

**North American Division Men's Day of Prayer
September 5, 2009**

Resource Packet

“Relationships that Tell it to the World”

Sermon by Dr. Dick Stenbakken

Table of Contents

About the Contributor.....	2
Suggested Order of Service.....	3
Children’s Story.....	4
Sermon.....	5
Extra Illustrations.....	15
Men’s Activity Ideas.....	17

Suggested Order of Service
Men's Ministries Day of Prayer
September 5, 2009
"Relationships That Tell It To The World"

Call to Worship- Opening Prayer

Opening Hymn
"All Hail the Power of Jesus Name"
SDA Hymnal # 229

Offering
Musician to play song music that is strong, bold about the power of God

Children's Story
See Story Provided

Scripture Reading
I Samuel 23:15-18

Pastoral Prayer
Select three men of different ages. Have them pray one at a time
(consecutively, in order, briefly- please include in a prayer...)
1. For the Men to be empowered by the Holy Spirit
2. For the Men's family life; mothers, wives, children, others
3. For the men's work and church life.

Special Music
Select a Joyful song of Victory and Strength
Preferred- Male Quartet, or Male Choir

Sermon
See Provided Sermon

Closing Hymn
"What a Friend We Have in Jesus"
SDA Hymnal # 499

Closing Prayer

About the Sermon Author;

Dick Stenbakken:

The author of this year's Men's Ministries Sermon pastored a district of churches in Wyoming before going on active duty as an Army Chaplain for 24 years, including a combat tour in Vietnam. He retired from the Army Chaplaincy as a full Colonel, then served as Director of the Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries Department of the General Conference for 14 years. He is known as a first-person-narrative preacher having developed and delivered over 60 biblical characters. His book, *The Centurion*, was released by Pacific Press just before Easter 2009. Dick has three DVDs of first person preaching characters out, and is working on three more to be released soon. His educational background includes four Masters Degrees in; Theology and Philosophy; New Testament Studies; Family Therapy; Education; and a Doctorate in Education from Columbia University in New York City. He is a frequent speaker at the Pentagon and at the US Senate. He and Ardis live at the foot of the majestic Rocky Mountains in Loveland, Colorado. More information is available at the web site: www.dickstenbakken.com He can be contacted at: dickardis@comcast.net or through his web site.

Children's Story Provided by Dr. Stenbakken.

Place some sports item like a baseball mitt, a football, a pair of golf shoes, fishing tackle box/creel or some other easily identifiable item where it will be out of sight until you pull it out for the congregation to see.

Bring the item out and begin to "play with it" in full view of the congregation. Don't say anything at this point.

Then, after a little bit of "play" time, ask the congregation, "What does this tell you about me and my interests?"

Yes! This makes it clear that I have an interest in _____!
Pretty obvious isn't it?

The reality is that people see what we *DO*....how we live and what we are interested in, and on that basis make assumptions (sometimes right, sometimes wrong) about who we *ARE*.

Think about it....What are you telling the world about Jesus. It's not a game or a sport. What we tell others about Jesus is eternal.

Closing prayer.

“Relationships that Tell it to the World”

By Dr. Dick Stenbakken

The two men stood a short distance apart, warily eyeing each other. The hot wind ruffled their hair causing them to squint against the swirling dust in the air. Their meeting was serious... deadly serious.

They were rivals, whose friends and family urged them to stain the earth with the other's blood so the survivor would be the singular, unchallenged leader of the nation.

They could have, should have been deadly, bitter rivals... but they were the *best of friends*. Each was willing to die for the other. Their meeting was not to defeat or debate the other. Their meeting was to **tell the world** that following God brings rich, rewarding, relationships, not raging ruin. They were living out **John 10:10**. (Read or quote the text).

We read about their lives and friendship in **I Samuel Chapter 20**. They are of course David and Jonathan; their mutual commitment and covenant to each other was based on their relationship to God and His will. They reflect the reality that men need other men as friends, mentors, and helpers. No one can “go it alone,” or as another has so well said, “No man is an island...”

As human beings we are," hard wired" for relationships. Our drive to relate to others is God-given. All positive and productive relationships are based on our individual relationship with God. That relationship is fundamental to all other positive relationships in every part of life.

