PART 3: GOD IS ALWAYS CLOSER THAN YOU THINK

Sermon Notes

Text: Genesis 28:10-22

Intro:

Mountains have long been viewed as religiously significant; allowing the climber to get “closer” the presence of the gods.

Genesis 28:10-22

God is always closer than you think (v. 16)

We live by faith, not by sight

- Our “sight” works like a virtual reality world, causing us to forget that in the real world, God is always closer than we think.

God appears to Jacob above a large stairway (a tower like the tower of Babel)…but he’s also above and beside Jacob. Ever-present!

Key verse: v. 15 “I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go.”

John 1:47-51 - Jesus identifies himself as both the ever-present God AND the stairway connecting heaven and earth.

Jacob’s response:

1. **Jacob set up a memorial**

He used the only thing he had: A rock

2. Jacob made a commitment

To worship the Lord and give him a tithe.

Conclusion:

Revelation 21:3

Connect Group Discussion

Warm up:

1. If it were within your means, would you be willing to try climbing Mount Everest? Why or why not? Are you the adventurous type? Or are you more reserved?

2. What stood out to you from Sunday's sermon?

Study & Discussion:

1. Take a moment right now to close your eyes and imagine God. What does he look like? Take about 90 seconds to imagine God.

    - Where is he? What is around him? Why do you think this image came to mind? How did it differ from how other's saw God?

2. Can you think of a time when you experienced the presence of God in a tangible way? What was it like? What was going on around you when it happened? Do you normally find it hard to believe that God is near? Why or why not?

3. Read John 1:43-51. What stands out in this story? How does it relate to the story of Jacob in Genesis 28? Why does Jesus identify himself as the staircase?

4. Read Genesis 28:18-22. How did Jacob respond to this experience? What did his actions mean?

Practice:

1. Jacob responded to God by setting up a memorial with the rock he had used to sleep on. What kind of memorial could you set up to remind yourself that God is always present? Posting a Bible verse? Writing in your journal? Making an offering? Starting a family tradition?