

# Facing God Involves Facing Ourselves

Closer: Developing a Life with God  
February 26, 2017 – Brad Bailey

The nature of being close to another.

Developing a Life with God involves...

1. Facing our \_\_\_\_\_... our true selves.

Genesis 3:6-10

*When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.*

*Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"*

*He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."*

Connecting with God involves \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Facing our unresolved \_\_\_\_\_.

The Example of Asaph

Psalms 73:1-3, 13, 16-17, 21-23

*Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. <sup>2</sup> But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold. <sup>3</sup> For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.*

*<sup>13</sup> Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence.*

*<sup>16</sup> When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me <sup>17</sup> till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny.*

*<sup>21</sup> When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, <sup>22</sup> I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you. <sup>23</sup> Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand.*

Connecting with God involves resolving \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Facing our \_\_\_\_\_ (Any other area of our life, in which we have disregarded God and others.)

Jesus said, *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."* (Matthew 5:8)

Connecting with God involves being honest... the honesty of \_\_\_\_\_... that restores openness and reaffirms agreement with God.

Psalms 139:23-24 (NLT)

*Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.*

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### Intro

When a close relationship, such as a marriage relationship, begins to feel **disconnected** ...perhaps it's feeling more **functional than personal**... there's a phrase one might use to describe what is needed ...which is:

**“We need some real face time.”**

“Face time”...time in which we are actually engaged with each other...not just engaged with kids or any other activity...but actually facing each other...eye to eye.

What do you think of or even feel when you hear that?

Two things will find equally true....

**It's not optional**...There are many ways we may be connected through common responsibilities and activities...but there is no substitute for actually relating to the other person. It's essential ... vital...indispensable to being truly connected.

But here's the other truth...

**It's not easy**...it's difficult....tough ... **challenging** ....

**What are some of the reasons it is hard** to spend focused time with another person?

Busyness... hard to make the time...hard to focus on the other person amidst all the distractions... **requires listening**... hard to communicate...know how to **express ourselves**...we may feel vulnerable.

These are the **very issues** that are involved in **developing a life with God**...having time focused with God.

**Some of us** have found it **hard to stay close**...some have **never felt as close** as we'd like.

And like any relationship... developing life with God ... personal life...personal time...is neither optional...nor easy.

So we are going to **begin a series** entitled, **“Closer: Developing a Life with God.”**

And we are **going to engage every one of the challenges**...and every week we are going to have **one practical way** we can develop or renew our personal life with God.

**Over the next 6 weeks...we are going to have an opportunity to** develop or deepen our **personal life with God**. (it's actually 7 weeks but Cyclavia event will have no services) ....

(In church culture having time focused on God...our focus of our minds and hearts before God...has often been referred to as having “a quiet time.” I want to focus more on practical aspects of engaging God.)

We are **timing this focus with “Lent”**... one week from tomorrow...March 6<sup>th</sup>...we begin the final 40 days before Good Friday in which we join around in engaging the sacrifice of Christ.

**Today...help us prepare....by considering what lies within us.**

When I consider **my own marriage...and the many I have the privilege of sharing with...** it's **common to have times** when you begin to realize that you **feel disconnected...** and the **initial thought** is that you **need to spend more time together...**alone together.

Often there are **lots of logistics...**busyness... kids... schedules.... All of which can be the issue. And just like the **remainder of our series...**we are going to look at practical elements involved with connecting with God.

**But often...**we can be **missing something far more fundamental.** We are not comfortable being so intimate.

Often what we must face...is that we aren't disconnected because we haven't been spending focused time with one another...but rather we have not been spending focused time with one another because are avoiding the connection.

**It won't help to focus on practical ways to spend time...**if there are reasons we are **avoiding it.**

It's not uncommon for couple to realize that they are comfortable doing stuff together... as long as it is activity and outward focused...because that itself can serve to avoid facing each other...and it can even offer some level of connection.... avoiding something that we may not even realize we are avoiding.

**It is that dynamic that can lead to a spouse saying..."We never talk anymore." It never means words aren't spoken. It means there is not real sharing of selves.**

**> The same can be true of our relationship with God. God may want to say to some of us today. "We don't talk anymore."**

The truth is that **intimacy is vulnerable...**it means **facing uncomfortable stuff...**and ultimately...facing **stuff about ourselves.**

So it may be helpful to start with a simple truth...

**Facing God involves facing ourselves ...our real selves.**

Just as many couples can find it really helpful to consider why they may be avoiding "face time"...so may we with God. So I want to invite us to try and be honest about what's within us...that could resist being comfortable coming personally before God's presence.

