

# ***Biblical Foundations for Faithful Presence***

*John 1:14-18, 20:21; 1 Thessalonians 2:1-11*

**Introduction:** The Bible teaches a concept of being in the world called *faithful presence*. Just as Jesus came to reveal the person and the presence of God, Christians are also called to reflect the person and presence of Christ by living lives of humble integrity in the midst of a fallen world. This morning we lay the foundation for this concept.

## **1. *JESUS' EXAMPLE – Jesus establishes the concept of faithful presence. John 1:14-18***

- A. Background: John's strategy in John Chapter One is to reveal Jesus as the new Moses. 1:14-18
- B. 1<sup>st</sup> act: Jesus is the God who fellowships with us. 1:14a
  - 1. He's the infinite God because He is the Word (1:14a) and the only begotten (1:14, 18)
  - 2. He's the infinite God because witnesses said He was. 1:15
  - 3. Jesus is God as He "pitches his tent" among us. 1:14
- C. 2<sup>nd</sup> act: Jesus displays God's glory to us. 1:14b-15
  - 1. When the tabernacle was completed, the glory came down. Exodus 40:17-38
  - 2. The disciples see the glory of God reflected in the transfiguration. Mark 9:1-8
  - 3. But, the main way they see His glory is in the relational style of Jesus. 1:14b
- D. 3<sup>rd</sup> act: Jesus turns religion on its head. 1:16
  - 1. The law came through Moses.
  - 2. But, relationship with God comes through Jesus.
  - 3. In Christ, God layers blessing upon blessing.
- E. 4<sup>th</sup> act: Jesus fulfills our ultimate desire for purpose in life. 1:18
  - 1. No one can see God and live. Exodus 33:20
  - 2. But, Jesus unveils God's character to us. (See also Jn. 14:9.)
- F. Summary of *F.P.* in Jesus: He models the person of God and is the bridge to the Father.

## **2. *PAUL'S EXAMPLE – Paul models a practical concept of faithful presence that we can easily understand. 1 Thessalonians 2:1-11***

- A. Paul comes to Thessalonica in great distress. 2:1-6
  - 1. He and his team had been mistreated in a previous city. 2:1-2a
  - 2. They come with authenticity. 2:2b
  - 3. Insight – We see in this, that it's never easy to be the faithful presence of Christ.
- B. Paul manifests the relational style of Jesus in grace and truth. 2:7-11
  - 1. Paul was like a spiritual mother – *grace* (2:7-8) & father – *truth* (2:11).
  - 2. This led Paul to invest skillfully in their lives. 2:9-10
  - 3. Insight – Being the faithful presence means close relationships.
- C. Summary of *F.P.* in Paul: Paul builds strong relationships that earn trust so he can speak.

## **3. *OUR CHALLENGE – God calls us to be the faithful presence of Christ.***

- A. Command: We're charged to be like Jesus and Paul. John 20:21; 1 Corinthians 11:1
- B. Decision: You decide to live an intentional Christian life within your sphere of influence.
  - 1. You model the integrity of Christ.
  - 2. You engage in prayer for others.
  - 3. You engage in proactive acts of service or you enhance value in others' lives.
- C. Expected outcome: People will see God in your life. John 1:14

## *Questions for Discussion*