



Loving Jesus, Loving People, Plowing a Counter-Culture

SERMON TEXT: Joshua 23-24

KEY POINT: People who live well for the glory of God are those who cultivate wise spiritual disciplines.

FOR LEADERS

- Final Week of 2020! This is the last week of Communities for 2020!! Thank you SO MUCH for leading a Community this year. Your commitment and dedication in discipling others toward Jesus (especially during a time of so much confusion and chaos) has been invaluable, and from everyone on our staff, thank you. We pray that you would find some much-deserved rest with your close ones this Christmas season, and look forward to seeing you again in the new year!
Winter 2021: Our Winter 2021 Communities Season will be kicking off on Sunday, January 24th and run for 10 weeks through the week of Sunday, March 28th.
Winter Sessions: Our Winter Sessions are kicking off this week, and run every Monday from 7:30p - 9:00p. For more information check out our digital bulletin at news.emergencenj.org!

GETTING STARTED

- [1] Communities Video: Watch this week's community extras video!
[2] Icebreaker: What are you most hoping for in 2021?
[3] Opener: What was one takeaway you had from the sermon this week?

LIVING WELL FOR GOD'S GLORY

This week we're closing up our series with Joshua's final two speeches to the people of Israel, given at the end of a long life of faithful ministry. In the sermon, Pastor Ryan identified six key principles we should observe about those who live well for God's glory. Let's dive into each one of these together:

- 1. Raise up others
2. Focus on the Main Thing
3. Avoid Apathy
4. Remember God's Faithfulness
5. Recommit to God
6. Love Grace

Principle 1: Raise up others [Joshua 23:1-5, 2 Tim. 2:2]. At the end of his life, Joshua directs his attention away from his own ministry, and focuses his concern on seeing the work of God continue forward after he is gone.

- [1] Why do you think preparing others for lives of faithfulness is so critical for the health of Israel (and the church today!)? If it's so important, why is it that so few people are involved in this today?
[2] What are some meaningful ways that other people have invested in you? How are you endeavoring to do the same? Are there any ways in which you feel you could make yourself more available to others?
[3] What are some things you look for in determining who you should be investing time in developing?

Principle 2: Focus on the Main Thing [Josh. 23:6, Matt. 28:18-20]. In the Old Covenant, God's people were to keep the Law of Moses. Today, in light of Jesus fulfilling the Law, God's people are to accomplish the Great Commission.

- [4] Where are Christians most often tempted to turn "to the right hand or to the left" from doing what Jesus instructs us in the Great Commission?



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**Principle 3: Avoid Apathy [Josh. 23:6-13].** Joshua warns the people that if they lose focus on God, they'll become apathetic to the things of God, and ultimately turn to worshipping false idols. Ryan went on to explain that the antidote for apathy is cultivating a genuine love for God.

**[5]** "Keeping the main thing the main thing," may sometimes feel monotonous after years of devotion. How can Christians prevent themselves from growing apathetic to the Gospel?

**[6]** Where do you personally find that you struggle with apathy or staying focused on the Great Commission in your own life?

**Principle 4: Remember God's Faithfulness [Josh. 24:1-13].** Joshua recounts the story of Israel.

**[7]** Why do you think Joshua intentionally recounted the "same old story" of God leading Israel, to the very people who've lived it?

**[8]** How do you personally remember God's faithfulness in your own life?

**Principle 5: Choose Him...Again. [Josh. 24:14-15].** Joshua reups his decision to follow God and invites Israel to do the same.

**[9]** What does it look like for a person to recommit their life to God, and why is it important to do this often?

**[10]** Why is this so often forgotten in times of prosperity and blessing? How can we make sure that we do not fall into this common trap?

**Principle 6: Love Grace. [Josh. 24:16-28].** The nation of Israel declares its commitment to God, and Joshua warns them of their own self-righteousness.

**[11]** What is self-righteousness, and why is it so deadly to our relationship with God and others?

**[12]** Where does the temptation toward self-righteousness show up in your life?

**[13]** What is God's answer to our own self-righteousness? How should we show that answer to others?

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**PRAYER**

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**[1]** Pray that the Lord would help us each to cultivate these habits in our lives – to love God in sincerity and truth, showing grace toward others, and recognizing our own desperate need for Jesus. Rejoice in the hope we all have in the Gospel and pray that that joy would never be lost on us, but rather grow more passionate in each passing day.

**[2]** Pray that God would help you to love Jesus, His Word, and the things of God more than you do now.