

“THE” Artist

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I need to start today's message with how it came about and how Sherry (VanNordstrand) and her message two Sunday's ago played a pivotal role in it.

While riding in the car as the leaves were just beginning to color, thoughts started tumbling around in my head. I knew they all meant something at the time, but I didn't know what. So, I dug in my purse for something to write on and found only a receipt. When the Holy Spirit is speaking, it can be torture if you don't act. I knew I'd forget all He was saying so I began to jot down phrases and words. I filled the back side and began to write in between the receipt charges on the front side and stuck it back in my purse, thinking it's done with now. But as the Spirit is wont to do, He would not leave me alone.

The trees were getting more color, more brilliance and the Spirit kept nudging every time we were in the car. He even gave me a title. Title for what, I thought? How or where do you want this message shared? I kept asking the Spirit, perhaps in my Inspirational messages I send out each week, I thought. No, was the answer. That just didn't feel right. Time kept passing, the Spirit kept nudging, by this time I knew very well what He wanted and I was resisting in my conversations with Him. Then that Sunday, Sherry began to speak and as she told the story of her in-laws and their resistance to Bill's and her attempts to share the Word she told of the day in the hospital when the Spirit told her to pray over her sick father-in-law and of her fear and resistance, but finally giving into the Spirit's wishes and the pleasant, positive result of her father-in-law's welcome to the prayer.

I knew what I had to do, while still resisting. I don't always feel very well and think I'm undependable. But the Spirit assured me He'd see me through. And in past experience He has. That Sunday I almost made it out of the sanctuary as I walked by Donald, still resisting and questioning. The Spirit had other plans. I marched back to Donald and asked if there was a date open in October for a service and lo and behold, he said yes there was. So here we are today. The message title is “THE” Artist.

Let these words be pleasing to You O God.

Who has visited an art gallery? We walk among the art pieces making comments as we go. Some artists speak to our souls and others leave us wondering. But those artists are just happy to share what they have created, leaving it up to each viewers' feelings to decide what they like and don't like. And so it is with “THE” Artist of all time, God Himself. Imagine if you will a palette of colorful paints with many brushes and our God enjoying His creativity for us to enjoy. Right now, we are able to feel our Creator through the colors that surround us. As the greens begin to fade, and leaves fall to the ground, we see the fiery reds – golden yellows – oranges the color of pumpkins – and every once in a while, velvety burgundies tucked in giving us a last blast of color, while the fields are turning glorious rust, signaling a time to harvest. Let's take time in our busy schedules to drink in the glory of autumn. This glorious riot of color is saying that soon there will be a change of season when “THE” Artist displays the barren trees with all their stark splendor. When the leaves have all fallen to the ground, blown in the winds and the

gray of the tree branches will show us their true shapes. As snow begins to fall, white and pristine in its purity, the branches become a work of art, taking on a beauty of their own even in their nakedness.

“THE” Artist introduces us to less color than the glorious leaves, but the barren trees are just as stunning in their simplicity and many shades of gray. As time passes, we soon tire of the winter’s starkness and we wish for a change. Up from the frozen ground, colors once again begin to poke through. “THE” Artist gets His palette with the glorious colors out once again along with His imagination and spring rushes in with yellows like the sun, whites like the moon and stars, purples and pinks to make us smile. “THE” Artist mixes His many refreshing greens as the leaves begin to pop out of the pregnant buds that have been dormant during the cold bitter winter showing us once again the glory of rebirth. Before we know it, summer and its bright colors explode with riots of color everywhere we look. Psalm 19:1 says, “The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork.”

“THE” Artist in His flurry for beauty goes on to paint the skies. Look up and notice white billowy clouds with cerulean blue skies by day and twinkling stars and moon by night. The sun rises and the sun sets each day displaying “THE” Artist’s love of color and His wish to communicate as we are surrounded with corals, pinks and lavenders. And once in a while a bonus of a heavenly rainbow that takes our breath away. Oh, the beauty of color.

As “THE” Artist worked with His stunning colors He wanted someone to share it all with, someone to enjoy His glory, someone to communicate with. Genesis 1:27a “So God created mankind in His own image.”

“THE” Artist pulled out His palette and brush once again, as He created each of us in His own image. Our colors are as glorious and various as the trees we see out our windows. Mankind is beauty in our variation of shapes and sizes and colors. We are as varied as the snowflakes that fall in winter, as colorful as the autumn leaves. Ephesians 2:10 “For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Isaiah 42:5 shares God’s word with us, this is what the Lord says, “The Creator of the heavens who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it. Who gives breath to the people and life to those who walk on it.”

God’s word in Isaiah lets us know that He uses His precious Word and His creation to talk to us. Each word, each sight reminds us that He has spoken. His Word and creation is filled with magnificent life and transforming promises. Let’s drink in every sight and. Like Jeremiah 15:16 says, “Your words were found and I ate them; and Your words became for me joy and the delight of my heart. For I have been called by Your name O Lord God of hosts.”

Think about the millions of dollars over time that has been spent on art and art objects and the messages the artist is sending to their viewers. Our artist (The Original Artist) shares His art with us at no charge. Let’s open our eyes and receive the beauty, originality and messages meant to remind us of His Word that is rife with promises, love, protection and yes, even advice. Our artist surrounds us, can you feel Him? I’m praying that if you haven’t yet, you will now. Be encouraged when we don’t feel God near us and the trials and challenges of life threaten to drown us that we remember to look up at the sky by night and beauty around us by day and know without a doubt He is all around us wrapping us up

under His wings. Psalm 91:4 "He will cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you will find refuge, His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart."

This is a beautiful message and we are to remember we are never alone because He never leaves us. Deuteronomy 31:6 says, "Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you or forsake you."

Please join me in prayer:

Heavenly Father, we are so grateful for your faithfulness to never leave us. You continue to surround us with your beautiful messages of love, protection and encouragement. Open our eyes to always feel you and to understand what you want us to know. Keep our doubts and worries away and replace them with hope and courage to face our trials with You by our side. Help us to recognize You as "THE" great artist who is communicating with us. Hebrews 4:12 says, "The Word of God is alive and active." And so we thank You and glorify Your name. In Jesus name, Amen.