Standing in the Gap

Ice Breaker
- In what way do you share your God-given gifts with others?

I. Difference Makers
Ezekiel 22:30-31 (NIV®)

30 "I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found none.

Jeremiah 15:1-2 (NIV®)

1 Then the LORD said to me: "Even if Moses and Samuel were to stand before me, my heart would not go out to this people. Send them away from my presence! Let them go! 2 And if they ask you, 'Where shall we go?' tell them, 'This is what the LORD says: 'Those destined for death, to death; those for the sword, to the sword; those for starvation, to starvation; those for captivity, to captivity.'"

2 Kings 19:34-36 (NIV®)

34 I will defend this city and save it, for my sake and for the sake of David my servant." 35 That night the angel of the LORD went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning--there were all the dead bodies! 36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He returned to Nineveh and stayed there.

Throughout Scripture we find these men & women who "stood in the gap". It is equally obvious in some generations there were no such people. For this lesson we want to gather insight about the characteristics associated with men and women who are able to "stand in the gap".

1. Who are referenced in the above scriptures as gap standers? What did God do on behalf of David who had been dead for hundreds of years before this event in 2 Kings? What difference do people making this stand for the Kingdom change for time and eternity?

A. God is still recruiting
2 Chronicles 16:9 (NIV®)

9 For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war."

2. Who is God looking for? How would your daily life change if this perspective was prominent?

B. The Nature of the Invitation
2 Timothy 2:3 (NIV®)

3 Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

3. Discuss the assignment of a solider...the sacrifice. How do we embrace this idea as believers?

We have to develop a new imagination of what it means to "stand in the gap". It has seemed like it is about community, fellowship, helping one another, being an encourager. But the true meaning is becoming a consistent person, making choices to be a difference maker. Others will experience God and his purposes in new ways because someone was willing to "stand in the gap". People who take a place, turn up the light, express the truth, lift prayers, forgive boldly, and pursue God through adversity.

4. Are you willing?

II. A Case Study
Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13 (NIV®)

5. Why do you suppose God did not reveal full story to Samuel when He asked him to anoint a king? What if we only follow when we have complete information? Has there been a time God asked you to follow but did not reveal the full picture? Discuss your experience.
6. What was the threat to Samuel? What was Samuel awakened to?

7. Read v4 Samuel was the most influential in Bethlehem, the leaders trembled at the sight of him. Do you believe God could use believers in this time to make such a difference? How?

Quick Observations ---big picture

David chosen & anointed
v.13 So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power. Samuel then went to Ramah.

8. What happened to David upon his anointing? Does this happens today for God's chosen?

Awkward circumstances
vs. 6-7 When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed stands here before the LORD." But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him.

9. What were the circumstances that makes this anointing awkward?

Game of thrones
v.2 But Samuel said, "How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me."

A. Powerful Adversary ---no easy path forward, civil war
2 Samuel 3:1 (NIV)
1 The war between the house of Saul and the house of David lasted a long time. David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker.

10. Why did David inherit an advisory this day? What were the motives of Saul against David? Do you suppose that being a Christ follower brings us adversity? Discuss.

B. Pressures are persistent
Read 1 Samuel 21:10-15 (NIV)

11. What was David’s solution to the threat of his life? To stand in the gap takes more than simple faith or easy pathways. In what ways has God given you encouragement or the ability to stand under pressure?

III. Life Hacks/Travel Tips
Read 1 Samuel 17:34-45 (NIV)

A. never too young (or too old) to begin relationship with the Lord
B. cultivate/nurture the fear of the Lord
C. know what defines you

12. Discuss the Life hacks we can learn from David standing in the gap. How do we cultivate these principles? Does time restrict your purposes in the Lord? What does the fear of the Lord mean? How did this help David? List some ways that God defines you.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, here I am ---send me! Deliver me from futility and establish me in the midst of your purposes. Holy Spirit lead me in the paths of preparation for the purposes of the King. In my weakness may your strength be evident. Deliver me from all my enemies, let them be turned back and ashamed. Let the purposes of God be made apparent throughout the earth, in Jesus’ name, amen.

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