



Series: God Up Close and Personal

Title: God Through Us

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Smythe Street Church

## Pre-Sermon – Call Down Elementary and Pre-School Kids

Upstairs in Elementary, do you know what we've been talking about this month? It is **Compassion: Caring Enough to Do Something about Someone's Need**.

It is not just enough to see someone needs help, but God wants us to care enough to make a difference, to do something.

God did. **God did something about our greatest need**. God saw that we had a problem with sin, and sent his Son Jesus to come to pay the price for all our wrong, and show us the way to have a relationship with God.

Like Jesus came to show us God's love, we have a mission for you. As part of 'Undercover Christmas' want you to do something special. In this secret envelope, we have two Christmas cards, we want you to think of two people that you know could use encouragement or to know they are loved. We want you to colour a card for each of them (and write a note if you know how) and then secretly deliver it to them (but don't let them see it was you). You can give them some love and joy 'undercover'. (there's also a sucker in there for a snack while I talk to everyone else, okay?) **(Send Kids Back)**

## Christmas Series

You see by Jesus' coming at Christmas God breaks the false stories that we can tell ourselves about God.

- God Is Distant and Disinterested – vs. God with Us
  - Pastor Verner – God comes to be with us, asks 'where are you?'
- God is against me, he is out to punish me – God is for Us
  - Last week Pastor Wayne looked at some verses at the end of Romans chapter 8, that talked about how we cannot be separated from the love of God.

**"If God is for us who can be against us? – Romans 8:31**

- If God did not withhold his own son, what would he withhold from us.
- Last Week we looked at the false story, “I am stuck trying to overcome my sin and problems on my own.” As we studied the end of Romans 7:22-8:9. We saw that God not only is for us, but wants His Spirit to live in us; transforming our desires and changing our relationship with him. (see last week’s notes or message online for more)

## **This Week’s False Narrative to Confront – Christianity is all about ‘Jesus and me’**

Sometimes faith in Jesus is characterized as a something intensely personal, and all about me, myself and God. But God’s work in Jesus shows us that God’s work is a lot larger than that.

### **2 Corinthians 5:17–21, NIV84**

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

I have one simple point to make today, that when God puts his spirit in you, it is so that he can work through you.

### **Outline of the Passage**

- God had transformed you into a new creation.
- God reconciled you to himself

- God has given you the ministry of sharing what he has given to you (reconciliation).
- God now makes his appeal through you.

### YOU ARE CALLED TO SHARE WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN YOU

It reminds me of my kids presents at Christmas. The younger ones, well they went to the Dollar Store with Heidi & my money, with what we gave them, and took what we gave them to get us (and their friends) presents at Christmas. They were so excited to give their gifts, but in a very real sense, the gifts they gave also came from Heidi and I. We took them to the store, we gave them the money, we gave them the opportunity, and what did they do, they seized the opportunity to give what we gave them.

My favourite experience was watching my kids give gifts to each other (and to Heidi and I). Probably as much as seeing them open what Heidi and I got, seeing the way they reacted to what they gave each other (Nate gave me a pair of Christmas fun socks, I'm wearing them today).

### YOU CAN'T GIVE WHAT YOU DON'T HAVE, BUT YOU SHOULDN'T HIDE WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN.

## What Has God Given to You

- God walked with me in my sickness
- God met me in my grief
- God gave me a passage of scripture that spoke to me (that's all a sermon is)
- God has blessed me with finances, let me give some of that for him to this need.
- God has given me help as a parent, a spouse, a widow.

**What freedom would we find if we freely gave what God has given us, and did not try to give what we don't have.**

- Isn't that the problem we run into at Christmas, when we want to give what we don't have.
- Isn't that the problem we run into when we want to serve God, that we feel like we don't have all the answers, or know all the things to say.
- We can learn from our kids, they take opportunities.

**STORY OF ENVELOPES WE GAVE THE KIDS:**

TODAY WE GAVE THE KIDS ENVELOPES (SOME GOT THEM EARLIER IN THE MONTH). WE GAVE THEM THE CARDS, THE MARKERS, THE IDEA.

WHEN SOMEONE TAKES THE OPPORTUNITY THOUGH, WELL...

I FOUND A CARD (WITHOUT A NAME) AT MY HOUSE, IT REALLY ENCOURAGED ME.

What has God put in your hand. What has God done for you. You can share what God has done as you see the ideas and opportunities God drops in your lap. If you share, God will work through you, and in others lives it can make all the difference.