



Loving Jesus, Loving People, Plowing a Counter-Culture

SERMON TEXT: Joshua 3-5:15

KEY POINT: God uses hard things for the good and growth of those who step out in faith.

FOR LEADERS

- Attendance!: We're asking ALL of our Communities to take attendance on Emergence Connect this season. Please be sure to make a note of who attended your group this week, and input that on your weekly event in EConnect! If you need any assistance with this we're happy to help!

GETTING STARTED

- [1] Communities Video: Watch this week's community extras video!
[2] Icebreaker: Name a random tradition in your family that you had growing up!
[3] Opener: What was one takeaway you had from the sermon this week?

HARD THINGS FOR OUR GROWTH

In the intro to this week's message, Ryan talked about how, in Joshua, God did not simply give his people the Promised Land automatically and without struggle, but rather used their walk of faith, stumbles and all, to see his promise fulfilled. He noted that the Lord is constantly at work in us by challenging us with things that are hard, in order to build us into the people we need to be.

- [1] What are some of the hard things that you've personally had to do in life which have shaped you into who you are today?
[2] What are some hard things you think God might be calling you to now? How do you think God might use those things to shape you?

COMMIT TO FOLLOWING GOD

Ask for a volunteer to read Joshua 3:1-6.

If you remember from the sermon, there were four steps to following God's call that we should do when faced with difficulties and challenges, the first of which was Committing ourselves to follow God. This passage reminds us that God is not always interested in doing things efficiently or pragmatically, but sometimes chooses certain ways of doing things to teach us about himself. One example of this is how God called Israel into the promised Land, by crossing a river with the ark out in front of them, rather than simply marching straight into the land from the South.

- [3] What do you think the point of all this was? What truths about God can we learn from these anti-pragmatic, symbolic actions?
[4] In what way(s) might following the Lord go against the grain of the pragmatism and efficiency that is so valued in our culture today?
[5] What are some wise steps we should all take to make sure that it is actually God whom we're following, and not some religious fad or personal preference?





Loving Jesus, Loving People, Plowing a Counter-Culture

CONSECRATE YOURSELF TO GOD

[6] What do you think it means to “consecrate” ourselves to God?

For Leaders: The words “consecrate”, “sanctify” and “be holy” are all different ways of saying the same thing – being set apart by and for God as his own.

Ask for a volunteer to read 1 Peter 1:13-16.

[7] The Bible says that Christians are “consecrated” by their faith in Christ (Acts 26:18, 1 Cor. 6:11, Heb. 10:10) and yet Peter commands us here to “be holy in all your conduct.” If this is something Jesus has done for us on the cross, why do you think Peter tell us it’s something we have to do?

MEMORIALIZE GOD’S FAITHFULNESS

Ask for a volunteer to read Joshua 4:1-7.

[8] What do you think it means to have memorials of faith in our lives? What are some faith memorials in your own life, and how do they encourage you?

[9] As the actions of Joshua and the Israelites illustrate, faith memorials aren’t just for us, but for others also to see how God has been faithful in our lives. Have you ever been personally impacted by another’s faith memorial?

BE VULNERABLE IN WEAKNESS

Ask for a volunteer to read Joshua 5:1-9.

[10] Consider that the circumcision of Israel’s entire fighting force (within enemy territory) placed God’s people in a uniquely vulnerable position. Still, as with the river crossing, this reinforced some very important truths about God...what are some of these truths that you notice?

Ask for a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 4:7-12.

[11] According to this passage, what purpose does vulnerability in weakness serve in the life of the Christian?

[12] In what way(s) does God show his power in specific weaknesses you have?

PRAYER

[1] Pray that God would help us to live holy lives, consecrated to Him.

[2] Thank God for his specific acts of faithfulness in our lives.

[3] Pray for the vulnerability to let God’s power shine in our weaknesses.