

FINDING GOD

Scripture used: 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

Recommended book: *Finding God in Silicon Valley: Spiritual Journeys in a High-Tech World*

OVERVIEW

Each one of us has a story to tell.

In today's message we learned a bit about the story of God in Skip Vaccarello's life. As he shared his testimony of his interactions and relationship with God, we also heard our story as well. Skip knew about God but did not know God. Another (actually his wife) shared the first steps with Skip, and he tagged along!

As he discovered more and opened his heart, God used today's verse to speak to his soul and encourage him to trust. Skip had seen the open hole in his soul which he tried to fill with career, success, and achievement. Regardless of his own activities, he found that only God could fill up that hole in his soul and lead him to a fulfilling life. As the result of a chance Vacation Bible Study invitation, Skip's family was impacted for an eternity.

Skip's soul was touched by honest questions and then by scripture. His purpose was then clarified in the Word: Helping people find God with gentleness and respect.

God pointed Skip to his community with a challenge: use your existing community standing and platform to share your story. Use your story to point others to God's presence. Skip shared story after story to illustrate what God was doing in several lives: Paul, Deb, Ed, Jaida, and others. Each life led to a rippling effect in the lives of many others in their own communities.

KEY POINTS

- 1) Be ready to tell your story. For each life touched by God, there is a story to tell which points others back to God. But God asked us through scripture (1 Peter 3:15) to be ready to tell our story at all times and in all places. The qualifications which are important in the telling are 2-fold: tell your story (1) with gentleness and (2) with respect. Your story is meant to point others to the very real presence of God in our daily lives.
- 2) Accept these 3 God Challenges:
 - o Prayer. Prayer works to transform lives. Not all prayers are answered immediately or in miraculous ways. Prayer allows us the privilege of entering into the very real presence of God who hears us every time. Seek God's face regularly.
 - o Share your story. Sometimes you may have 30 minutes to share your story and at other times you may only have 30 seconds. But each opportunity must be met with preparation and respect. God uses you to point others to Him. Be prepared.
 - o Invest your time. Be willing to open your time and energy to meet others' needs. By entering into a relationship with them, you are building a bridge or path from their soul to yours. Honesty and openness must be the foundation for that relationship because those are the building blocks of trust.
- 3) It's not up to us! Relax and rely on God. Be obedient to God to pray for others, to invest, and to tell. Use your own platform to transform your community into new relationships with God!

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - From what platform has God given you to share your story? Give a brief description of it.
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Why has God had to remind us to use gentleness and respect when sharing our stories? What significance is found in being obedient to that scripture?
- 3) **DO** - Ask God to show you one person this week in whom you should invest your time and energy. Identify the first steps you need to take for building a bridge of a deeper relationship. Take those steps and look for God's action to unfold before you. Take a few moments to praise and thank Him for his faithfulness!