

The background is a light blue gradient with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered across the surface. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The text is centered in the middle of the frame.

COMPANIONSHIP

SANCTUARY COURSE, SESSION 6

PSALM 42: 2B-3

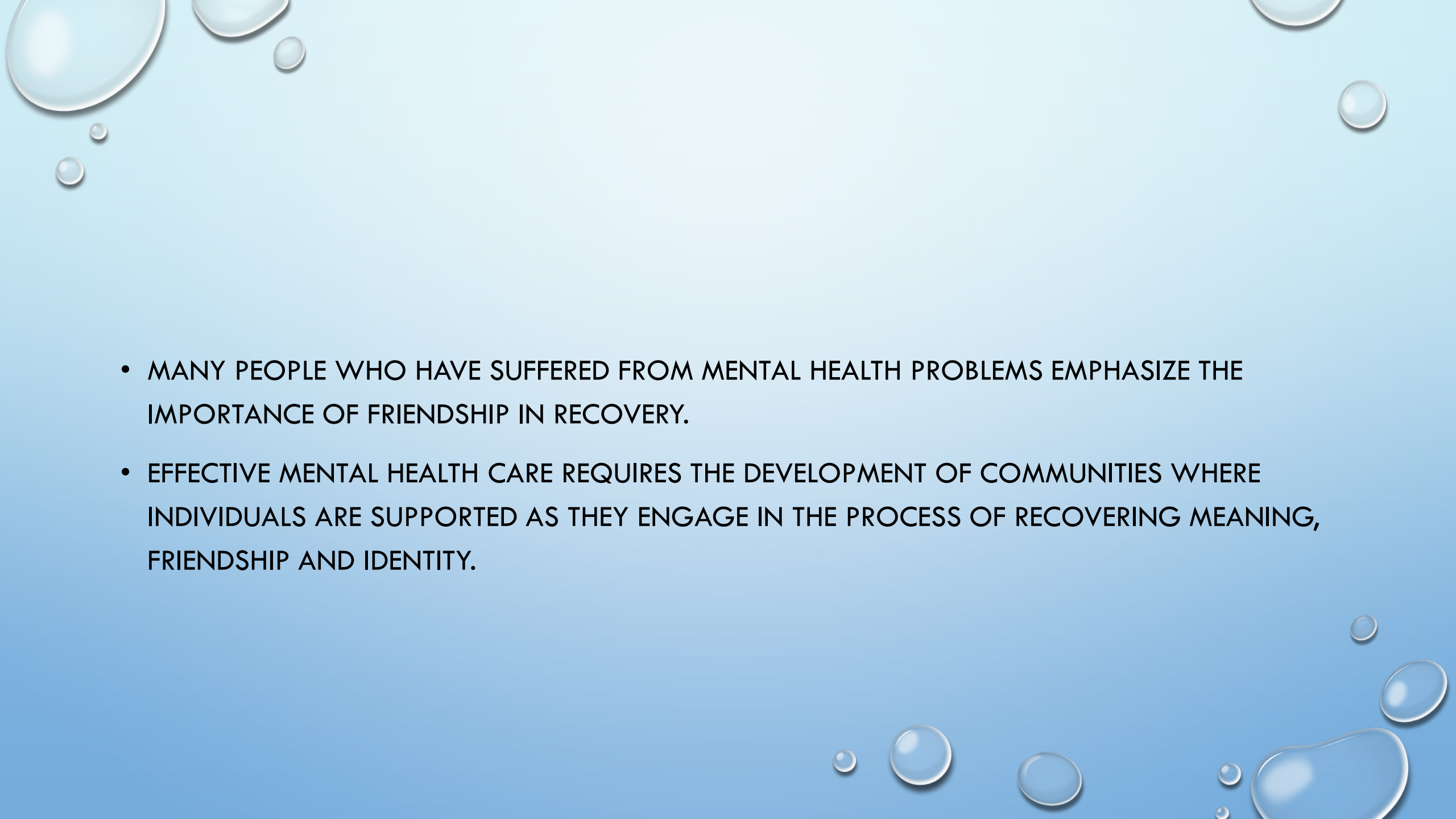
- WHEN SHALL I COME AND BEHOLD THE FACE OF GOD ?
- MY TEARS HAVE BEEN MY FOOD DAY AND NIGHT, WHILE PEOPLE SAY TO ME CONTINUALLY ‘WHERE IS YOUR GOD ?’
 - THE CRY TO BEHOLD THE FACE OF GOD CAPTURES THE LONGING OF THE HUMAN HEART FOR RELATIONSHIP. IN THESE VERSES THE LOSS OF HOMELAND AND TEMPLE IS MAGNIFIED BY THE GRIEF OF BROKEN COMMUNION WITH GOD. EXILE HAS REMOVED ISRAEL FROM THE VERY PRESENCE OF GOD, AND NOW THE PSALMIST’S TEARS HAVE BECOME PRAYERS.