Jonathan knew God had destined David to be the next king of Israel. He knew that David would occupy the throne of Solomon and that Solomon was determined the throne would go to his son Jonathan, not to David.

David knew that Saul wanted to kill him. So, then, Jonathan would have no rival. David knew Saul had made plans and would willingly kill him if there was a chance to do so.

But both Jonathan and David also knew that their first allegiance and relationship was with God and to His will. They built their relationship with each other on their relationship with the all powerful, merciful, and wise God of all history.

(Read I Samuel 20:41 & 42)

Jonathan willingly did everything he could to support his friend David. He believed God and he acted accordingly.

(Read I Samuel 23:14-18)

Note that the location of this meeting was in the desert... that word is better described as wasteland, or empty space, or nothingness. Jonathan met

with David when David was in an absolute despair and isolation. At their meeting, Jonathan committed himself to David by saying that David was to be first in the kingdom. Jonathan would be second, or in support of David, or acting as a mirror image of David.

Here is a beautiful picture of how men need each other, and can support each other. There is no sense of superiority, no sense of arrogance, or cut-throat competitiveness, but a very clear picture of brotherly support and commitment. Jonathan helped strengthen David and David's belief and faith in God and in God's will.

As Proverbs 27:17 says, “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”

So, then... who is helping sharpen and shape your life right now? Who is sharpening your character? Who is shaping your destiny?

Or looking at it from another angle, who are you sharpening, shaping, and mentoring into a deeper relationship with God?

There are several layers of relationship that can **tell the world** much about us, our faith, and our God:

1. *We need a relationship with God* to **tell the world** how great He is and how He shapes our lives

2. *We need relationships with each other to **tell the world** that we all have ultimate and eternal value.*

2. *We need to relate to our community to **tell the world** that God is our mutual Creator, sustainer, and coming King.*

Moses was a man whose relationship with God and his community moved over a million people from bondage and belittling slavery to freedom, strength, and national identity. It wasn't an easy job. Look at **Exodus 4: 10 through 17.**

Moses was not at all sure that he wanted to do with God asked him to do. But, Moses learned, as we must, that the bidding of God brings enabling power to do what He asks of us.

Moses learned that he needed others to help him with his job. He couldn't do it alone. Oh, at first he tried, like many men, to do it alone. Can't you almost hear him say, "No problem. I can handle it myself. I can do it."

He had to learn to be mentored, to mentor others, to share power and authority. Those are good lessons for all of us, because Moses' needs are our needs, his challenges are also our challenges.

(Read Exodus 18:13-26)

Do the math. Moses was trying to do all and he was overwhelmed. Being a wise man, he listened to the advice of his father-in-law and set up groups of a thousand, 100, 50, and 10. The idea was to solve the problem at the lowest level. If it couldn't be solved at the level of a thousand, move to the level of a hundred. If it can't be solved there, move to 50 and on to 10. If it was not solved at that level, then Moses personally stepped in.

Look at the mentoring process, consider how many men learned to lead and decide. Moses learned, "all of us are smarter than any of us." A good lesson for us today!

Think about that for a minute. Do you believe it? Do you live it? What do your relationships tell your community about God and about you?

Nehemiah was another man whose relationships **told the world** that God hears, cares, and acts.

Nehemiah had a great job, a super position, a marvelous place to work, and the trust of the world's strongest monarch. But, Nehemiah had a passion to serve God and to serve his community. So Nehemiah left it all: the King's daily service, the life of luxury, the good job, basking in the beauty of the palace, to rebuild broken down city. Jerusalem. And he did it all under extreme pressure and harassment. It wasn't easy, and he was initially "very much afraid..." Nehemiah 2:2.

But Nehemiah, and his team, with God's everlasting strength, did the impossible. They built the walls of Jerusalem in a mere 52 days. How did he do that?

Read Nehemiah chapter 3 carefully. Nehemiah was successful because:

He knew the people that he worked with.

He knew where they lived

He knew their occupations

He knew their family members

He knew exactly where they were working on the wall.

In short, Nehemiah had developed relationships that **told the world** and tell us, how to lead, how to be successful, how to build community, how to restore of that which is broken.

Do you want to make a difference in your community, in your church, in your home?

Ask yourself:

Do I know the people?

