



THE GOD WHO LIVES  
**IN THE FRAY**

KORY M. CAPPS

God makes his home in unexpected places. He not only meets us in the fray of life, he lives alongside us there. God's residential history is full of surprises. Where he chooses to live is gospel for us. His address is the epitome of good news.

# THE FRAY

The word fray is a verb. It means to unravel, to become worn at the edges through constant friction. It is also a noun defined as a battle or intense conflict. Sounds a lot like life, at least mine. Both the noun and verb are true to life. Life is a battle. Friction is common. It's not rare to find ourselves worn thin, exhausted. At times, we may feel like we are coming unglued, we are unraveling. Life. It can just be so messy. The good news in this...

God inhabits the verb and the noun. He comes to us at the edge and meets us in the chaos. He is no stranger to a war-torn existence. Sorrow. Suffering. Death. He is worn by their edges. Jesus Christ is the address of God. In Christ God makes his home with us. The Son of God "became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood" (Jn 1:14, The Message). The incarnation means that God has come to live with us in the fray.

**JESUS** is the address of God.

Let me explain, but first allow me a story. 39 Burnshirt Road is one of fifteen addresses we have called home. It was a stunning place to live. Located in rural Massachusetts. It was surrounded by acres of forest and sat on a pristine lake. It remains our favorite place to live to this day.

Its true beauty, however, was the residents. 39 Burnshirt Road was a residential home

for juvenile offenders. These guys would stay for 6 months to a year earning GED's, gaining a trade, developing life skills and receiving spiritual nourishment.

Our desire was to bring Christ to this place. So we moved to 39 Burnshirt Road. You can imagine our surprise when we learned that Christ was already a resident there.

I thought I was bringing him there. Instead, I found him there. I shouldn't have been shocked. He said we would find him in such places.

"I was in prison and you came to me...whenever you did this to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me---you did it to me" (Matt 25:36,40 The Message).

It is unmistakable. We find God where we least expect to find him. He's hidden in the stranger, the hungry, the thirsty, the naked and the sick (Matt 25:34-40).

Richard Beck in his book *Stranger God: Meeting Jesus in Disguise* states, "We don't show hospitality to be *like* Jesus, we show hospitality to

*welcome* Jesus. In Matthew 25, Jesus isn't the one doing the visiting. Jesus is the one being visited." I had it backwards. 39 Burnshirt Road was Jesus' address. I was the guest.

God has a track record of living in unanticipated places. He lived in a tent for years, 440 to be exact (Ex 25-40, 1 Kgs 6). He passes by the proud while making his home in lowly, contrite individuals (Is 57:15).

His people are his dwelling place. Though sinful, broken

and needy, He indwells us individually and corporately (1 Cor 3:16, Eph 2:22).

The first four books of the New Testament tell the story of God's greatest address change. God came to earth. Christmas season was moving season for God.

The New Testament says that in Christ we encounter "all the fullness of God in a human body" (Col 2:9, NLT). In other words, Jesus is the address of God.

The principle is critical to grasp. Where Jesus makes his

home, God makes his home. If Jesus is at home somewhere, God is at home there. This is why we find God in the gutter, among the homeless, beside the widow and with the broken. That's where Jesus calls home.

Jesus lives in the fray. He is in the mess. This is the best news. It means that God is down in the dirt with us. It also means, we don't need to leave the mess to find him. In fact, we will miss him if we look for him anywhere but in the fray.



[WWW.FROMTHEFRAY.COM](http://WWW.FROMTHEFRAY.COM)