

## Back to Basics: Connecting with God

A friend taught me once that summer is a great time to go back-to-basics. Back-to-basics in our homes, with our families, in our routines, and perhaps especially in our spiritual lives.

I recently returned from vacation with my family. The time away gave me opportunity to focus on some of the basics: enjoying and experiencing (instead of just striving and doing); reflecting and pondering (instead of “firing and forgetting”); being present and engaged (instead of being distracted and distant).

The change in routine also give me the opportunity to reflect on my relationship with God. I found myself pondering the last 15 months of uncertainty and upheaval in our world. I could identify a number of times that I had grown in my relationship and reliance upon the Lord. However, there were other times where it seemed like I regressed, feeling overwhelmed and allowing my study of God’s Word and my commitment to prayer wane.

*How about you? As you look back, what have you experienced? In what ways have you grown? At what times have you struggled?*

First of all, let me say that we have a gracious God, one who is with us through it all—the ups and the downs, the joys and struggles. Consider Romans 8:31-32, “What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?” In other words, please don’t come away from this devotion feeling condemned if there have been more downs than ups. And certainly “give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

And yet, the Lord, who gave His own Son so that we might have the most amazing relationship with Him, desires that we grow closer to Him (Colossians 1:9-11; 2 Peter 3:18). And that’s where I am at today as I think about going back-to-basics.

As I anticipate all that God has in store for the next 15 months, and as I evaluate today where I have been, I am making a new commitment to one of the most basic, yet powerful tools, the Lord has given us to grow in our relationship with Him: His Word and prayer.

The past couple of weeks I have gone back to what I call the “comfort food” of my devotional life, my “go-to”—reading and praying the Psalms. It gives me a routine, 5 Psalms a day (150 for the month). I get to feast on His Word and ponder that not only did the Psalms point ahead in so many ways to Jesus’ life, they also were the prayer book that Jesus used.

I am going back-to-basics.

*What about you? How will you go back-to-basics in connecting with God? Is there a book of the Bible you will read through? A pattern of devotion and prayer you will commit to? Share with me your thoughts through a quick email. I would love to hear more.*

~ Pastor Ken | Senior Pastor  
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