Do I know their needs?

Do I know their abilities?

Do I know their history?

Do I know where they live?

Do I lead by example so I can show them, and **show the world**, what a real leader is like?

Nehemiah could answer positively to every question. He built relationships that **tell the world** that by building solid relationships with others the impossible becomes possible.

Our relationships can make a difference that will change our community, and thus change the world.

There's another relationship level that **tells the world** about who we are and about who God is: that's how we care about the women in our life. How do we relate to our wife, daughter, sister, mother, fellow worker? A man who is a real man, a *strong* man, takes care of the women in his life. He will not exploit, belittle, or disrespect them in any way.

A *strong*, real, man shows women respect, caring, and compassion. A great example of the kind of man is Boaz. His very name means strength. In fact, one of the huge entrance pillars on Solomon's temple was named Boaz, the one on the right as you enter the Temple, meaning “strength and ability.” The pillar on the left was Jachin, meaning “to establish” (I Kings 7:21).

Thus, entering the Temple through and between the two massive pillars, worshipers were verifying that strength and ability were founded and established through a relationship with God and that relationship is the bed-rock basis of how I relate to others, especially to the women in my life and influence.

Boaz was that kind of man.

The first thing Boaz did in his interactions with Ruth was to actually *see* her (Ruth 2:5). He acknowledged her existence and her presence. He did not ignore her. He actually *saw* her as *a person* not as a "cute *thing*."

When he saw her, he willingly and quickly offered to meet her needs. He gave her (Ruth 2:8, 9 & 14-16):

1. Guidance... "Listen to my advice."
2. Acceptance... "Stay in my field."
3. Protection... "My men will not touch or harm you."
4. Sustenance... "We will provide water and food."
5. Emotional care... "Do not embarrass her."

We read Ruth's response to Boaz' kindness in **Ruth 2:12 and 13**.

Do you want the rich blessings of God in your life? Then, be a *real man* and treat the women in your life like Boaz treated Ruth. Your relationships with women in your life will **tell the world** that you are in a

rich relationship with God and a rewarding relationship with females in your life. That will **tell the world** that you are a *real man of real strength and real ability*: a true pillar of your family and your community.

There is another relationship that speaks volumes to the world. That's how you relate to your children.

An example Jesus gave to us was in the story we call, "The prodigal son," found **Luke 15:11-32**. (Read or tell the story)

The dictionary defines prodigal as, "Exceedingly or recklessly wasteful;" or a secondary meaning of... "Extremely generous or lavish with one's praise."

Think about it: was the son the prodigal? Or was the father, the prodigal?

There's no question the younger son was recklessly wasteful, but his father was extremely generous and lavish.

Notice how respectful the father in the story was to *both* of his sons.

He could have been harsh, critical, judgmental, and as hard-as-nails to both of them. But, this "prodigal father" in Jesus' marvelous story chose respect over recrimination, because he wanted a positive relationship with both of his sons more than he wanted to be right.

He wanted to show them how much he loved them not how wrong they were.

This wise father knew that a "my-way-or-the-highway," attitude would ruin any chance of building a saving, strong relationship with his sons. He had something to tell them, and **to tell the world**.

He wanted to show them, and the world, that he was:

Powerful enough to be compassionate,

Big enough to be forgiving,

Strong enough to be in control of his own responses.

How is it with you and your children?

Are you powerful enough to care about the needs and feelings of your children?

Are you big enough to be forgiving, to mentor and to restore when mistakes are made?

Are you strong enough to keep yourself in control?

If so, your relationships **tell the world** that you have a deep relationship with your Father in heaven as well as your children on earth.

That's the way Jesus led his life.

That's the way He built His relationships, that's what He left us as His example. He remains loyal to us by Jonathan remained loyal to David because of His covenant and commitment to us.

Like Jonathan and David, Jesus wants to **tell the world** that we need each other; we can impart strength and hope to each other. We don't need to "go it alone."

Like Moses, Jesus **tells the world** that there is an Exodus..."the way out." is what that word means. He shows us the way out of misery and slavery to sin, and the way to a better land and life.

Like Nehemiah, Jesus' life **tells the world** how to rebuild, repair, and restore that which sin and Satan has broken.

