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1. Do you think your life is impacting the Kingdom of God? Good or Bad

2. How many of you have a Real, Personal, and practical relationship with God?

3. What is God's plan for expanding the Kingdom?

- God's plan for the advancement of His kingdom depends on His relationship with His people.

A REAL, PERSONAL,PRACTICAL RELATIONSHIP

- The relationship God wants to have with you will be real and personal. By "***real***" I mean that God is more than a doctrine or a person in history. He wants to interact with you on a personal level ***today***.

- He is also practical in how He relates to you. Some people ask, can a person actually have a real, personal, and practical relationship with God? They seem to think God is far off and unconcerned about their day-to-day living. That is not the God we see in the Scriptures.

4. Read each Scripture passage and describe at least one fact indicating the relationship the person(s) had with God was real, personal, and/or practical. If you are already familiar with the account, you may answer from your present knowledge of the passage.

a. *Adam and Eve after they sinned*:

(Genesis 3:20–21) Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.

21 The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

b. *Hagar when she fled from Sarai*:

(Genesis 16:1–13)

Hagar and Ishmael

16 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; 2 so she said to Abram, "The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her.

Abram agreed to what Sarai said. 3 So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. 4 He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.

When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. 5 Then Sarai said to Abram, "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the Lord judge between you and me."

6 "Your slave is in your hands," Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so, she fled from her.

7 The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. 8 And he said, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?"

"I'm running away from my mistress Sarai," she answered.

[9] Then the angel of the Lord told her, “Go back to your mistress and submit to her.” [10] The angel added, “I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count.”

[11] The angel of the Lord also said to her: “You are now pregnant, and you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the Lord has heard of your misery.

[12] He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone’s hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers.

[13] She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen the One who sees me.

c. *Hannah when she poured out her grief to God*:

(1 Samuel 1:9–18) Once when they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah stood up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on his chair by the doorpost of the Lord’s house. [10] In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly. [11] And she made a vow, saying, “Lord Almighty, if you will only look on your servant’s misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.”

[12] As she kept on praying to the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. [13] Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk [14] and said to her, “How long are you going to stay drunk? Put away your wine.”

[15] “Not so, my lord,” Hannah replied, “I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer; I was pouring out my soul to the Lord. [16] Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief.”

[17] Eli answered, “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him.”

[18] She said, “May your servant find favor in your eyes.” Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast.

d. *Twelve Jesus sent out to preach*:

(Mark 6:7–13) Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits.

[8] These were his instructions: “Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. [9] Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. [10] Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. [11] And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.”

[12] They went out and preached that people should repent. [13] They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

5. What can we learn from the Scriptures we just discussed?

- From Genesis to Revelation, we see God relating to people in real, personal, intimate, and practical ways. God had wonderful fellowship with Adam and Eve, walking in the garden with them in the cool of the day. When they sinned, God pursued them to restore the love relationship. He met a practical need by providing clothing to cover their nakedness.

- Hagar fled for her life after Sarai used and mistreated her. When she reached the end of her resources, had nowhere else to turn, when all hope was gone, and everyone had forsaken her, God came to Hagar. In her relationship with God, she learned that God saw her, knew her needs, and would lovingly provide for her. God is extremely personal.

- Hannah experienced years of disappointment and hurt. She poured out her sorrow in worship and God met her need in a very practical and powerful way, giving her a son, Samuel, the following year.

- The disciples also had a real, personal, and practical relationship with Jesus. Jesus chose them to be with Him. What a joy it must have been to walk with Jesus daily as the twelve disciples did! When Jesus gave them a difficult assignment, He did not send them out without any help. He gave them instructions and authority they had never known before, even over evil spirits.

6. Do you sense, as you read Scripture, God expressed Himself to people in personal and practical ways?

7. Do you see their relationships with God were practical?

8. Was He also real and personal to Noah? to Abraham? to Moses? to Isaiah? Yes!

9. Has God changed? No! What was true in the Old Testament also occurred during the time of Jesus' life and ministry. It was the same after the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

- Your life can also reflect a real, personal, and practical relationship as you respond to God's work in your life.

10. Describe an experience in your life when God was real, personal, and practical in His relationship with you.

11. What does love has to do with it?

- Love must be personal and practical. A person cannot love without someone to love. A love relationship with God takes place between two persons.
- A relationship with God is not just a belief system, it is personal. This has always been His desire.
- God is a Person pouring His life into yours. Christianity is a personal, practical, progressive relationship with almighty God.

❖ If for some reason you cannot think of a time when your relationship with God was real, personal, and practical, spend time evaluating your current relationship with Him. Go to the Lord in prayer and ask Him to ***reveal the true nature of your walk with Him***. Ask Him ***to bring you into the kind of relationship He desires for you***. If you realize you have never entered a saving relationship with God, we can settle this very important issue now.

❖ If you sense your need to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior, now is the time to settle this matter with God. Ask God to speak to you as you read the following Scriptures.

❏ *Romans 3:23*: All have sinned.

❏ *Romans 6:23*: Eternal life is a free gift of God.

❏ *Romans 5:8*: Because of His love for you, Jesus paid the death penalty for your sins. Confess and repent of your sins against a holy God.

❏ *Romans 10:9-10*: Confess Jesus as Lord and believe that God raised Him from the dead.

❏ *Romans 10:13*: Ask God to save you, and He will.

To place your faith in Jesus and receive His gift of eternal life, you must:

1. *Recognize you are a sinner who needs a saving relationship with Jesus Christ*.

2. *Confess (agree with God about) your sins*.

3. *Repent of your sins (turn from sin to God)*.

4. *Ask Jesus to save you by His grace*.

5. *Turn over the rule of your life to Jesus, letting Him be your Lord*.

12. Is God's Presence and work practical in your life?

GOD'S PRESENCE AND WORK IN YOUR LIFE ARE PRACTICAL

- Some people will say to you, doing God's will is not practical in our day. We should always differ from them. God is an extremely practical God. He was in Scripture. He is the same today. When He provided manna, quail, and water for the children of Israel, He was being practical. When Jesus fed five thousand people, He was being practical. The God I see revealed in Scripture is real, personal, and practical. You can trust God to be exceedingly practical as He relates to you too.

- God's constant presence is the most practical part of your life and ministry.

- God's constant presence is the most practical aspect of your life and ministry. Unfortunately, we often assign God a limited role in our lives. We only call on him when we need help. That is the exact opposite of what we find in God's Word. He is the one who is working in our world. He invites you to relate to him, so he accomplishes his work through you. His plan for the advancement of his kingdom depends on His working in real and practical ways through His people.

- Knowing and experiencing God through a real and personal relationship was practical in the Scriptures. I believe you will find that this kind of walk with God will be profoundly helpful to you as well. God can make a big difference in your relationships in your family, in your church, and with other people.

13. Can you describe your relationship with God as real, personal, and practical?

❏ Yes ❏ No Why or why not?

14. What is one area of your life you would like God to be more: 1) *real*; **2**) *personal*; **3**) *practical*? Pray you will be responsive to all He does in these areas of your life in the coming days.

SUMMARY STATEMENTS

- The relationship God wants to have with me will be real and personal.

- God's plan for the advancement of the kingdom depends on His working in real and practical ways through His relationships with His people.