SESSION OVERVIEW

- IN THIS SESSION YOU WILL:
- 1. EXPLORE THE NEED FOR COMMUNITY.
- 2. DEFINE AND EXAMINE THE PRACTICES OF COMPANIONSHIP.
- 3. REFLECT ON THE SCRIPTURAL UNDERSTANDING OF FRIENDSHIP AND THE GIFT OF PERSONAL PRESENCE.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

- “WHAT DOES LOVE LOOK LIKE ? IT HAS THE HANDS TO HELP OTHERS. IT HAS THE FEET TO HASTEN TO THE POOR AND NEEDY. IT HAS EYES TO SEE MISERY AND WANT. IT HAS THE EARS TO HEAR THE SIGHS AND SORROWS OF MEN. THAT IS WHAT LOVE LOOKS LIKE.” ST. AUGUSTINE
- LOVE IS OFTEN EXPRESSED IN COMMUNITIES OF FAITH.
- WE HAVE SEEN IN THE PAST FEW SESSIONS THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS AND SOCIAL SUPPORT IN PREVENTING MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AND PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY.

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- MANY PEOPLE WHO HAVE SUFFERED FROM MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF FRIENDSHIP IN RECOVERY.
 - EFFECTIVE MENTAL HEALTH CARE REQUIRES THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITIES WHERE INDIVIDUALS ARE SUPPORTED AS THEY ENGAGE IN THE PROCESS OF RECOVERING MEANING, FRIENDSHIP AND IDENTITY.

VIDEO

- WE MEET LISA, WHO LIVES WITH BIPOLAR 2 DISORDER AND HAS EXPERIENCED EPISODES OF PSYCHOSIS – A TEMPORARY LOSS OF CONTACT WITH REALITY DUE TO HALLUCINATIONS OR DELUSIONS.
- DISCUSSION QUESTION: HOW DOES LISA'S STORY ILLUSTRATE THE IMPORTANCE OF FRIENDSHIP AND COMPANIONSHIP ?

SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

- COMPANIONSHIP INCLUDES HOSPITALITY: OFFERING A SAFE AND KIND ENVIRONMENT, SHARING SIMPLE THINGS LIKE FOOD OR CONVERSATION AND TREATING OTHERS WITH RESPECT.
- COMPANIONSHIP MEANS NEIGHBORING: ENCOURAGES PEOPLE TO DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS AS EQUALS, LOOKING FOR THINGS THAT ARE SHARED IN COMMON BETWEEN THEM. WE LEARN TO SET ASIDE THE ROLES AND IDENTITIES WE OFTEN INHABIT AND SIMPLY MEET OTHERS AS FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD.

SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

- COMPANIONSHIP INCLUDES ADOPTING A SIDE-BY-SIDE PERSPECTIVE: PEOPLE REMAIN SIDE BY SIDE TAKING IN THEIR OWN VIEWS WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THE DIFFERENT VIEWS OF THE PERSON NEXT TO THEM.
- COMPANIONSHIP INCLUDES LISTENING: THE BEST LISTENERS SUSPEND JUDGMENT AND ARE SENSITIVE TO THE HEART OF THE STORY. THEY ALSO REFLECT BACK TO THE STORYTELLER THE ELEMENTS OF FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE EMBEDDED IN THEIR STORY AND PROVIDE ENCOURAGEMENT AND AFFIRMATION.
- COMPANIONSHIP INCLUDES ACCOMPANIMENT: THIS INCLUDES BOTH PRACTICAL AND SPIRITUAL SUPPORT. WE SEEK TO SUPPORT AND EMPOWER OTHERS RATHER THAN DO THINGS FOR THEM

- COMPANIONSHIP IS NOT SOMETHING THAT INDIVIDUALS SHOULD OFFER WITHOUT THE SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION OF A LARGER COMMUNITY. IT TAKES MANY PEOPLE TO ABSORB AND DISTRIBUTE THE STRAIN CREATED BY A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS OR A LENGTHY RECOVERY JOURNEY. WHEN A FAITH COMMUNITY IS FILLED WITH COMPANIONS, INDIVIDUALS ARE FREE TO STEP BACK IF THE DEMANDS OF LIFE INCREASE OR IF THEY SENSE THAT A FRESH PRESENCE IS NEEDED. THIS COMMUNAL APPROACH RELIEVES THE BURDEN OF CARE THAT OFTEN FALLS HEAVILY ON PRIESTS, LAY LEADERS, AND FAMILY MEMBERS AND IT PRESENTS PARISH MEMBERS WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO COME TOGETHER AS THE BODY OF CHRIST.

THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

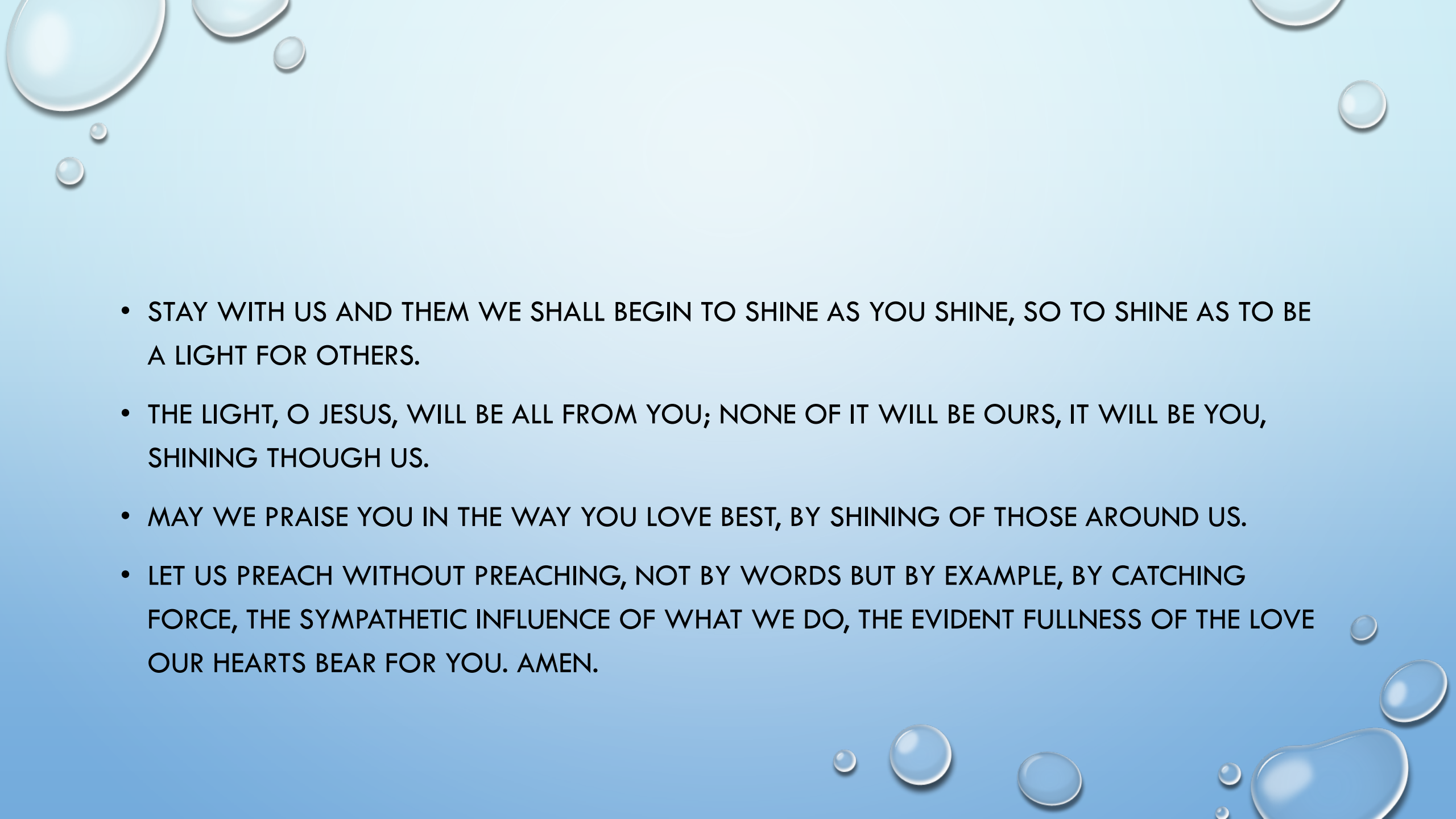
- JESUS CALLED HIS DISCIPLE TO FORM A COMMUNITY AROUND HIM, TO IMITATE HIM AND JOIN HIM IN MISSION.
- THE BIBLICAL AUTHORS CELEBRATED THE UNIQUE GIFTS GIVEN TO PEOPLE AND ENCOURAGED THEM TO PUT THEM IN THE SERVICE OF THE CHURCH'S MISSION.
- THE GOOD SAMARITAN WAS MOVED BY COMPASSION AND A SENSE OF SHARED HUMANITY AND DEMONSTRATED HOSPITALITY AND ACCOMPANIMENT IN HIS CARE OF THE WOUNDED MAN.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

