

August 23, 2020

Rev Jen's 18th Love Letter From Lockdown

Dear pilgrims on the journey,

Pandemic summer blessings of the Spirit to you. Wherever you may be, I trust you are resting in the presence of God by giving yourself permission to “be still and know”. Permission to rest, recover and renew. Being still is a critical part of knowing God and this Pandemic has provided plenty of opportunity for us to be “more still” by staying at home, doing only the essential things, and limiting our bubbles of connection and interaction.

For some, this pandemic has been really hard, others say nothing much has changed in their lives and still others feel they are thriving. So many diverse experiences of the same event. So many different points of view about WHAT IS... And all of them talking at the same time. These are the pandemic days.

Who do people say the Son of Man is? Jesus asks.

**They** replied...

There are some that say, “The mighty God is the living Man”. Bob Marley sings these words and inspires the God in us to “Get up and Stand up for our Rights”.

There are some that say the Son of Man is the God force at work in humanity manifesting in everyone.

They replied, John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.

**THEY** say many things about who the son of Man is....the Anchor Bible Dictionary had a lot to say about the SON of MAN tradition. Pages and pages of teeny tiny print proclaiming years of research, debate and discussion of the term, the texts and the history and traditions of the SON OF MAN in the old testament, the ancient near east traditions and the new testament.

**They** say many things. They have been saying many things for many years. And They are still talking... this is the work of theology.

And just who are THEY anyway? Who are the authorities speaking on these things? What do the experts say? Is it all just fake news? Do you believe any of it?

In our time of celebrity and endless screens, it is easy to get distracted by the many voices competing for attention and influence hoping to sway our thoughts and behaviours about what we believe. These are the times we live in.

There are many Sons of Man competing for top spot...just as in the time of Jesus.

And Jesus asks "But what about you? Who do you say that I am?"

Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

Who do YOU say that I am?

YOU...not Simon Peter, not the religious authorities, nor the conspiracy theorists.

Who you do say that I am?

This is the WTF!? Where's the faith question of the week for your theological consideration.

Imagine Jesus asking you... Who do you say that I am? What would you answer?

I have been asking and answering this question for most of my life...pondering God...wondering about Jesus and ever aware of the Holy Spirit. From a very young age I was "aware of the presence of God" and sought to describe and explain what I knew in my heart to be true. God is, God creates, God loves. And Jesus was "my brother" human and divine. Modeling the way of God.

Over the years through the experiences and explorations my understanding and definitions of Jesus have shifted, changed, and evolved as have I. My faith and understanding have grown and expanded. I still rest in the presence of God and my "awareness of the awareness" has grown exponentially. I no longer question if there is a God. I know. I live and breathe and have my being in God. This I know.

Jesus remains my complicated and complex brother. He is still my divine human and he continues to show me the way. He still shows me the way to God.

My mother taught me how to pray, Jesus taught me to pray, the church taught me to pray and I pray...everyday...I rest in the presence of God. Everyday I glory in the relationship with God by sitting in silence and resting there. And Jesus is "there"

with me and the communion of saints, the heavenly hosts, all, as we sit in the unity and oneness of the Holy Spirit. Here I am one with God. Here I belong. Here I am loved, and it is good. Here I know that GOD LOVES ME.

In these challenging Pandemic times, it is very reassuring for me to rest in God. God is my rock and Jesus is my friend on the journey, fellow traveller on the road of life.

The Son of Man, Messiah, Son of the living God, the Christ, Jesus of Nazareth... who do you say that Jesus is? What difference does it make in your life?

Please share your stories of faith. Your journey of faith and relationship with God is good news.

Tell me your stories of Jesus. I long to hear.

Let us build up the faith and equip the saints for the work of God's kingdom here and now.

Blessings to you,

Rev Jen