

Understanding God in a Confusing World

5-13-20

Living with a Hide & Seek God (part 2)

I. Slide1 Announce:

A. Slide2 Hey tonight is our 1st night that AL is hosting an *online gathering* in just a little bit.

1. You'll watch this together w/the addition of discussion & prayer. **If you'd like a little more interaction, join here...**

B. Pray: Ps.89:46 *How long, O Lord? Will you hide yourself forever?*

II. Slide3 Intro: *Living with a Hide & Seek God* (part 2)

A. Well, we are on week 2, of our 4 part series on *Understanding God in a Confusing World*.

B. I remember **3 games** of hide & seek:

1. **Hide n seek gone bad.** (Trumball St Whittier) The kid on the block we teased, *we all just left & let him keep seeking w/o the possibility of ever finding.*
2. **Once I hid so well no one could find me.** *Oly oly oxen free free free.*
3. I'll talk about #3 later.

C. Slide4 Is this how you see God?

1. Maybe you always feel you are **seeking but** He's nowhere to be found.
2. **Or**, you believe He is out there, **but** He's hiding from **you**. **Everyone else knows where He is, it's just you** that He's hiding from.

D. Some of you, even this evening, are in *a new place, a scary place, a dark place*. You need to know that *God is there*.

1. I'd like to say here in the beginning, **that God is a terrible at Hide & Seek.**
2. I'd also like to say that *He does hide Himself from us at times.*
3. I'd also like to challenge us **what to do** when that happens.

III. Slide5 GOD HIDING

A. Job says it most clearly, Job 23:8-12 *I go east, but he is not there. I go west, but I cannot find him. 9 I do not see him in the north, for he is hidden. I look to the south, but he is concealed. 10 But he knows where I am going. And when he tests me, I will come out as pure as gold. 11 For I have stayed on God's paths; I have followed his ways and not turned aside. 12 I have not departed from his commands, but have treasured his words more than daily food.*

1. Would you agree God was hiding from Job?
2. Have you asked yourself lately...*what's God doing in my life?* Well you're in good company, pull up a rock & sit next to Job.
 - a) Slide6 *Trust Him when you cannot Trace Him.*
3. (10) *But he knows where I am going.*
 - a) I don't always know *His ways*, but He ALWAYS knows mine.
 - b) Let's review some facts: *He's never once lost you. He knows your step before your foot falls. He knows you intimately.*
 - c) Remember the song, *He knows my name?* [Tommy Walker]
I have a Maker, He formed my heart. Before even time began, my life was in His hand. He knows my name, He knows my every thought. He sees each tear that falls, and hears me when I call. I have a Father, He calls me His own. He'll never leave me, no matter where I go.
4. Slide7 (10b) *And when he tests me, I will come out as pure as gold.*
 - a) Note who the testing is coming from? (God)
 - b) Remember, *All the dogs of affliction are muzzled, until God sets them free.*
 - c) The next 2 verses let us know **how** to get & maintain this **Golden Heart**.
 - d) Our hospitals are set up with a Cardio-tachometer (a device that counts every heart beat).
 - (1) Let's take a personal Cardiogram ourselves: **How has your heart been lately? Will you choose to go for the Gold in your situation?**
 - (2) I think sometimes we whisper...*"I shall come forth...as Mold!"*

e) Let's look at how **Job** would pursue the **Gold**.

5. **Slide8** (11) *For I have stayed on God's paths; I have followed his ways & not turned aside*

a) **Be Sure Footed** - [mountain climbing analogy] (Zach at age 5, put your feet where mine are going).

(1) He wants us to have sure footed confidence through difficult times.

b) **Stay on Track** - If the **devil** had a back yard full of *construction signs*, I bet 90% of them would read **DETOUR**.

(1) If he could just bump you *1 degree off course*, you'll miss your intended mark.

6. **Slide9** (12) *I have not departed from his commands, but have treasured his words more than daily food.*

a) **I will do what He says** (**obedience** to His word).

b) **I will place a higher importance upon my spiritual food, then on my physical food.** (**Love** for His word)

IV. **Slide10a YOU SEEKING**

1. **Last time Grandkids were over I played hide & go seek...well, kinda.**

a) **See I'm always the bad guy.** They are dressed up as **1/2 superhero, 1/2 police.** They hall me off to jail (**backroom**). **I break out & hide in the house.**

b) **This is key...I let myself get caught again, I let them catch me...before** they want to give up *seeking* me.

c) **Truth: God is a bad hide & go seek player...He always lets Himself get caught, by the *seekers!***

d) We as social humans want to be *pursued*...and God desires the same.

2. **Slide10b** God says to us, **You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with **all your heart.** 14 **I will be found by you, declares the Lord.****

Jer.29:13,14a

a) Doesn't that sound like a game of *Divine Hide and Seek* where the Lord invites us to **find** Him? *I Am worth your effort. Come and find Me, He seems to be saying.*

b) The Lord wants to be pursued. He wants to be found. He is worthy of our pursuit.

3. While some people think the game of **Hide & Seek** found its origins in the **1600s**, I think it started with the 1st child. Isn't it just an **extended version of peekaboo**? The cross-cultural game in which a child loves to be **startled** by someone who pops out and says "boo"?

a) It's **not** cruel, every kid likes it.

B. **Slide11a** Psalm 63:1 *O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.*

1. **Devotions** is all about **seeking** Him. **Prayer** is all about **seeking** Him.

C. **How do you seek the Lord?** Seeking the Lord means **seeking His presence**.

1. **Slide11b** *I love those who love me and those who seek me diligently, find me.* Prov. 8:17

2. **Slide11c** **Presence**, is a common translation of the Hebrew word **face**.

a) Literally, we are to seek His **face**. This is the Hebraic way of **having access to God**. To be **before His face** is to **be in His presence**.

D. **Slide11d** Ok, so God feels far away, or has been actually hiding from you, so what? Jeremiah quotes God as saying, *Am I only a God nearby and not a God far away?* Jer.23:23

E. Or as David reminds us - Ps.139:7-10 *Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? 8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! 9 If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, 10 even there your hand shall lead me, and your right*

hand shall hold me.

F. **Slide12** Ask, Seek, Knock - *And so I tell you, keep on **asking**, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on **seeking**, and you will find. Keep on **knocking**, and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who **asks**, receives. Everyone who **seeks**, finds. And to everyone who **knocks**, the door will be opened. Lk.11:9,10*

1. It's not saying twist God's arm & you'll get what we want. *It means keeping in **close communion** with the Father. Keep knowing His will. Keep asking Him to perform His will.*