



Week 1 – FACE OFF

Relationships are worth FIGHTING for.

Mark 12:30-31

³⁰ You must love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' This is the first Law. ³¹ "The second Law is this: 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.' No other Law is greater than these."

:: How we see OURSELVES influences how we see others.

Romans 12:3

I ask each one of you not to think more of himself than he should think. Instead, think in the right way toward yourself by the faith God has given you.

Luke 18:14

"I tell you, this man went back to his house forgiven, and not the other man. For whoever makes himself look more important than he is will find out how little he is worth. Whoever does not try to honor himself will be made important."

:: Choosing to HIDE creates SEPARATION.

James 5:16

Tell your sins to each other. And pray for each other so you may be healed. The prayer from the heart of a man right with God has much power.

1 Corinthians 2:3-4

³ I came to you in weakness—timid and trembling. ⁴ And my message and my preaching were very plain. Rather than using clever and persuasive speeches, I relied only on the power of the Holy Spirit.

:: God **KNOWS** and **LOVES** us completely.

Jeremiah 31:3

The Lord came to us from far away, saying, "I have loved you with a love that lasts forever. So I have helped you come to Me with loving-kindness."

Zephaniah 3:17

For the Lord your God is living among you. He is a mighty savior. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs."

1 John 3:1

See what great love the Father has for us that He would call us His children. And that is what we are.



TRAINING TIPS



:: Embrace **WHO YOU ARE**.

1 Peter 2:9 (MSG)

But you are the ones chosen by God, chosen for the high calling of priestly work, chosen to be a holy people, God's instruments to do his work and speak out for him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference he made for you—from nothing to something, from rejected to accepted.

:: Let **JESUS** fill the gaps.

2 Corinthians 12:9

Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me.

Romans 5:8

But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

NOTES:

“To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot like being loved by God. It is what we need more than anything. It liberates us from pretense, humbles us out of our self-righteousness, and fortifies us for any difficulty life can throw at us.”

– Tim Keller –



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Now What? [For Further Reflection]:

- :: *What about this weekend's message impacted, surprised or challenged you?*
 - :: *If you had a list of "things worth fighting for" what would be on it?*
 - :: *Re-read Jesus' word in Mark 12:30-31. How do you think His words speak to the importance of relationships – with God, others and yourself?*
 - :: *Share how you responded to Pastor Justin's question of, "What do you see when you look in the mirror?" (Take a risk and be honest.)*
 - :: *How do you think the way you see yourself impacts how you see and/or interact with others?*
 - :: *Read Luke 18:9-14. How do you see this truth that "how we see ourselves influences how we see others" displayed in the life of the Pharisee?*
 - :: *Pastor Justin said, "Choosing to hide creates separation." Do you think this is true? If so, share an example where you've experienced or seen this.*
 - :: *Read James 5:16 & 1 Corinthians 2:3-4. How do you see vulnerability displayed and called for in these passages?*
 - :: *Who are you able to be truly vulnerable with? What holds you back?*
 - :: *Re-read the Tim Keller quote on pg. 3. How does this speak to the value of not hiding but rather taking the risk of being fully known?*
 - :: *Take a moment to re-read Jeremiah 31:3, Zephaniah 3:17 & 1 John 3:1. Knowing that God knows you completely, what do these verses say about how He feels about you? Which verse encourages you or challenges you? Why?*
 - :: *Brene Brown says, "Let go of who you think you're supposed to be and embrace who you are." What part of you do you struggle to embrace?*
 - :: *Share one "gap" in how you feel about yourself that you'd like to invite Jesus to fill this week. Who can you ask to pray for and check in with you about this?*
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How to start a relationship with God:

- 1) Admitting that you, like everyone else, are in need of rescue.
- 2) Asking God to forgive your sins.
- 3) Saying YES to God by trusting Jesus as Savior & Lord.

You can do that right now by simply talking to God in a prayer like this:

**Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness.
I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. Today, I recognize
you as Savior; and I choose to respond to you as my Risen LORD.
Help me to follow you all the days of my life.
In Your name, Amen.**

Unless otherwise noted, today's Scripture is from the New Living Translation [NLT].
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