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February

9, 2020

"TWENTY-TWENTY VISION"

- The Spirit of Isolationism - Part Two

(Romans 14:7; Matthew 6:10; 1 Peter 2:21; Galatians 5:25; Psalm 100:2; Romans 12:10, 15:14;
Psalm 116:15; John 11:25; Ephesians 4:30; Romans 8:39; Philippians 1:23; 1 Cor. 5:1)

Intro ... What a thrill it was last week on our **Annual Commitment Sunday** to share with you a '**Spirit of the Age**' that I could confidently and joyfully announce:

"HAS NO HOLD ON US!"

It's ...

TODAY'S REPEAT FOCUS:

"THE SPIRIT OF ISOLATIONISM"

This is the '*Spirit*' that would cause us to say:

*"Just leave me **ALONE** - I'm doing just **FINE**."*

Last week we were and today we still are and throughout the rest of this month we will continue to be actively demonstrating that that '**Spirit**' has no hold on us!

Throughout this month, we are communicating to one another and (thanks to our Live Stream) to a watching world that we are anything but isolated believers - We reject the notion that we can '*Do just fine*' as Christians '*on our own*.'

Today we re-affirm the Truth of the Scripture upon which we focused our attention last Sunday. It's ...

TODAY'S REPEAT VERSE ... Romans 14:7

*"None of us **LIVES** to himself and
none of us **DIES** to himself."*

"None of us lives to himself and none of us dies to himself."

That's the way our Heavenly Abba desires it to be for all of His Born-Again Children.

Because that is such a profound truth and because it can provide such a foundational understanding and because it can so thoroughly squelch out the '*Spirit of Isolationism*,' I want us to plumb its depths a bit more this morning.

TWO GREAT TRUTHS FOR OUR EDIFICATION:

**1. OUR LIVES ARE MEANT TO BE LIVED
IN CONNECTION WITH OTHERS.**

"None of us lives to himself ..." - Romans 14:7

Consider with me first of all this morning that ...
Our Lives are meant to be lived ...

*** IN CONNECTION WITH FATHER, SON and SPIRIT**

We live our lives in connection with our **Heavenly Father**, specifically, when we are in connection with ...

THE FATHER'S WILL ... 'Thy Will be done' (Matthew 6:10)

This is our first and most fundamental connection: We live our lives under the '*Profoundly Wise*' jurisdiction of our Abba Father ...

In no way are wandering aimlessly through life, seeking to '*figure things out on our own*.' Our '*Breath-Takingly Strategic, Brilliantly-Tactical Heavenly Father*' has everything in hand. How good is that!

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Also, we live our lives in connection with the **Son of God**, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, specifically when we are in connection with ...

THE SON'S EXAMPLE ... 'Follow in His Steps' (1 Peter 2:21)

We are not required to '*Make it up as we go along*' ... The Apostle Peter plainly tells us that Jesus '*left us an example*' and that we should '*follow in His Steps*' - especially when it comes to handling the struggles and even the sufferings this earthly life can bring. We have an example!

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And, of course, we most consciously and purposefully live our lives in connection with the **Holy Spirit** Himself when we are connection with ...

THE SPIRIT'S COMPANIONSHIP ... "Keep in Step with Him' (Gal. 5:25)

And as we follow the Son's Example, we do not have to hesitatingly step out upon the path as though we were walking across the thinnest of ice on a deep dark lake. We can confidently step out each morning for the Spirit of God Himself is our companion and He chooses the path and He guides our steps! He is the ONE who will never leave us or forsake us. We are not and never will be alone ... We have a Heaven-Sent Companion!

Indeed ... We are not Isolated. We can resist breathing in the '*Spirit of Isolationism*' because we are personally connected to our Heavenly Father (**Abba**) our Lord and Savior (**Jesus**) and our Earthly Companion (**Pneuma**)!

That's the way our lives are meant to be lived!

Now here's another thing included in this **First Great Truth:**
Our Lives are meant to be lived ...

*** *IN CONNECTION WITH OUR FELLOW BELIEVERS***

Three aspects of that '**Connection**' come to mind:

- We **WORSHIP** with them ... We practice willing **SUBMISSION**
"*Serve the Lord with gladness: come ... with singing...*" (Psalm 100:2)

Corporate worship on earth is one incredible evidence of our Heavenly Connection. Submitting ourselves to the **Will** of the Father and committing ourselves to follow the **Example** of the Son and experiencing the **Companionship** of the Spirit in conjunction with others who are doing the same thing creates a marvelously energizing '**Spirit of Fellowship**' that completely squelches out any '**Spirit of Isolationism.**'

We connect with our fellow believers as we worship with them.

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Secondly, we connect with our fellow believers as ...