**Developing a Life with God involves...**

**1. Facing our humanity ... our true selves.**

**We are not gods... we bear both the limits of our humanity. That may seem obvious... but in truth we are not as fully reconciled with that as we might think.**

**We have...**

- **Limited prominence** (We are not the center of existence)

- **Limited authority** (Our will is not what everything evolves around)
- **Limited understanding**
- **Limited control**

**Interesting what happens when two people are told to sit and stare into at each other – for several minutes. What do you think they might initially feel?**  
**Self conscious.**

**This self-consciousness echoes back to how God describes the posture of human life.**

Let's look back on that early description in the Book of Genesis... that describes human life trying to be like God...by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil....which they had been told was the only thing that was not for them...

### **Genesis 3:6-10**

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

Having **lost their innocence**, our first ancestors **become ashamed of their nakedness**. They **hide from each other** behind **fig leaves**... and they hide **from God** behind **bushes**.

God's presence comes with the **first question**... **"Where are you?"**

That question, so simple and direct, **had and continues to have enormous implications**. It may be the **first question God asks anyone**... if we will listen.

**Se he comes asking "Where are you?"**

Because he lacks the ability to see?

The question is **not referring** to **coordinates** but **condition**. God isn't asking for an evaluation of our coordinates... but an evaluation of our **condition**.

In what way are they naked... not covered?

Now exposed to life apart from God...uncovered by God... and therefore their finiteness.

**We become uncomfortable with trying to be like god when we are not....**

**And that center is not some impersonal force... but personal.**

**Not... sort of personal ...not 'semi-personal'...but more truly personal than we know.**

So the question "where are you" is a **profoundly personal question**...from the infinite person to the finite creature....from the **father to the child**...your father to you His son or daughter.

And we hear the response “I was afraid....so I hid.  
He hides and tries to cover himself.  
As one described...

**“... we either flee our own reality or manufacture a false self”** (Simon Tugwell)

**These are two natural reactions...and we may do a bit of both.**

**Listen deeply** to the **soul of a man driven to success...** and the **man lying drunk in the gutter** outside the local liquor store...and you may **hear something at the core** they are not so different.... Each is unable to face their basic humanity...one may be driven to cover themselves with self-importance...and one may have given up trying.

**We all have ways that we try to hide from God...that we try to cover up our nakedness. Here are some ways to consider how we may be uncomfortable with our own humanity.**

- **Consider what drives us...**

**When we become driven... find ourselves going after something in a way that may not be serving the whole of our lives well...it may be because we are avoiding facing our humanity.**

**We can find that we are only comfortable DOING things... and avoiding just BEING. [1a]**

- **Consider our dreams... where our mind wanders.**

Let's say you're sitting church and find yourself a little bored.... Where does your mind go to relieve the boredom? What do you find yourself thinking about? What is it that you can't wait to get to or begin to do?

> **That may well be your hiding place.** (I'm not talking about a need to go to the bathroom!)

- **Consider our disapproval of others.**

Some of us can be **particularly critical and angry**...and all of us have **some we can demonize**. We may need to face the **common truth** that **those who struggle most in being critical** and angry generally have the deepest **struggle with their own acceptability**. When we struggle to have grace with others...we usually **struggle** to have **grace with ourselves**. And there we may have **difficulty desiring to be present with God**. [1b]

**Most of us are expending some significant energy sowing our coverings...** because we've come to sense we can't live without them. Our false coverings have **become so much a part of us** that we **can't imagine life uncovered... it frighten us**.

But what we must realize is that **the false self can never be loved...because it doesn't exist**.

The false self may demand to forge for love on it's own terms...even feeding off of others...often in very “loveless” ways.... resisting love for it's true self. [2]

**Connecting with God involves being human.**

There's good news...God saw them for what they were...in all their nakedness...and He come to them.

It's a **striking reversal** of what we commonly may **think about relating to God**.

We **may think** that **we are the one's seeking** God and **he is the one hiding**.

But the Scriptures declare that God has made Himself known and that we turned away and worshipped the creation rather than the creator and SUPPRESSED the truth...not simply did not understand it...but suppressed it. Our inward nature turned away...that our hearts have become blind.

So perhaps the **most important** thing for us to recognize and hear... is that it's **we who moved** away from God. **God never withdrew**. His commitment to relationship never was withdrawn. His desire for relationship has never changed. Whatever Adam and Eve did, **God still comes to pursue relationship**.

**It is there before God**...that we **can become** most truly human again.

We need to find heart of King David...found in **Psalm 139**...