Like Boaz, Jesus is the Protector, Provider, and Kinsman Redeemer for women... especially those in need. He **tells the world** how to treat women...the way He did!

Like the caring and compassion father with two rebellious boys, Jesus wants relationships that **tell the world** about his desire to celebrate His power through the way we relate to our own family.

Do Christian men have something to **tell the world**? We certainly do! And we **tell the world** about his power in our lives by the way we live and relate to others. It's as simple ... and as complex ... as that.

So, what are you telling the world?

They are listening, looking, and learning.

They want to know...the need to know.....

Prayer: Father, God of us all, may our voices be clarion strong and clear: Help us to tell the world about Your love, Your caring, and Your powerful relationships. And...help us do that not only in word, but in deed, relationships, and actions. In Jesus name....Amen.

Two Optional Illustrations to choose from;

ILLUSTRATION ONE:

There is a story about a man watching a boy stroll along the beach. Periodically the boy would reach down, pick up a star-fish and throw it back into the ocean waters.

As the boy drew near, throwing yet another stranded star-fish back into the deep, the man commented to the boy, "son, the tide will just wash the

star-fish back onto the beach. Besides, there are hundreds of them on the beach. All your hard work is not going to make a difference!"

The boy looked up from his self appointed task as he threw another star-fish into the water and with a smile replied, "It made a difference to that one!"

Do you want to make a difference? Neither you nor I can impact *everyone* with the love of Jesus, but you can make a difference to *someone*! So can I.

What will you tell the world...or your neighbor...or your family member...or your fellow-worker...about Jesus that can change their world for eternity? Make a difference!

Closing prayer.

ILLUSTRATION TWO:

Think for a moment about the Centurion who was in charge of the crucifixion of Jesus. He came to that hill with only one thing in mind: Get this dirty job done as quickly as possible." He, like many other men, was 100% task oriented.

But something happened that changed him forever. He heard a thief confess his belief in Jesus. He saw changed people around him that Jesus had touched. He saw a dying man care about his mother and tenderly place her in the care of one of his disciples. He saw a man who would pray for his very executioners...pray for their forgiveness even as they nailed him to the rough wooden cross. He saw the sun go out like a candle in the wind. He felt the earth shake and the wind scream. Then he heard his own voice cry out, "This was God's Son!"

His confession was considered high treason. The son of the gods was Caesar on the throne in Rome, not a dying, brutalized man on a cross in Jerusalem. But what he experienced told him, and the world, that this was, indeed, the Son of God. The rough Roman was willing to change his direction of march from that point on. His confession - the only one on the hill that day to call Jesus the Son of God - marked a new dawn for his life.

Who/what do people see you willing to follow today?

What single sentence would sum up your life? What do you tell the world is important to you?

Prayer.

Men's Weekend Activity Ideas and Planning Suggestions

We encourage you to get the men out of the normal meetings, away from church where men can be men and have fun together which in turn will encourage men to relate to each other in a different format than in church or church meetings.

How do I plan a men's outing?

1. Talk and brainstorm with your pastor and leading elders.
2. Select an idea or get a group of men together and ask them what they would like to do together as a group.
3. Pick a date and time for the activity.
4. Get it into the bulletin.
5. Make a list of the men in your church and personally call them and invite them to be a part of the activity. Note the ones that want to be a part so that they can personally be called again just before the event.
6. Announce the scheduled activity in church and then 2 weeks before announce it again, then announce it the week before the scheduled time.
7. Carry through with the scheduled activity no matter how many men do or don't show up.
8. Take pictures if possible and write up a story on your event to put into the bulletin as an insert and also submit your story and pictures to NAD Men's Ministry Department for publication on the web site www.emale.org or www.adventistmen.org.

Saturday night event suggestions:

Game night
Pee Wee golf outing
Movie night at one of the men's homes
Bowling
Fire pit gathering
Horseshoes

Sunday event suggestions:

Fishing Trip
Canoeing
Putting contest at Pee Wee golf course
Hiking
Bike ride
Golf
Pick up game of basketball, football or baseball
Horseback riding
Whitewater Rafting
Mountain Climbing

Whatever you decide to do have **FUN** with the men in your church!
Remember; "Play hard, **Pray even harder.**"