

From the Pastor

We are dependent beings, dependent upon the world around us. Sure, we also experience a limited amount of independence from and power over the world, but that power, that independence, is limited on every side by our dependence.

We hold an infant in our arms, our own child or someone else's, and we think how we, when we were infants, must've been as dependent upon the care of others as is this child in our arms. We remember that childhood contest, the one testing the capacity of ourselves and our peers to hold our breath. Who can hold it the longest? The conclusion drawn by all of the gasping participants was that we must breathe, that we depend upon air, invisible but all around us.

We learned to trust our school teachers who taught us that plants, upon which we depend for food, depend upon the power of the sun, its light and warmth, our school teachers also teaching us that those plants also depend upon water vapor, generated by the power of the sun's heat, condensing in the cooler, upper reaches of the atmosphere into, first, clouds and then the falling rains. We remember the day we got our driver's license, our ticket to freedom. But we learned, and some of us maybe learned the hard way, that that freedom is limited by the rules of the road; we depend upon other drivers to follow these rules and they depend upon us to do the same.

Whenever we go to the grocery store for the food we need, we know that, for the freedom and convenience of doing so, we depend upon many others: upon those who grow and harvest that food, those who process and package that harvest, those who transport and deliver it. Upon these many others do we depend and upon the fossil fuels required to run all of their engines and machinery. Ours is an exceedingly complex society, a giant web of mutual dependence. And there is nothing like a trip to the emergency room in a rushing ambulance to realize how much a person depends upon the health of his or her body.

And the question arises: Upon what do we and all these other things depend? Ourselves and all these other things and people upon which we depend, is there something, is there one thing, upon which all of it depends? It is with that question that we begin to know God. And to know and rightly understand ourselves.

Pastor Neal