*O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; **your works are wonderful**, I know that full well.*  
*Psalm 139:1-2, 6, 13-14*

Each of us is made with a wonder...something sacred that is not for us to deny. If you don't think God wants to relate to you personally, you may need to pierce that resignation.

We also do well to recognize that **developing a life with God involves...**

## **2. Facing our unresolved disappointment.**

One of the things that can cause a marital partner to avoid engaging face to face...is a deep disappointment that they haven't resolved or reconciled.

There is **something they expected from the other person...that wasn't met...**and the disappointment is a feeling that they just **want to protect themselves from having to feel**.

We can have unresolved disappointment...disappointment we have not reconciled with our expectations of God that leads to withdrawing.

Many have **known such times** in their journey.

- We experience a **major crisis of loss or suffering** that leads to disillusionment (health, financial, divorce, death of loved one, etc.)
- Our faith does not appear to "work."
- We have **more questions than answers**, and the foundation of our faith feels unclear.

So perhaps unconsciously **we want to avoid disappointment by avoiding expectations.**

We can still have a **form of faithfulness**...still be fully acknowledging God... still present in community...but our **belief becomes** more an **objective truth...inactive.**

**Faith becomes more of a noun** than as a verb.

We become **more comfortable** believing **in God**... than **believing God.**

**Connecting with God involves resolving unmet expectations.**

**It is natural, as finite creatures in relationship to an infinite God, that we will come to points in which what we understand doesn't fit into what we are experiencing.**

**The truth is that the journey of life will involve various levels orientation... disorientation... and reorientation.** There are **transitions in life**... from one stage of **understanding** the world to another.

Illus – child thinks **'Good people do good things'**...or **'Parents can stop bad from happening.'** These reflect something that we might consider to **bear some level of truth**... at a basic or **simplicistic level** of understanding but they **don't reflect the whole of reality.** Such beliefs will face a time in which life is not making sense...disorienting...until they are able to let some presumptions go... and enter a new way of trusting life beyond those assumptions. Consider this assumption: **"God will always keep me safe."** Is it true? Yes in an ultimate way but not in terms of the immediate safety we often presume.

We can hear this experience in...

### **The Example of Asaph**

Asaph is one of the greatest worshipers... and wrote many of the Psalms in Scripture. He captures something of the wall in his own experience which is captured in Psalm 73.

### **Psalms 73:1-3, 13, 16-17, 21-23 (NIV)**

Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. <sup>2</sup> But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold. <sup>3</sup> For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

<sup>13</sup> Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence.

<sup>16</sup> When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me <sup>17</sup> till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny.

<sup>21</sup> When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, <sup>22</sup> I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you. <sup>23</sup> Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand.

> Here Asaph is **describing a juncture in which he hit the wall**... a point of being at a deep and defining sense of loss to understand how God could be at work. He cannot understand what he is experiencing... it doesn't fit...he then considers that all his devotion may have been in vain... it becomes oppressive...but then he emerges from that isolating place... and **realizes God is there for him... even though he may not understand.**

**We may face a season in which we must realize that we cannot understand everything...but God has come to enter our suffering and to open up the door on the other side.**

**That is what Jesus did. That is what we come towards as we approach his death and resurrection.**

And finally we do well to recognize that **developing a life with God involves...**

**3. Facing our unconfessed sin** (Any other area of our life, in which we have disregarded God and others.)

Perhaps the most obvious reason we might want to avoid real direct engagement with another...is basic guilt.... When something not right between us...something we are hiding. And this is true with God. Along with the condition that is depicted in the Garden...that of being uncovered...the consequences...there is also the act. They had done something. They had to answer for that.

**Why? Because God would not know?**

**No...because until it was confessed....it stood between them.**

**Like a parent and child.** If a parent already knows about a child's having done something wrong....does it matter if the child tells the parent themselves? Absolutely... relationally it makes ALL the difference.

I don't think at any time we're going to be aware of all our unconscious wrongs, but **at any given time** there are **certain convictions** God is **likely trying to make us conscious of.**

Our connection to God involves openness...and openness involves our hearts.

