

Standing in the Gap

Pastor Peter Smith 8-28-16

When you think of a Gap: pictures

- **Not this Gap**
- **Definitely this one either...I had to show this!!**
- **(1st pic) On a mtn in Norway there is a large gap that plunges 3,226 feet straight down**
- **(2nd pic) However, there's a large boulder caught in the Gap. So what do people do? (Next few pics till Motorcycle) Wow!**
- **Did you here another Gap story this week? (Show pic)**

A University of Pittsburgh student fell between the two buildings, breaking his ankle, and remained wedged in the tight space separating the businesses while police and paramedics worked to get him out.

(Show Pic) They had to use a jackhammer to break open a wall and remove him!

Today, as we are thinking about Friend's Day and our upcoming Googling God series, I want you to think about still one more kind of Gap, one that God wants us to jump into. Ready? Look in your sermon notes with me to the OT book of Ezekiel

³⁰ "I looked for someone who might rebuild the wall of righteousness that guards the land. I searched for someone to stand in the gap in the wall so I wouldn't have to destroy the land, but I found no one. ³¹ So now I will pour out my fury on them, consuming them with the fire of my anger. I will heap on their heads the full penalty for all their sins. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken!"
-Ezekiel 22:30-31, NIV

Ezekiel:

- city of Jerusalem captured & destroyed, including the walls that protected it
- people taken away to Babylon, a hard time for Israel
- God wants to rebuild Jerusalem and bring His people home, but he needs people who care and are willing to 'jump into' the Gap that is there

Problem is, He couldn't find anybody!

Some ways I can stand in the gap

1. I can Pray

- Different kinds of prayer: thanksgiving, worship, our own needs...but then there are prayers for others:
 - Intercession is praying for other's needs
- Intercession is effective

Moses

"So God said he would destroy them— had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach (gap) before him to keep his wrath from destroying them." -Psalm 106:23

When we pray

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man *is powerful and effective.*" -James 5:16

- Warfare prayer

"For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

-2 Corinthians 10:3-5, NIV

Some ways I can stand in the gap: I can pray and

2. I can Care deeply

"Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy

at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.”
-Titus 2:3-5

What's it take to care deeply?

- A listening ear, a shoulder to lean on, giving our time and other resources...
- 'walk' with someone through their divorce, their grief, their pain
- Bring someone to the Food Pantry this week; better yet, if you can, split the cost of their groceries!
- Pay attention, show how much you care

Another way I can stand in the gap:

3. I can get involved

In general, many ways to get involved:

- PTA, coach a sport, Character Counts, Mentoring, MADD (1 mom changed a lot!)

In our Friend's lives we can:

- Babysit / offer respite care, after school care (pick up from school, stay at your place after school), do a cleaning day, the list goes on...
- In the early days of Christianity, God saved people **daily** because Christians cared deeply for their friends

So we can stand in the gap by praying, caring deeply, by getting involved and one more way I can stand in the gap:

4. I can invite my friends to follow Jesus

“Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two disciples who heard John and followed Jesus. Andrew at once found his

brother Simon and told him, “We have found the Messiah”...
Andrew brought Simon to Jesus.” -John 1:40-42

- Most people will accept an invite to church...don't be afraid to ask!
- Inviting is a valid part of sharing faith in Jesus
- Learn how to share your faith with family and friends: the basics, ask a question like: Do you ever think about spiritual things? See what doors God opens for you

My Next Step

- 1. Who can I Invite to Googling God? Quickly think of 3 people (neighbor, friend, teacher, co worker, family)**

- 2. Meet a need they may have**

- 3. Pray daily for them**