

FROM THE PULPIT

What is God's role in your daily life?

By Brad Bryant
FOR THE PANTAGRAPH

Here we are: March 1. Two months of 2008 are already history... The decisions and actions you have made in the past have helped to create your "now." And each decision in your "now" is defining and creating your "tomorrow."

So, if you are looking for a "better tomorrow," today is the only place and time when those changes can be made.

In our finite human form, we lack the "big picture" of our life situations. It's nearly impossible to know and make the "right choices" alone.

And "alone" is not how God wants us to live! In the Genesis story, God "models" the relationship he planned: People and God, walking and talking together! We know, however, that this "planned" relationship fell apart after we humans decided we wanted things our

way instead of following God's way. Sin (separation from God) entered our world.

Later in history, Jesus (God with us) lived with us, showing God's plan again, and inviting every person to choose to participate in a living, real relationship with God.

As recorded in the Scriptures, Jesus experienced our human life, facing sickness and death of friends, disappointments, temptations... the problems you and I face during life.

At many points throughout his mortal life and ministry, Jesus would stop, separate himself from the crowds, and "check in," listening to God's direction. Jesus knew the importance of having God's ongoing guidance to help him make "right choices." That lesson is equally important for us today!

Are you trying to travel through life by yourself? Or are you building a dependable and ongoing relationship with

a heavenly guide? God, who lovingly and intentionally created you, waits patiently for you to ask for his presence and guidance.

Everyone is searching for meaning in life. But without help from God's perspective, we end up looking for meaning in the wrong places. We end up "always busy," overcommitted, tired and frustrated, with lack of focus, direction and purpose.

Jesus' life shows us how much God loves us. "Listening" to Jesus through the Scripture story is a good starting place. But the risen Jesus, working with us today through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, is an even better guide.

God wants you to find him! We have Scriptures full of God's invitation to each of us... the book of Jeremiah, which is significant enough to be considered scripture for the Jewish, Christian and Islamic

faiths, reminds us that God wants to be found. Jeremiah 29:13-14 states, "If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. I will be found by you," says the Lord."

God himself promises, through his prophet, that you can find him. And once we "find" God, we can begin to build that important, ongoing relationship with him, allowing God to help us deal with life's challenges.

How do we start this journey?

Jeremiah said to seek God "wholeheartedly," with all your desire and effort.

Jesus, in Matthew 7:7-8, says, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."

Psalm 46:10 tells us to "Be still, and know that I am God." These three Scriptures pro-

vide a very good "starting place" for those who are searching for God.

► Decide that you want to find and know God.

► Ask God to help you recognize His work and activity in your life.

► Be still - listen, and see what God has to tell you.

So, we're back to our original question:

What role do you allow God to play in your everyday life?

God wants to be there... but waits for you to invite him!

Remember: God loves you unconditionally, and wants you to find him and choose to be with him. Search until you find a church family that helps you meet the "living, loving God," who knows you personally and wants to be involved in your life every day!

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