

[ree-Kuh-nekt]: reliant

Reconnect – September 28, 2008

Series/Theme Intro:

- Today we begin a new series here at Reconnect, called just that
- [ree-Kuh-nekt] is a look beneath the surface at who we are and who we want to be as a church
- What's our DNA? What are we trying to accomplish and how do we want to do it?
- Over the next few weeks, we're going to look at our values – and instead of just talking about how they might look for us as a group being Reconnect Barrhaven, we're also going to look at how they might look in each of our individual lives
- Because as God works in us as a group, we believe that these values will start to spill into our lives individually, and God will use them to see us transformed
- And today's piece is "Reliant" – what does it mean, exactly, to be reliant on God?

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Text:

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again – rejoice! Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do.

The Lord is near.

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

(Philippians 4:4-7, NLT)

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Text: Philippians 4:4-7

Key Thought: We really can depend on God.

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again – rejoice! Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. The Lord is near. Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:4-7, NLT)

Intro: Christian sayings – WWJD, JOY, GOLF, PUSH – and FROG

“Fully Rely On God” – but what does that mean?

Super spiritual and do nothing? “I'm not going to go to work anymore – I'm just going to wait until someone comes to the door to put money into my hand” (joke about the drowning victim)

...It's like the joke about the man who has been notified that his house is going to be flooded and he needs to get out of the house. He says no I don't have to, God is going to take care of me. Then the flood starts to rise and a sheriff comes along and tells him to get out. The man says no, God is going to save me. So, the floods continue to rise, and he climbs on top of the house. A boat comes along and he's told to climb into the boat. He says, no, no, God is going to save me. Finally, a helicopter comes along and they lower the net to rescue him. The man says, no, no, God is going to save me! Well, the man drowns and goes to heaven. When he gets to heaven he says to God, "why didn't you save me?" God says, "I sent the sheriff, I sent a boat, I sent a helicopter, what more did you want me to do?"

Do stupid things? (Keep driving on empty and believe that God will fill up your tank)

Play the “God told me to” card? (Do whatever you want and add, “God told me to”)

A very limited sense? (i.e. “in church” or “once a week” – like a fortune cookie?)

Go join a monastery or a convent?

Or is it something else?

“Reliant” – one of our values – not just for church, but those that we feel that everyone, including ourselves, needs more of in their life

What does it look like? Good indicator is how it is when the pressure's on – because if you don't need it, you're not really reliant on something – you're reliant on something else instead

Charlie Gill – “When in a fix, Philippians 4:6”

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Reliant – definition (welcome slide) – two senses –

Dependent: (which we don't like) – who wants to be at someone else's mercy? No, you want your destiny in your own hands – and yet ironically, we ARE at God's mercy, one way or another – to be reliant is only acknowledging that and living accordingly

Confident: (which is really hard to maintain consistently, especially the tougher times get)
i.e. I rely on my friends – but if they're busy, I don't have the same expectation (I'm on my own)
I rely on my wife – but if the van broke, I wouldn't have the same expectation (I'm on my own)
I rely on God – but if HE's busy/incapable/not interested enough, do I have the same sort of lowered expectation? Am I on my own?

Lurking suspicion: Is God real? Does He matter? Does He care?

But the Bible picture is very different (text)

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It presupposes that yes, God is real, yes, He matters, and especially that yes, He cares

The church at Philippi was feeling persecution for following Jesus – people were feeling the pinch, and there was a general malaise out there – why shouldn't we just go back to our old ways and make our lives that much easier on ourselves? Why endure the misery?

But Paul says what looks like/should feel like misery actually holds the seeds of joy in it – and if we will feel it and let it out, then everything else starts to change

Joy – not something we see a lot of – we see some humour, some of that is funny, some isn't – we laugh at irony and sarcasm and cynicism – but that's not joy – joy is rare enough that when we feel it, once it passes we feel embarrassed – we're not sure if we're really allowed to feel that way, especially in our world

But that joy will start to make a difference – in this case, in consideration / compassion – taking note of those around you, that God loves too – what does it say? “The Lord is near”

God actually really does care! About us – how we feel, what we’re going through – and not only us, but those around us, too, funny enough –how are we treating them? With consideration? Putting them ahead of ourselves? And He’s near – near to help, near to supervise, near to make sure that something is getting done

“Don’t worry about anything” – this kind of exchange, where instead of holding on to worry, we are turning it right back around towards God in prayer – giving it back to the only One who can actually sort it all out, like the Relient K video

God’s peace – there’s one way to it, and that’s through the prayer, petition, thanksgiving route – that’s the only way to get there, is to let Him take care of you

- **Merge lane** – one gets you through, but the other ones can lead you there, as you follow them – you just have to sooner or later get to the right lane (God in the centre, no additives or preservatives)
- **Reliant: web definition** of our church value: *“Realizing that true fulfillment in life comes from an intimate, transforming relationship with God, an understanding of who He is and a commitment to what He desires”*
- But what does that look like in a person like you and I?

What Does It Look Like?

Choices:

Prayer:

Time:

Identity:

Gradual process – but it starts with building that trust in God

Take It Home: We really can depend on God

“But the Lord watches over those who fear Him, those who rely on His unfailing love”

Conclusion: Flower (He loves me, He loves me not – He loves me – He really does)

Life is beautiful – He loves me – life is fragile – He loves me not (keep pulling petals) – my child is well – He loves me – my kid is really sick – He loves me not (etc.)

Response: In Christ Alone