

03 26 2023
Standing in the Gap
Martinwood Christian Church

Standing in the Gap

Good morning. We want to take a minute to welcome any visitors we have. It is great to have you today.

Today I want to talk to you about Standing in the Gap. A long time ago cities we surrounded by big, thick walls. The walls surrounded the city and protected them. There were times when there would be gaps in the walls, places that anyone could get through, especially the bad people or it would be a vulnerability for the city.

To protect the city and ensure no one got through to attack or destroy the city, people would stand in the gap. When they stood in the gap, they would be armed so they could protect the city. They might be armed with a sword or a pitch fork, or anything they could find to protect the people within the city.

Nehemiah 4:13

Therefore I positioned *men* behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows

They would help guard the city by standing in the gap. Many times the city people wouldn't even know there was a gap, yet someone stood guard for them while others went along in life, protected.

There are many people who stand in the gap for us. The police stand in the gap to be sure we are safe. If we have a problem or are threatened, one call and they are there. They stand in the gap between us and the bad guys. They protect us to be sure we are safe.

The same thing happens with firemen. If we have a fire or need them to save our life or someone else's life, they are there. It's what they do. They protect us.

There are more practical things like a loan. Your loan company stands in the gap. The gap is between where you are and what you are wanting. The gap is having money to get that house or that car you want. The gap is the crevasse; the valley between where you are and what you want. There are many gaps in our lives, and in other's lives too.

You're probably wondering what the heck I'm talking about and where I'm headed with this, but as Christians, we too should be standing in the gap for others. It's not humiliating to do that and all it takes is a few minutes of our time to "fill in the gap," to be there for someone else and to protect them. You don't have to know them, to stand in the gap for them.

Jeanette standing in the gap.

Maybe there is a gap between them and God and you are the only one who can stand in that gap for them. I am sure you know someone who you can stand in the gap for. Someone who could use "coverage" from Almighty God. Listen to what God says and who He appoints you to help.

Ezekiel 22:30

**"I looked for someone among them
who would build up the wall and stand
before me in the gap on behalf of the
land so I would not have to destroy it,
but I found no one.**

So you might say "Mike, how can I do that? How can I stand in the gap for them?" You may be the only one to stand in the gap, to be there for them, protect them, to bring them to Christ, or to close the gap between them and Christ.

Remember when you stood in the gap for your children? You went to bat for them when they couldn't do it for themselves. There was no hesitation.

You just did it because you knew they needed your help. You just felt it and didn't even hesitate.

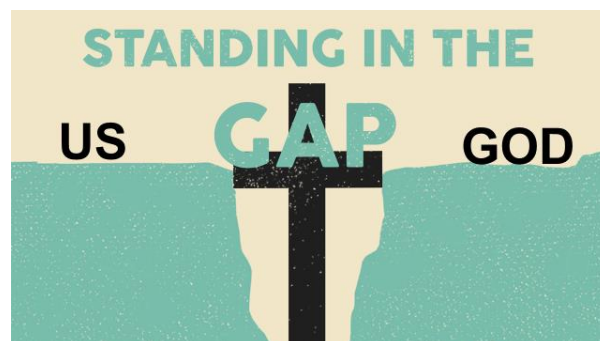
There are those whom we know have a gap in their life; are we standing in the gap for them? Are we protecting them when we can? Last week Jim talked about intercessory prayer. Praying for others when they cannot, or maybe they don't know they need help. Maybe they just need a little extra "coverage" or protection and you are the one who can give that to them. Maybe there is a gap between them and Christ. They definitely need our help.

We have gaps in our life too. Maybe we don't know there are gaps or we need a little extra help. There are those who step up without hesitation and help. You may never know who they are because God called them to step up for you. Many people have been there for me when I needed coverage.

Even Wildewood is standing in the gap for us to be sure we get our steps paid for. It's incredible when you think about it.

JC. There once was a man who stood in the gap for us and to this day no matter what we do, He still stands in the gap for us. Without Him, there was a huge gap between us and God. Something we, as humans would never overcome.

Yes, we tried, but that only worked for a short time, then we were back to our ugly selves and turning against God. This man, Jesus, came to our rescue and to this day He Stands in the Gap for us. He is our policeman and fireman to keep us safe.



We can call on Him any time of the day or night and He even gave us the power to do what He did. He gave us the power to help others by doing

simple things like intercessory prayer. Your prayers are powerful because this one man gave us that power. This one man who died for us gave us that power, His power. He stood in the gap.

Because of Jesus, as soon as you pray, God goes to work. He goes to work to answer your prayers. Our prayers are so important to God that.....

Revelations 8:3-4

Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all God's people, on the golden altar in front of the throne. The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of God's people, went up before God from the angel's hand

Look at all the times He stood in the gap for ordinary people. He stood in the gap between blindness and sight. He stood in the gap between health and sickness. He stood in the gap between life and death. He went to the cross and died so we would have life.

In two weeks we will be celebrating what this man did for us. In two weeks we'll be celebrating Easter; Jesus resurrection, but don't forget the why. Don't forget why He stands in the gap for us. Do the same for others, because He did this for us. He is the Way to God. He is the Way, He is the Truth and He is the Light. He gives us Life as we know it.

There are people today who need your help. It may be something small, it may be something a bit larger, but Jesus gave you the power to take care of them. It's up to us to take the initiative, to take the time to help others. If you need help, if you need someone to stand in the gap for you, let others know.

We have an opportunity to make our lives and this church into what God wants it to be. If we choose to obey His direction, we'll see God perform even more miracles than He already has.

2023 is a great year. I declare there will be more Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control than ever before. Be ready.

This week Stand in the Gap for someone. Take time to be there for them, help them, say a prayer for them and protect them.

Lord,

Show us those whom you want us to stand in the gap for and how to protect them whether it is by prayer, supplication or by physically being there for them. We are your people and look to you for guidance and support. Help us understand your will and your ways so we can follow you and help those whom you ask us to help. Tell us what your will is for this church and its people. Bless your ministry on 8th Avenue. In Jesus Name we pray...Amen.