As we all know, **true hearing is more than just a physical phenomenon.**  
**Ears hear sound... but only the heart can choose to hear the message.**

As Jesus said, Matthew 5:8 (NIV)

**“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”**

**Word translated “pure” (katharos) referred to ‘clean’... used in speaking of clothes clean from dirt, corn sifted and cleansed from all chaff.**

➤ **This points to the issue unconfessed sin in our lives.**

If I begin to consciously lie, cultivate lust, hold onto contempt toward another... I will be trying to ignore and insulate the spirit within me. **Only honest confession will allow our own spirits to be open again.**

**Connecting with God involves being honest... the honesty of confession... that restores openness and re-affirms agreement with God.**

**This is not just accepting that we are “not perfect” in some basic sense.**



**If there is something that has offended your spouse or a close friend and you respond by saying...**“Hey, I know I’m not perfect...” ...it can be as much a deflection of what you may be doing that is wrong and distancing.

We have developed a similar way of being “generic sinners.” We accept the basic truth that all people are sinners....I am a person...and therefore I sin....but never acknowledge anything much more particular than that.

The truth is that **we are rebels at the core...** we don’t just have wills...we want our wills to rule. At the core of our fallen state we have sought to usurp God... to use God’s gifts but dismiss God. Sin involves every act and every thought that disregards God and others...as well as every way we neglect the same by what we do not do.

**We will never know real grace...if we are never really sinners. [3]**

### **Romans 5:8**

*“God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

**God’s love is demonstrated for us in what state? “While we were still sinners...” We will never really be loved until we are really forgiven.**

### **Closing:**

I want to invite you to join me in setting aside this season as a season to seek being closer to God...by being more honest with God.

The good news is that God is still present.... And has met us in Christ...

Invite us to share a prayer together.

### **Psalm 139:23-24 (NLT)**

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

### **Notes:**

Henri Nouwen provides much in life and teaching regarding the need to overcome our false self of doing...and achieving...and importance. (<http://henrinouwen.org/about-henri/his-life/>)

Taught at Yale, Notre Dame, and Harvard....where he resigned and went to live in residential community that was rooted in those with disabilities.

He lived in one of the homes and was asked to help Adam Arnett, a man with a severe disability, with his morning routine.

After recovering from a severe depression, Nouwen began to experience perhaps his deepest fulfillment. En route to Russia to do a documentary about Rembrandt’s painting of the Prodigal Son, Nouwen suffered a heart attack in The Netherlands. He died on Saturday, September 21, 1996.

<http://www.nouwenlegacy.com/papers/nouwenstudies.pdf>

Like Augustine, Nouwen held that the knowledge of self and the knowledge of God are inextricably bound together. Illustrating their reciprocal dynamic, he declared: “we become strangers to ourselves” the more we act as strangers before God.<sup>3</sup> The self, as Nouwen viewed it, ultimately derives its meaning in relation to God in that “we can be most ourselves when most like God” (LS:38). As he himself affirmed: “I am hidden in God and I have to find myself in that relationship.”<sup>4</sup>

The way of God, Henri Nouwen asserted, is the way of weakness manifested in Christ’s birth and death in voluntary powerlessness (FWH:33, 35) Appealing to Christ’s example, Nouwen stressed that the way of the Christian minister “is not the way of upward mobility ... but the way of downward mobility ending on the cross” (INJ:62). The mystery of ministry lies in the reality that “ministers are powerless people who have nothing to boast of except their weakness.”<sup>14</sup> Like the apostle Paul, “it is precisely in such ‘weakness’ that true power, the power of God, becomes effective in [our] ministry.”<sup>15</sup> The path of power is through weakness, but it is one which “claims power, God’s power, the all-transforming power of love ” (FWH:42). Again, Paul demonstrated this in his own ministry. “Like the cross of Christ, Paul’s weakness is, an expression of love ... (2 Cor 4:15).”<sup>16</sup> Ministry then, as a movement toward others, is a powerful love in action, albeit via weakness.

“To live a spiritual life we must first find the courage to enter into the desert of our loneliness and to change it by gentle and persistent efforts into a garden of solitude. The movement from loneliness to solitude, however, is the beginning of any spiritual life because it is the movement from the restless senses to the restful spirit,<sup>1</sup> from the outward-reaching cravings to the inward-reaching search, from the fearful clinging to the fearless play.”

— [Henri J.M. Nouwen, \*Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life\*](#)

1b. Regarding our disapproval of others, we must face **an unmerciful heart towards others...because when we become unmerciful towards others...we create a self-righteous and ungracious wall.**

The very work of God is an invasion of mercy into a world under the power of condemnation. If I condemn others, I’m identifying with the enemy & refusing God’s work. God knows that as we hold onto the wrong of others as unforgivable, we can’t at the same time expect to enter His mercy & forgiveness.

So Jesus told us,

*Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23-24*

Some of us know we have been holding on to contempt to someone or people in general...and refusing the mercy and grace by which we find life. We need to be rescued by humility.

