



Loving Jesus, Loving People, Plowing a Counter-Culture

SERMON TEXT: Joshua 10-12

KEY POINT: True faith is characterized by enduring faithfulness over time.

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:** What's the oldest thing you have, and why do you have it?
- [3] Opener:** What was one takeaway you had from the sermon this week?

EXTRAORDINARY ACTS OF GOD

Ask for a volunteer to read Joshua 10:1-15.

Joshua chapter 10 recounts Israel's battles in southern Canaan. Here, we see a coalition of five kings joining together to attack Israel's most recent ally, the Gibeonites. In response, Joshua seeks the Lord to lead his people against these five kings, as God prolongs the day to their ultimate victory.

- [1]** What are some ways that you see God at work in this passage?
- [2]** Many consider what happens in vv. 12-14 to be one of the most incredible or even unbelievable miracles in Scripture. How would you personally respond to someone who points to this as an example of how unrealistic or preposterous the stories of the Bible are?
- [3]** In the sermon, Ryan noted how this passage reminds us of how God works in clear, unambiguous and exciting ways. Where have you experienced God working in such ways in your own life?

LONG TERM FAITHFULNESS

Ask for a volunteer to read Joshua 11:1-20.

This week we see how two of the major military campaigns that were fought by the people of Israel entering the promised land were actually started by the inhabitants of Canaan. As Pastor Doug points out in the Companion book, this can actually help us to process some of the more challenging moral questions that arise from reading the book of Joshua.

- [4]** What are some of the moral dilemmas that arise from the Book of Joshua, and how do these chapters help us in understanding them?
- [5]** What are some of the differences between the northern campaign of Joshua in chapter 11 and the southern campaign in chapter 10?
- [6]** Do you think it's fair to say that God was more powerfully at work in one than the other? Why or why not?



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In the sermon, Ryan contrasted these two chapters to highlight how God is at work both in the long-term, everyday faithfulness of his people every bit as much as he is when things are exciting and extraordinary. In fact, one of our church's core values – plowing a counter culture – is meant to underscore this truth and highlight the importance of diligence over time, rather than chasing moments of momentary (and sometimes superficial) excitement.

- [7]** What spiritual dangers can we face if we seek out spiritual “highs” over steady years of hard growth and slow, incremental improvement in our walks with God?
- [8]** What spiritual dangers can we face during times of long-term (perhaps “mundane”) growth? In what ways are we vulnerable to attack either from outside or within?
- [9]** How do you personally celebrate moments of extraordinary movements of God? What kind of attitude and actions should we have to also celebrate during times which are less exciting?
- [10]** Who has the Lord placed in your life as an example of long-term faithfulness?

DON'T GIVE UP!

Ask for a volunteer to read Galatians 6:7-10.

- [11]** Why do you think Paul uses this agricultural metaphor of sewing and reaping to describe the Christian life?
- [12]** Consider verse 9. What is it about doing “good” that could cause us to grow weary?
- [13]** What are some important strategies you would recommend to help us not grow weary in doing good?

PRAYER

- [1]** Pray that the Lord would help you recognize and celebrate both the exciting moments of our faith, as well as long-term faithfulness.
- [2]** Pray that God would encourage each of us in how we faithfully invest ourselves in the long-term “plowing” of our faith.
- [3]** Give thanks to God for how he has worked powerfully in your life!