

With

Redemptive Relating #1

January 25, 2015

We exist to enjoy and share the love and message of God with everyone.

DAY 1: God *with* us!

1. We are part of three communities.

Community #1: the Trinity. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit relate in perfect love, delight, honor and joy with one another. They invite us to enjoy their love for us.

Community #2: the church community, God's family, our brothers and sisters. We are to reflect the wonder of Trinitarian love with one another.

Community #3: the lost community. We relate to lost people as salt and light, reflecting God's love and sharing His message that they may also enjoy the wonder of God's love. This happens as we are with them.

2. During the next five weeks we will ask two questions:

- a. How does God relate to us? We'll unpack five prepositions: With, For, Toward, In, Up.
- b. How are we to relate to others? With, For, Toward, In, Up.

3. From the very beginning of Genesis, God's plan was to be with man, to fellowship with us, to show us His amazing love, be transformed by that love and enjoy giving that love to others.

4. God appears to Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph in the remotest of places, the most dire of circumstances, and the most unlikely of successes. God's most fundamental promises included that He would be with these men.

5. God appears to Moses in Exodus 3.

Exodus 3:18 "The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God.'

6. Moses is to appeal to Pharaoh to let God's people go. On what basis is Moses to make that claim?

Exodus 5:3 Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God, or he may strike us with plagues or with the sword."

7. Moses makes his appeal to Pharaoh. On what basis does Moses make his appeal?

DAY 2: God's presence with Moses and with His people.

1. Moses is up to his eyeballs in "drama!" It wasn't long after God's miraculous defeat of Pharaoh's army, and deliverance *through* the Red Sea, that God's people began their assault on the Guinness World Record for whining and grumbling. This culminated in the abhorrent making of a golden calf and worshipping it as if the calf had brought them deliverance!

2. Moses sees nothing ahead but disaster. If these people can't walk with God and obey Him after the EXODUS, who's to think that they have any chance of making it to the Promised Land?

*Exodus 33:15 Then Moses said to him (God), "If your Presence does not go **with** us, do not send us up from here."*

3. Moses sees only one way that this is going to work. What is that way?

4. Why do you think this is so?

5. Why would God's presence be the key to success?

6. Why would God's absence from the trek to the Promised Land mean failure?

7. Moses has other concerns regarding the presence or absence of God.

*Exodus 33:16 How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go **with** us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?"*

8. Apart from God's presence, does Moses see any difference between the lost people of the earth and the Hebrew people?

9. Moses sees God's presence as essential for three specific things. What are they? (Ex. 33:16).

10. What would you say is most crucial about God being **with** you?

DAY 3: God's presence: basis for confidence, courage and strength

2 Chronicles 32:1 After all that Hezekiah had so faithfully done, Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah. He laid siege to the fortified cities, thinking to conquer them for himself.

1. Assyria invaded the land of Judah. What kind of king had King Hezekiah been?

2. Hezekiah gives orders to protect the stream and spring that provides water for Jerusalem. He launched a building program to beef up the city defenses. Then he called his troops together. This is an excerpt from what he said...

2 Chronicles 32:7 "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged because of the king of Assyria and the vast army with him, for there is a greater power with us than with him.

3. What does Hezekiah tell them about Assyria's army?

4. How would Hezekiah's soldiers be tempted to respond to the "vast army" that will lay siege to Jerusalem?

5. Instead of being afraid and discouraged, what does King Hezekiah tell the men to be?

6. What is the basis for Hezekiah's assertion that strength and courage are possible?

7. Hezekiah continues to speak to the soldiers.

*2 Chronicles 32:8 With him is only the arm of flesh, but **with** us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles." And the people gained confidence from what Hezekiah the king of Judah said.*

a. What is the difference maker between victory and defeat?

b. On what basis lies Hezekiah's confidence?

c. How's your confidence? On what is it really based? What challenges you about Hezekiah?

DAY 4:

Hebrews 13:5 "... Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

1. It's one thing to remember that God promises to be **with** us. But what do we begin to wonder if we sin or fail God? What do we fear will happen?

2. Think of a time when someone left you or forsook you. What words come to mind to describe what you went through?

3. These painful memories "color" our view of God when we sin. We easily imagine that just like so-and-so left us, so will God.

4. What differences are there between a human being promising never to leave you, and God promising never to leave you?

5. Why is it crazy to assume the same thing about God, that He might leave us since that's what our experience with people has been?

6. The nation, and several leaders were facing daunting tasks.

*Deuteronomy 31:6 (to the people) "Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes **with** you. He will not leave you or forsake you."*

*Joshua 1:5 (To Joshua)"No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. **Just as** I was **with** Moses, so I will be **with** you. I will not leave you or forsake you."*

*1 Chronicles 28:20 Then David said to Solomon his son, "Be strong and courageous and do it. Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed, for the Lord God, even my God, is **with** you. He will not leave you or forsake you, until all the work for the service of the house of the Lord is finished."*

7. Which of these three verses strikes you the most? Why?

8. To what can you associate God's presence? Can you "lock the door" on wondering if He might abandon you?

DAY 5: Being WITH people.

1. If we're to relate redemptively with the people in our three communities, we start with "with!"

2. Can you think of someone who has been with you? Check the ones you've seen firsthand:

___ Listens very well; hears me out; hears my inner story, what's going on inside.

___ They seem to like my company

___ They don't seem to be in a hurry to get on to "the next thing."

___ They are faithful to me, whether I'm succeeding or failing.

___ I sense that I am valuable to them.

___ Their presence indicates I can "lean on" them.

___ Other: _____

3. Jesus was about to be arrested, tortured and crucified. Before all that, He had a chance to go to a garden and pray to His Father. Jesus took all the disciples to Gethsemane, and then took Peter, James and John with Him a short distance away.

Matthew 26:36... "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸ Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

³⁹ Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

⁴⁰ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. ⁴¹ "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

⁴² He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."

⁴³ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy.

⁴⁴ So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

⁴⁵ Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

⁴⁶ Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

4. Why do you think Jesus wanted His disciples with Him?

5. What happened to Jesus, inside, when He came back and found Peter, James and John sleeping instead of praying for Him? (Is it possible to be absent when you are "present?")

6. What would it mean for you to be with someone? Review the checklist at the top of this page.

7. Being with is on God's heart. He wants it to be on our hearts, to give people the gift of our presence.