

I. OUR STORY

- A. We all have a story to tell. Throughout our days, regardless of how many days or years we are given, our story meanders between exquisite powerful mountain top highs, and some of the most excruciatingly painful lows.
- B. If we were to draw the peaks and valleys represented as a single solitary line on a piece of paper it would closely resemble a heartbeat.
- C. Some of the stories I have heard from you since taking my place as Sr. Pastor. in Nov. 2019.
 - 1. *Highs* – weddings and marriage relationships beginning, deeper relationship with Jesus, healings or near misses with death where our lives have been spared, new jobs and salary raises in a market that has been decimated by Covid and other global ‘contractions, salvations, relational restorations, healings...

I was in the hospital from September 18 to October 8 being treated for covid pneumonia. I was placed on a ventilator for 10 days. The nurses did not give my girls a lot of hope, death was a strong possibility. It was a time of spiritual battle, many people were praying for me and God had a plan! I had a vision of His gavel coming down and smashing all the work of the enemy to dust, His light consuming everything, His love for me so evident. My body was at peace, so full of rest. I said wow that was easy, I just surrendered everything to Him, live or die. He raised me up! I believe from that point on I got better. I'm alive today because His Word is the truth! It will never change and never fail. HALLELUJAH (Colleen Jeppesen)

- 2. *Lows* – marital pressure and failures, loss of jobs or income, sin patterns getting stronger and deeper, relational losses and conflict, ‘...the kids are out of control...’, ‘...my husband/wife is a jerk...’, deaths due to Covid where you cannot attend the dying, flooded apartments, cold cold heartedness increasing, depression is up, suicide is up, BLM, LGTBQ, Antifa, religious radicalization, hundreds of human remains of our Indigenous Peoples found just below the surface of what looks like a little grassy park...
- D. We have had to face a very dramatic truth in these last two years – apart from God we are nothing. ***We are not enough...and we do not have complete control of our story!***

II. GOD’S STORY

- A. Yet in the midst of this heartbeat of humanity, God is writing his story. His narrative has never ceased to press forward for God’s story is never thwarted by man’s successes and/or failures.
- B. God’s story is new every morning (Lam. 3:22-23) because he is rich in mercy (Eph. 2:4).

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; ²³ they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. Lam. 3:22-23

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our lows, he made us alive in Christ...Eph. 2:4-5

- C. And so through God’s story we learn another lesson – *He is more than enough, and that we must find our story within his greater story to find peace and fulfillment.*

III. PEOPLE OF PRESENCE – PS. 27: 4-5, 7-8

When the wicked come against me to eat up my flesh...One thing I have desired of the Lord, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord, And to inquire in His temple. 5 For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock. 6 And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord. 7 Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice! Have mercy also upon me, and answer me. 8 When You said, “Seek My face,” My heart said to You, “Your face, Lord, I will seek.” Ps. 27:2, 4-5, 7-8

- A. In a time of personal and familial upheaval, David set a value in his heart that he would never turn from the rest of his days.
- B. He recognized that God’s presence in his life was more valuable than any earthly treasure. David elevated relationship with God and God’s tangible presence above anything else to be pursued.
- C. David understood that the goal of prayer wasn’t always that you got your prayers answered in the way you wanted them answered but that the goal of prayer was relationship with God.
- D. David above all else, wanted to meet with and touch God. In this way, as he touched God, he became a carrier of God’s presence and peace entered his soul.
- E. It was God’s presence above all else that drove David’s mission (assignments), empowered his leadership and which he sought to give away to the next generation.
- F. Above all else, David knew he was part of God’s greater story for the simple purpose of knowing God and making him known to others in his generation.
- G. David decided that he would let God define success and failure. David submitted the highs and lows of his life – the heartbeat of his human frailty to God for evaluation.

IV. SETTING OUR VISION FROM BEING A PEOPLE OF ‘ONETHING’ – PEOPLE OF GOD’S PRESENCE

- A. God is enough. Like David, your life will be well spent if you decide today to be a person of “onething”.
- B. I call you to purposely pursue onething in your life, the presence of God.
- C. I call you to submit your highs and lows – the heartbeat of your humanity to the one person who knows how to evaluate that heartbeat.
- D. I am calling CFG to submit our individual and corporate stories to the greater story God is writing. To be a people of presence...to be a people of onething.

