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Description automatically generated**Adult Bible Class**

**Invitations From God - Week Two – March 2022**

**God’s Invitation to Practice the Presence of People**

*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” -* John 13:34-35

Peter Scazzero writes,

*“The essence of true Christian spirituality is to love well. This requires that we experience connection with God, with ourselves, and with other people. God invites us to practice his presence in our daily lives. At the same time, he invites us to* ***“practice the presence of people,”*** *within an awareness of his presence, in our daily relationships. Sadly, the two are rarely brought together.” –* P. Scazzero

1. **THE CALL – GOD’S EXPECTATION**

**God’s invitation to practice the presence of people is to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as Jesus does – as the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ beings in the world.**

1. Jesus – A Study in Practicing the Presence

*“He compelled people to himself through authentic love and compassion. He accepted people where they were at, while at the same time challenging them to grow and change. He extended grace, but also carried out justice. He related to people with confidence while simultaneously remaining humble. He knew when to challenge others and when to encourage them. On his brief journey when he walked on earth, he never saw a single person as disposable or unworthy*.” - Steve Saccone

***“At a deep level, people want to be seen. Everyone hopes for someone to see and invest some attention and time in them. Everyone wants someone to practice their presence.”***

1. **THE CHALLENGE – OUR RELATIONAL \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
2. Roadblocks (Relational Barriers):

* Our own brokenness and fear of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* The placement of priority \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_before people.
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with certain things so that I fail to notice those around me.
* Inability to handle \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ gracefully.
* The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of getting involved.

1. **THE CHANGE WE NEED – PAYING \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* Notice when I put myself before others.
* Notice whom I talk to and whom I don’t talk to.
* Notice my reactions to being interrupted.
* Notice everything I can about my spouse, parents, kids, colleagues.

1. **THE CONDUCT OF THOSE WHO PRACTICE THE PRESENCE – \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ TO WHAT WE SEE**

* Practice *courtesy,* which can give me eyes to see others.
* Be *curious,* listen to other’s stories.
* Offer *hospitality*.
* *Intercede* for others and their needs, which can help me see the world more clearly.
* *Act* on what you see to the degree you are able.

1. Being as Much \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as Possible

*“Every day I put love on the line. There is nothing I am less good at than love. I am far better in competition than in love.... I am schooled and trained in acquisitive skills, in getting my own way. And yet I decide, every day, to set aside what I can do best and attempt what I do very clumsily-open myself to the frustrations and failures of loving, daring to believe that failing in love is better than succeeding in pride. All that is hazardous work. I live on the edge of defeat all the time.”* – E. Peterson

1. Loving in the Real World

Love isn't a "safe investment”. To love at all is to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Than Meets the Eye

By practicing the presence of people, we give them the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

*“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. -* John 15:12-13

Answer Key: Pg. 1- see people, most important, myopia, being hurt, Pg. 2 - self-centeredness, on tasks, preoccupation, interruptions, inconvenience, paying attention, responding, like God, vulnerable, seeing more, gift of mattering.