

Sermon: March 7,22010

**“Out of sync”**

We all have days ... when, from the beginning ...we are “out of whack” ... “out of sync” ...

We get up.

The furnace isn't pumping out heat ... you wake up your son a bit late for school ... he spills his cereal all over the carpet ... late for the bus ...you forget your sun-glasses ... you run into the house, then run out ... drop your glasses and step on them ... you get situated in the car ... and spill your coffee all over your pants, that don't fit as well as they used to.

You feel sorry for yourself ... then your cell phone rings ... your best buddy is on the phone ----- *his wife has just been diagnosed with cancer.*

Suddenly --- the spilled coffee and cereal ... your furnace ... being a bit late ----- they don't seem so important. “The moments of life” have a way of teaching us about what's important and what's not.

The arthritis in your knee is acting up ... you wonder why your sister never calls ... you sent your kid some money, and he never said “thank-you” ... your 401K is a 101K ... retirement isn't lookin' real good ... and the phone rings:

Your developmentally-disabled grand-daughter is on the line:

“Grandpa ... I just got chosen for the special Olympics ... I am running in a race Saturday afternoon ... can you and grandma come????

Suddenly ---- your knee doesn't hurt as much ... you can worry about retiring tomorrow ...but for now: **YOU HAVE ARRANGEMENTS TO MAKE ... YOUR GRAND-DAUGHTER IS AN OLYMPIAN!!**

I certainly don't understand God's will.

I certainly don't believe God carves out our path through life ahead of time. And ... we all know ... lots of our prayers go “unanswered” ... or at least we may not hear God's voice as clearly as we would like ... Such is life.

But ----- **GOD DOES SPEAK TO US ... YES, HE DOES.**

In the moments ... in the interruptions ... a phone call from a friend, about his wife ... a phone call from your granddaughter, sharing her accomplishment.

This is precisely what Jesus did: the moments, the intersections, the touches, teaching us what's important and what's not.

I think of the words in the 2<sup>nd</sup> lesson this morning:

*“No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful ... and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength ... you will be able to endure it.”*

And you wonder ----- God ... if you are testing me ... you're getting **CLOSE TO MY LIMIT.**

I don't like to take issue with St. Paul ... but ...

**GOD DOES NOT TEST US.** God is not some puppeteer ... pulling strings ...seeing how much we can endure. God doesn't play games.

**LIFE TESTS US ... all the time, everyday.**

From furnaces to sump-pumps to spilled milk ... unpaid bills and hospital stays ... re-hab ...saying “good-bye” to someone we love ... yes: **LIFE TESTS US.**

And, in the middle of all this ----- **God loves us.**

The song we just sang: “What a friend we have in Jesus.”

One of the most precious gifts in the world ... is **FRIENDSHIP.**

Do you have a friend who is really “different” that you are???? You may not be drinkin' buddies ... or hang-out a lot. You may love music ... she loves sports. You may be 24 ... he may be 74.

Friendship is about **LIFE.** It's about loyalty, understanding, respect, and looking deep inside another's soul.

Her name is Gunny. She and her husband had a nice home, plenty of money ... they were vibrant and alive.

Over the years ... "stuff" began to happen.

Sickness ... her husband's death ... family "issues."

She had to leave her nice house ... lived alone ... daughter wouldn't visit ...

She ends up in a nursing home for folks like her ----- no money, nobody to take care of her.

Alone ... except for a friend named Dorothy.

The other day ... "her time" is near an end.

Her family is called ----- "too busy" to get there.

When I walk in the door of her room .... there she is, holding her hand ----- yes, it's Dorothy.

Dorothy ---- getting up there in years, like Gunny ... could easily say "I don't feel good enough" to come ...

but ----- a thing called "friendship" gives her strength.

We sit there.

We pray.

Into the room comes DEEDRA ----- she is an aid ... she is a lady of "abundance."

Abundance of love for Gunny, whom she has taken care of for years ... abundance of goodness in her heart.

Deedra looks at Dorothy: "*Thanks for being her friend.*"

Jesus comes to us in many packages.

God's spirit speaks to us in many ways.

I don't know how you spell JESUS or GOD or THE HOLY SPIRIT.

But for one day ... this week ... in the life of a lady named Gunny ...

"GOD" is spelled with a "**CAPITAL D.**"

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