- We **WATCH OVER** them ... We practice brotherly **KINDNESS**
"*Be devoted to one another in brotherly love ...*" (Romans 12:10)

We want nothing but the best for our brothers and sisters in Christ for they are family to us - God has connected our lives together and we know it. Our **Sonlife** Cell Groups give expression to that connection.

We connect with our fellow believers as we watch over them.

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Thirdly, we connect with our fellow believers as ...

- We **RELY** upon them ... We practice humble **TRUST**
"You are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another." (Romans 15:14)

There's a great sense of security in knowing that there are people in your life that you can confidently ask: *"What should I do?"* or *"What do you think?"*

There is more knowledge contained in us together than there is in any of us apart. Some of our **Sonlife** Cell Groups have been together for over 20 years!

Their members have walked through life together and cared for one another and counseled one another and perhaps at times gently chided one another. Perhaps even confessed sins to one another and received the assurance of forgiveness from one another.

We connect with our fellow believers as we rely upon them.

***Indeed, "Our lives are meant to be lived in connection to others."
That's our First Great Truth of the Morning!***

Here's our **Second Great Truth** of the Morning ...

***2. OUR DEATHS ARE MEANT TO BE EXPERIENCED
IN CONNECTION WITH OTHERS***

"None of us dies to himself ..." - Romans 14:7

Consider with me that ...

Our Deaths are meant to be experienced (first of all):

**** IN CONNECTION WITH FATHER, SON AND SPIRIT***

The death of a believer (our own or someone else's) should always be experienced in connection with ...

- The Father's **PERSPECTIVE** ... (Psalm 116:15)
"Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of His Saints"

My very first year in the ministry ... 1972 in Durango, Colorado, I was called upon to lead a funeral service for the 16-year-old son of the former pastor of the Church ... This was the verse the family chose to put on the funeral brochure ... I must confess that as a 25-year-old pastor, it was troublesome to me. I don't believe I made any reference to it at all in that service.

Today, nearly 50 years later, I understand that that young man's 65-year-old mom and dad were much more in tune with our Heavenly Father's **perspective** than I was.

The Death of a saint (a born-again believer) ushers into the Father's Presence one that He has known and cherished and anticipated from before the beginning of time. The Father opens his arms to greet such a one and whispers in his ear: '**Finally ... You are here.**'

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The death of a believer (our own or someone else's) should always be experienced in connection with ...

- The Son's **PERSUASION** ... (John 11:25)
"He who believeth in me - though He were dead, yet shall he live."

The literal, physical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, guarantees that faith in Him will bring a similar result for He promised it and His Promise should **persuade** us of its truth ...
Our death is connected to His!

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The death of a believer (our own or someone else's) should always be experienced in connection with ...

- The Spirit's **PROVISION** ... (Ephesians 4:30)
"Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the Day of Redemption ..."

Pneuma's entrance into our lives at the moment of our spiritual birth should forever change our view and experience of death. We are sealed, stamped as it were with the '*Seal of Heaven.*' Our death makes our full redemption possible. Our physical death allows the Spirit to complete the process. The Death of a believer is meant to be experienced in connection with Father, Son and Spirit ...
None of us should ever '*die to himself.*'

Surely, the Father's **Perspective**, the Son's **Persuasion** and the Spirit's **Provision** should forever change the way we look at death.

Now as we draw this message to a close this morning, consider with me that ...

Our **Deaths** are meant to be experienced:

* **IN CONNECTION WITH OUR FELLOW BELIEVERS**

We connect with our Fellow Believers as:

- We share with them this Biblical **PERSPECTIVE** ... (Romans 8:39)
" ... (nothing) *in all creation* (death included) *shall be able to separate us from the Love of God in Christ Jesus.*"

If nothing can separate us from the incredibly lavish Love of God - the Love that would even sacrifice His Own Son on Calvary - then NOTHING (not even death) can separate us from it! ... Death, in fact, draws us into the fulness of it! That's a **perspective** that takes all the fear out of it.

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We connect with our Fellow Believers as:

- We share with them this powerful **PERSUASION** ... (Philippians 1:23)
"I desire to depart and to be with Christ which is better by far."

None of us, including the Apostle Paul, has the right or permission to 'hurry things along,' but deep in our hearts we know that something 'far better' is on the other side of the doorway called 'death.'
We together share that **persuasion** and encourage each other with it.

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We connect with our Fellow Believers as:

- We share with them this Divine **PROVISION** ... (2 Corinthians 5:1)
"Now we know that if this earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have ... an eternal house in heaven ..."

Paul is saying that that '**Eternal House**' ... that '**Mansion**' is actually "**US**"!
A **provision** to 'house' our transported spirit in heavenly excellence.

And so, we come to today's ...

Final Thot ...

There is no better way to live or die than in **CONNECTION** with others **LIKE** ourselves! We reject any '**SPIRIT of ISOLATIONISM**'!