- HOW CAN YOU OFFER THE GIFT OF PRESENCE IN YOUR RELATIONSHIPS ? IN THE CONTEXT OF YOUR FAITH COMMUNITY ?
- SPECIFICALLY HOW CAN YOU DO THIS WITH THOSE LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS IN YOUR COMMUNITY ?

CLOSING PRAYER

- DEAR JESUS, HELP US TO SPREAD YOUR FRAGRANCE EVERYWHERE WE GO.
- FLOOD OUR SOULS WITH YOUR SPIRIT AND LIFE.
- PENETRATE AND POSSESS OUR WHOLE BEING SO UTTERLY THAT OUR LIVES MAY ONLY BE A RADIANCE OF YOURS.
- SHINE THROUGH US AND BE SO IN US THAT EVERY SOUL WE COME IN CONTACT WITH MAY FEEL YOUR PRESENCE IN OUR SOULS.
- LET THEM LOOK UP, AND SEE NO LONGER US, BUT ONLY JESUS.

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- STAY WITH US AND THEM WE SHALL BEGIN TO SHINE AS YOU SHINE, SO TO SHINE AS TO BE A LIGHT FOR OTHERS.
 - THE LIGHT, O JESUS, WILL BE ALL FROM YOU; NONE OF IT WILL BE OURS, IT WILL BE YOU, SHINING THROUGH US.
 - MAY WE PRAISE YOU IN THE WAY YOU LOVE BEST, BY SHINING OF THOSE AROUND US.
 - LET US PREACH WITHOUT PREACHING, NOT BY WORDS BUT BY EXAMPLE, BY CATCHING FORCE, THE SYMPATHETIC INFLUENCE OF WHAT WE DO, THE EVIDENT FULLNESS OF THE LOVE OUR HEARTS BEAR FOR YOU. AMEN.