



LENT DEVOTIONS

Connecting to God: Walking with God (and Raven)

Pastor John Wertz Jr.

Psalm 46:10 – “Be still, and know that I am God!”

I don't do stillness well. My default in life is to go and to do. I thrive when I'm creating new projects, exploring new places, and digging into complex questions. In my role as an Assistant to the Bishop and the Director for Evangelical Mission, I typically preach in a different congregation each week and log thousands of miles in the car each month. I know that for some folks my approach to life and ministry sounds exhausting, but for me, it is energizing.



And yet, no matter how much I like to go and to do, Psalm 46 reminds me quite clearly of the value of creating intentional moments to pause, to be renewed, and to connect to God. The question, of course, is how to create stillness and connection in a way that aligns with my gifts, quirks, and interests.

For me, one answer came in the form of our dog, Raven. Raven loves to walk around the neighborhood and during the pandemic when I was sitting and working in front of a computer for hours at a time, Raven strongly encouraged me to step away from the computer and out into the fresh air. Three or four times a day, she and I would walk around the neighborhood and as we walked, I discovered that even though I was moving, I had the opportunity to being still and know God. As I walked, I saw the beauty of the mountains and breathed in fresh air. As I walked, I reflected on the scripture readings from the daily scripture email that arrives in my inbox each morning. As I walked, I prayed and listened and knew God was with me. Together, Raven and I have walked hundreds of miles and I feel sure we will walk hundreds more in the years to come. Our walks strengthen my overall health and each day, they create space to connect to God.

Admittedly, my approach to stillness involves a great deal of movement, but I have discovered that my walks with Raven are a wonderful way for me to pause, to renew my spirit, and to strengthen my relationship with God.