the maximum amount of rain and dew gets directed down to the roots. So there is a purpose for this turn. So how much of a turn has to be made between the new cells that forms this beautiful design? 1.618!

Now get this, the Golden ratio is also found in sea shells, and snail shells, in the skeleton of Animals, in hurricanes, in the spirals found in the galaxies including our

Milky Way, in the different length of our fingers from the tip of our fingers to the base of our wrist, in DNA molecules, and its fullest realization is found in the human form. No wonder it has become known as the Divine Section!

How can you not believe in a creator? How could this just happen? Or how could it come about by a big bang theory. You may call Him a Supreme Being, a Higher Power, Creator, or God, but I want you to know you can also know Him as Father and Friend.

During Lent we have been talking about the God we worship. Like the Bible in these Lenten messages we have just assumed the existence of God. That's right, the Bible doesn't set out to prove the existence of God it assumes His existence. The very first verse of the Bible is:

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

So the Bible begins, simply as a matter of fact that God exists and that He is the creator of everything we can see and can't see. And, as we saw last week, the Creator – and it's beyond my comprehension, but God desires a personal relationship with us, even intimate friendship. He initiates the friendship but it is entered and maintained by faith.

Hebrews 11:6

And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.

Last week we talked about friendship with God. We can know God personally. And as we get to know God through our fellowship with Him we will realize certain benefits (He rewards those who sincerely seek Him). Of course we worship God not for the benefits we might receive, but simply because He is God and is worthy of worship and praise. However, there are some fantastic perks to loving and knowing Him. Dan DeHaan in *The God You Can Know*, listed some of these benefits, I'd like to share them with you this morning:

- Character Development

As we begin to know our Creator – God we learn that He is loving, holy, faithful, true and wants us to be like Him. He reveals Himself in all He created, but the best and most important revelation is found in Jesus and His purpose is to make us like Jesus.

Colossians 3:2

Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.

We become what we worship. If we focus on the things of earth, worldly things and individuals we will become like them. If we focus on Christ we will become like Him.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (THE MESSAGE)

Nothing between us and God, our faces shining with the brightness of his face. And so

we are transfigured much like the Messiah, our lives gradually becoming brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives and we become like him.

In his book Dan DeHaan writes

Find me a worshiper of God, and I will show you a stable man with his mind in control, ready to meet the present hour with refreshment from above.

- Dan DeHaan, *The God You Can Know*

- Freedom from Intimidation

Colossians 2:6-10

And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ. For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.

How can we avoid the trap of verse 8? How can we avoid being intimidated by the world? How can we avoid being taken in with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ.

The answer is found in verse 7. Be rooted in Christ, and build your life on Him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

Paul uses two metaphors in these verses:

First, be *rooted* in Christ. Just as plants draw nourishment from the soil through their roots, so believers should draw life-giving strength from Christ. The more we draw strength from Christ, the less likely to be fooled by those who falsely claimed to have life's answers.

Second, be *built on Him* or *build on Him*. Like a plant, we are "rooted" once and for all, but we have to grow continuously; and like a building, we have a solid foundation, but have to keep on building with solid materials in order to be strong.

Being rooted in Christ and building on Him is how we grow strong in the truth / or in *the* faith. Then the faith in which we are rooted, building and growing strong in should be a source of abundant thanksgiving. True understanding of what Christ has done on our behalf can lead to no other response than gratefulness.

Since we are complete in Christ, He is the only standard to compare ourselves to. And as Paul said...

Romans 8:31

If God is for us, who can ever be against us?

- Compassion

As we get to know God and gain His heart we will naturally develop compassion for others. Not only compassion for their physical and emotional needs, but for their spiritual need. After all who has a greater love and desire for the world to come to faith in Jesus than the Father? He sent His Son to live with us. He gave His one and only Son to be sacrificed for sin.

2 Corinthians 8:9 THE MESSAGE

You are familiar with the generosity of our Master, Jesus Christ. Rich as he was, he gave it all away for us — in one stroke he became poor and we became rich.

God loves and cares for those who do not yet know Him. When we have an intimate friendship with God we will also care for those who don't know Him.

- True Satisfaction in God

Philippians 4:11b-13

I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.

True satisfaction is a rare commodity these days. We tend to want bigger and better, and more and more. And it's never enough, for it never really satisfies. Paul learned the secret of contentment, it was doing everything through Christ, but more and more even Christians are basing their contentment on something other than Christ.

Matthew 5:6 THE MESSAGE

You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God. He's food and drink in the best meal you'll ever eat.

John 6:33

The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

We have to come to the right table to be fulfilled. You know what happens when you go food shopping hungry. You're tempted to by junk food. But if you feast on God you'll not find anything nearly as tempting.

God created you. The proof is in every molecule of your DNA. And you will not find peace (drawing) & rest and all you need until you rest in Him.