

SERMON NOTES

CHRISTMAS PRESENCE
WEEK THREE

A CLOSE ENCOUNTER Sunday, December 17, 2023

2 Corinthians 3:16-18 (ESV)

But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

1. We need _____ not just words.

1 Corinthians 2:3-5 (NIV)

I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.

2. We need an _____ not just an explanation.

John 9:17, 25 (NIV)

Finally they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him?".... He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!"

3. We need _____ not just practice.

Romans 8:11 (MSG)

... It stands to reason, doesn't it, that if the alive-and-present God who raised Jesus from the dead moves into your life, he'll do the same thing in you that he did in Jesus, bringing you alive to himself? When God lives and breathes in you (and he does, as surely as he did in Jesus), you are delivered from that dead life. With his Spirit living in you, your body will be as alive as Christ's!

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Jacob's Encounter

Genesis 32:24-30 (NIV)

So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered. Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome." Jacob said, "Please tell me your name." But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared."

1. A new _____.

Isaiah 40:29-31 (NIV)

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

2. A new _____.

Isaiah 43:18-19 (NIV)

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.

Revelation 2:17 (NIV)

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.

3. A new _____.

Psalms 16:11 (NIV)

You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

RightNow Media Weekly Suggestion:
"Hearing God" Dallas Willard

SmallGroup

1. Read John 9:17, 25. Discuss the power of a changed life over a compelling argument.
2. Discuss Jacob's encounter with the angel in Genesis 32:24-30. Why do you think God chose to meet with Jacob in this way?
3. When we encounter God, it changes our identity. How has your identity been changed through encounters with Christ?
4. What is a next step for you based on this teaching?

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