

McCabe United Methodist Church
Asking The Right Questions (part 1): *Who Do You Trust?*
Deuteronomy 6:1-8: April 6 & 7, 2013
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Her name was Mary Lou and his name was Tom. They both were in their eighties, and they were celebrating their sixtieth wedding anniversary.

A reporter from the local newspaper interviewed Mary Lou and Tom. His first question was this: **“With so many marriages failing today, what is your secret for your successful marriage?”**

Tom didn’t hesitate. **“Well,”** he said, **“Mary Lou’s father gave me this watch as a wedding present on the day we were married, (he pointed to his watch) and over the years this watch has played an important part in our successful marriage.”**

The reporter didn’t understand until he looked at the watch more closely. Written across the face of the watch were these words: **“Tom, tell Mary Lou you love her!”**

That father-in-law was a smart man. He realized that we all need reminders. We need reminders for not only good marriages, but we also need to be reminded of who we are and whose we are.

Easter is one of our reminders. On every Easter, we’re reminded that Jesus died for all of us and for the forgiveness of our sins. We’re reminded that we’ve given new life, a fresh start, with the freedom to make our own choices and decisions. We should never forget it. We are a forgiven people. We are a loved people. This is who we are and this is whose we are.

When Michelangelo was a young boy, he went to a master sculptor and asked to be one of his students. The master sculptor looked at the young Michelangelo and asked him if he knew what he asking. Did he realize what being an artist was all about? The master said, **“This will take your whole life.”**

Michelangelo replied, **“What else is life for?”**

Easter is our reminder. Jesus died for us that we might live for him. **“What else is life for?”**

Today we begin a new series we’re calling *Asking the Right Questions*. It’s a series based on a book by James W. Moore, a United Methodist pastor from Texas. Throughout this series, we’ll be asking certain questions.

Today the question is *Who Do You Trust?*

Two men were talking one day. The first man said, **“My wife has a terrible memory. She has the worst memory in the world.”**

The second man said, **“She forgets everything, huh?”**

“No,” the first man replied, **“She remembers everything.”**

Most of us are just the opposite especially men. We have trouble remembering. We're forgetful. I know I am.

This is what our passage from Deuteronomy was all about. By the time this passage was written, Moses had grown old and weak. He knew he wouldn't be with the people of Israel much longer.

Moses was afraid that the people of Israel might forget that it was God who delivered them out of Egyptian slavery. He was afraid they might forget that it was God who traveled with them for forty years and provided for all their needs. He was afraid they might forget that it was God who showed them the promised land. And he was afraid they might forget that it was God who led them into the promised land.

And so, like a string on a finger, Moses gave the people of Israel something called the *Shema* to help them remember. To help them remember *“to keep the main thing, the main thing.”* He gave them the Great Commandment of the Bible and it goes like this: *“Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might”* (Deuteronomy 6:4-5).

Moses went on, *“Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates”* (Deuteronomy 6:6-9).

In other words, Moses didn't want them to forget. **“Don't ever forget.”**

In this day and age, you and I are faced with all kinds of choices, decisions, and commitments. We wrestle with conflicting loyalties and priorities. Plus, we're just plain busy. It's easy for us to forget. Whom do you trust? Do you remember? Do you know?

I've learned many lessons during my lifetime. Some of these lessons I've had to

re-learn because I have a tendency to forget. During Holy Week, I remember hearing a voice as I was busy running from one place to another place. At that time, I was having one of those bad days. I was feeling sorry for myself. I was feeling down. I guess was having one of those 'pity parties' for myself. I was going through one of those 'Poor Rick' moments if you know what I mean.

And then this mysterious voice said to me, "**Rick, it's not about you.**" I pretty sure I know where that voice came from.

It hit me like a ton of bricks. I had forgotten this basic lesson. I thought it was all about me. What goes on in this church? What goes on in my family? What goes on in my life and the life around me? I had forgotten, that it's not about me. It's about God. What gets done gets done because of God. I'm simply an instrument that God uses. "**Rick, it's not about you.**"

Do you know what I'm talking about? It's easy to forget. It's not about you either. You, like me, are called to serve God. God uses us to make a difference in this world whether we get the credit or not.

Do you remember the musical, *The Sound of Music*? There's a great part toward the end where Captain von Trapp and Maria return from their honeymoon. They discover that the Nazis have taken over Austria and they're trying to force Captain von Trapp to join them. The von Trapps flee to a nearby abbey to escape, but the nuns tell them that all the roads are blocked at the border. Captain von Trapp decides that they will have to walk over the mountain. Maria is worried about the seven children making such a long, difficult and dangerous journey.

But then, the Mother Abbess or the head nun or the head of the abbey, quoted from Psalm 121. She said to them, "**Remember: You will not be alone. 'I lift up my eyes to the hills, from where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth'**"

In other words, "**God is with you.**"

And off they go, into an unknown future, but confident that God goes with them.

This is who we can trust. God has promised to never leave us nor forsake us. In every part of life, God will be there for us. So you see, it's not about you or me. It's about God and it's about Jesus Christ and it's about remembering whom we are and whose we are.

As God's people, we can trust God . . . always.