

Good morning,

Happy Mother's Day, I am glad to see you all this morning.

I have a one word that I want to share with you today, one word, that can help when you are in the depths of despair, one word, for when you don't know which way to go, one word, when nothing makes to sense to you. Believe... believe....

What's the difference between this Christian body and the rest of the world? That you believe... The world is noisy, there are so many voices, so much distractions, that tell you to feel hopeless, and that you are powerless, and that you don't matter, that nothing you do is good enough. So many voices...

Our gospel reading is about voice, not voices, but a voice. Jesus is speaking to some folks who really don't believe, they say, If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly." If you are who you say you are, tell us!

Jesus answered, "I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my father's name testify to me; but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand.

Believe. Jesus says my sheep know my voice...

How long has it been since you've heard the voice of Jesus?

Maybe it was this morning or yesterday, maybe it's been some years.

Let me tell you this story about me and my mother, its Mother's Day after all. It's silly, years ago I had moved out of the house to go to school and the family had moved to japan, military family, these things happen, time passes, I was growing up, life changed, my body change, voice got deeper.

But I went to visit my family, and my mom and I went shopping, she needed an outfit for something that we were doing. So we are picking out this outfit, I'm sure it was lovely, but she had to go try it on. So she went to the fitting room. I started wandering around the store while I waited.

But then I had to ask her something, I don't remember what.

So I went to the door of the fitting room, there was a bunch of women in there, its noisy, folks are talking. I have this image in my mind of this henhouse because of all the different stalls.

But I'm standing there at the door and I yell out. Ma, just like that. That's how I call my mother. And then she answers, yeah, Reese? And I was flabbergasted. You remember my voice. I haven't had to call out to you like that in years. And her I am thinking my voice is so deep and I'm so mature, so different. But my mom, she still recognizes my voice. Maybe I'm being silly, but it was touching to me.

But there's something about nature of relationships.

Especially the ones that are deep and long standing that no matter the time, no matter how much noise is around, when you hear that voice of that loved one it cuts through. That's what Jesus was talking about, my sheep know my voice.

So it doesn't matter if you last heard that voice today or two weeks ago, or if you've never that voice and the only the reason you're here this morning is cuz mom made you come. The invitation is always there. How do you hear that voice?

Believe. Believe..

The world says seeing shapes believing. But we know that that's not how God moves. I mean Jesus does help us, help us in the scriptures, by performing miracles. I mean we all can be kinda like Thomas who we heard about a couple of weeks ago

who needed that proof that he was talking to a resurrected Jesus. He needed to put his hands in Jesus wounds to get that... certainty. Jesus replies back to Thomas that doubting Thomas and says. Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.

The world says we see, then believe. Certainty is king!

But God says believe, then see. Believe.... Then see. Brothers and sisters... friends, believe...

I know there is someone here this morning. Gone through
enough, and knows that sometimes, When you're in that
darkest of night, in that loneliness of places. And you've got
nothing, you know that, that's not true, you do have
something...believe.

Jesus says my sheep hear my voice, and they will never parish.

Believe!

You are never alone; you can overcome much more than you
think. Believe!

Believe, believe, believe, believe.

Your power, your strength, does not come from your ability to do and to make, it comes from the depths of your belief.

This is the easter message, still in easter folks. Jesus died and was resurrected so that you may believe in the power of God to overcome death and pain and sickness. Not just in the galactic sense for things happening on the other side of the world, but that God can conquer all of that in your life, in all our lives...

Believe

I want to encourage you, right now, if you hear his voice, if you've heard his voice, I want you to repeat after me...

I believe

Amen