2. As Andy Comiskey writes,

“In scripture, the false self is represented by the "fig leaf" which Adam and Eve used to hide from God and from one another. They were no longer free for love; painfully and shamefully independent, both sought to hide themselves from the searchlight of love. We still bear the image of God. But we must face the truth that the image, or the true self, is veiled by the false. Every one of us faces a very real obstacle to love. That obstacle is the false self. In spite of Jesus' loving invitation to us, we resist Him as much as we long to receive Him.

That resistance constitutes the false self. We want our own way - we want to meet our own needs as we will. Just as the true self emerges in union with Christ, the false self arises in separation from Him.

The false self wants to be left alone. It fends for itself, and will go to any length to forage for love, or at least its own conception of love. Like a hungry animal, the false self will feed off of others without conscience, often compromising itself or others in the process. What drives the false self is its own pursuit of love. However "loveless" that pursuit may be, the false self resists anything higher and truer that may challenge its course.”

Andy Comisky, Desert Stream "Cross Current"

### 3. Brennan Manning

“For most of us the generic confession of sinfulness comes easily-i.e., all human beings are sinners, I am human, therefore I am a sinner. A hasty examination of conscience reveals minor infractions of the law. This vague admission of wrongdoing is necessary in order to qualify for membership in the community of the saved. But saved from what?

Paul Claudel once stated that the greatest sin is to lose the sense of sin. If we gloss over our selfishness and rationalize the evil within us, we can only pretend we are sinners and therefore only pretend we have been forgiven. Those who stop short of evil in themselves will never know what love is about. Unless and until we face our sanctimonious viciousness, we cannot grasp the meaning of the reconciliation Christ effected on Calvary's hill.” - Brennan Manning, "Abba's Child" pp 157, 158-159

## Facing God Involves Facing Ourselves

Series: Closer: Developing a Life with God

Week of February 26 – March 4, 2017

This week we are beginning a new series entitled “Closer: Developing a Life with God.” Some of us have found it hard to stay personally close in our relationship with God...some have never felt as close as we'd like. Over the next 6 weeks...we are going to have an opportunity to develop or deepen our personal life with God ...having time focused with God.

1. What are some of the reasons it is hard to spend focused time with another person?
2. Have you ever had a relationship drift apart....and realize that it wasn't just about practical reasons, but personal desire? Can you identify with the idea that it's possible that we aren't disconnected because we haven't been spending focused time with one another...but rather we have not been spending focused time with one another because we are avoiding the connection?
3. Read and reflect upon Genesis 3:6-10 which is the description in the Book of Genesis... that describes human life trying to be like God....by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil....which they had been told was the only thing that was not for them...

*“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.*

*Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?”*

*He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”*

As we begin this series focusing on developing time with God, it is helpful to consider that facing God involves facing ourselves ...our real selves. The most basic truth is that we are not gods... we bear the limits of our humanity. That may seem obvious... but in what ways might we want to avoid recognizing our basic humanity and therefore avoid God?

4. Describe what you imagine these two lives were feeling in this scene? Why were they afraid of being “naked”? What does such a description of “nakedness” seem to imply?
5. In what ways might we all be hiding and sowing our own coverings ....fearing we can't live without them?
6. How does this effect our own life with God? How might it be true that the false self can never be loved...because it doesn't exist?
7. It's a striking reversal of what we commonly may think about relating to God. We may think that we are the one's seeking God and he is the one hiding. Who is actually withdrawn and who appears still committed to relationship?
8. Why is it so important that we know that God saw them for what they were...in all their nakedness...and He comes to them?
9. Another factor that can affect our discomfort engaging another person or God directly...is that of disappointment due to unmet expectations. Can you identify any time in your life that you have wanted to such a feeling of disappointment by avoiding God or someone else?

10. The final reason we might avoid God is perhaps the most easy to understand, which is unconfessed sin. We might think of "sin" as the more dramatic acts of violating some moral good....but sin is rooted in our most basic posture of wanting to usurp God - to use God's gifts but dismiss God. It involves every act and every thought that disregards God and others...as well as every way we neglect the same by what we do not do. How does such more complete sense of sin help us understand the significance of confession?

11. Take time in prayer to set aside the coming season as a season to seek being closer to God...by being more honest with God.

NOTE: PLEASE all plan for a couple significant dates ahead.

Monday, March 6 – The start of our special 40 Days of "Lent" before Good Friday.

Sunday, March 26 – A Sunday to Love our Community at the Cyclavia Event