

Read Through The Bible

Week 18 - June 2-8, 2024

Joshua 17-24, Judges 1-5; John 1:29-5:15; Palms 54-57:6, Proverbs 11:1-18

Icebreaker

- What is the finest example of care of the members of the church for each other you have witnessed?
- Think of the saying: Nothing is certain except death and taxes. (Benjamin Franklin) Besides God, what can you think of that is certain or constant?
- Who, in your life, has been one of the greatest examples of following God?

Step 1 - GET REAL

What are you thankful for from the past week?

What struggles did you face?

What can you share from your personal Bible reading this week?

Where did you see God in your daily life?

Step 2: GET FED

Joshua

Joshua 21:43-45 *43 Thus the LORD gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there. 44 And the LORD gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the LORD had given all their enemies into their hands. 45 Not one word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.*

What other source of promises could meet ALL of the promises made? What significance should this fact hold for each of us? How important is the idea of rest on every side? How many of us would love to have this situation? How does this situation compare to Israel's state today?

Joshua 22:3 *3 You have not forsaken your brothers these many days, down to this day, but have been careful to keep the charge of the LORD your God.*

How valuable is the cooperation and concern of the brothers and sisters for each other? How do you rate the concern of the church for each other?

Joshua 22:5 *5 Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments and to cling to him and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul."*

How does this exhortation compare to that in the New Testament? What does this constancy of God mean for His people?

Joshua 23:1-13 *1 A long time afterward... Joshua was old and well advanced in years, 2 Joshua summoned all Israel...3 And you have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations ...6 Therefore, be very strong to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, turning aside from it neither to the right hand nor to the left, 7 that you may not mix with these nations remaining among you or make mention of the names of their gods or swear by them or serve them or bow down to them, 8 but you shall cling to the LORD your God just as you have done to this day...11 Be very careful, therefore, to love the LORD your God. 12 For if you turn back and cling to the remnant of these nations remaining among you and make marriages with them,... but they shall be a snare and a trap for you, a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good ground that the LORD your God has given you.*

How important is it for us to keep ourselves pure from the world? How easy is it to mix with the world and follow them instead of God? What will be the result if we mix with the world?

Joshua 24:14-15 14 “Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. 15 And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

We must choose whom we will serve. Whom have you chosen to serve?

Joshua 24:31, 33 31 Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had known all the work that the LORD did for Israel.

33 And Eleazar the son of Aaron died, and they buried him at Gibeah, the town of Phinehas his son, which had been given him in the hill country of Ephraim.

Two great men of God die. What a testament to the influence of Joshua and Eleazar. Israel served all the days of those who “had known all the work that the LORD did for Israel.” How important is it for us to remember all the work God has done for us? How much effect can one man have on the people of God?

Judges

Judges 2:11-14 11 And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals.

12 And they abandoned the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt.

They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the LORD to anger. 13 They abandoned the LORD and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. 14 So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies.

How many times had God told them to drive out the people of the land? How many times had he told them the results of disobedience? Did the people not believe God? Do we act the same way?

Judges 2:18-19 18 Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge, and he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge. For the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and oppressed them. 19 But whenever the judge died, they turned back and were more corrupt than their fathers, going after other gods, serving them and bowing down to them.

They did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways.

Judges 3:5-6 5 So the people of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 6 And their daughters they took to themselves for wives, and their own daughters they gave to their sons, and they served their gods.

Why would the people obey when the judge was present and turn back when the judge died? Are we like that? How important is it to have good leadership?

John

John 1:40-42, 45, 49 40 One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ). 42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas” (which means Peter).

45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

49 Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

Andrew recognized Jesus immediately as the Messiah, the one they had been waiting for. Do we recognize the divinity of Jesus? Have we been waiting for him?

Andrew first found his brother and brought him to Jesus. Have we told our family about Jesus first? Have we brought others to Jesus?

Philip and Nathaniel also recognized the divinity of Jesus and followed Him. Are we following Him? How long did it take us to recognize Him and decide to follow?

John 2:11 *11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.*

Jesus signs did two things; they manifested Jesus' glory, they confirmed His divinity; and they helped the disciples believe. Are we awed by Christ's glory? Do these signs help us believe?

John 3:1-3 *1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus 1 by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." 3 Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again 2 he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

There are very few "musts" in the Scripture. This is one of those. We MUST be born again to see the kingdom of God. Have we been born again?

John 4:23-24 *23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."*

What two truths are revealed about the nature of God in this passage? What does it mean to you that God is seeking you to worship Him? Does God need anything? Why would God be seeking us? What does it signify that God is spirit? Again, there is a "must" in this verse. How must we worship God? How are you doing in these two areas?

Psalms

Psalm 54:6-7 *6 With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you; I will give thanks to your name, O LORD, for it is good. 7 For he has delivered me from every trouble, and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.*

David is in trouble. He gives thanks anyway. He praises anyway. Why did David give thanks and praise God? Do we give thanks when we are in trouble?

Psalm 55:4, 22 *4 My heart is in anguish within me; the terrors of death have fallen upon me. 5 Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror overwhelms me.*

22 Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.

Do we ever feel like this? To whom do we look during this time? Do we trust completely He will sustain us?

Psalm 56:9-11 *9...This I know, that 4 God is for me. 10 In God, whose word I praise, in the LORD, whose word I praise, 11 in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?*

What can man do to me? Do we truly believe this thought? Or do we fear man? Do we fear man more than God?

Proverbs

Proverb 11:3 *3 The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them. The entire psalm is a contrast of the righteous and the wicked. What is your guide?*

Step 3: GET ACTIVE

- Meditate on what it means to serve God with all your heart and soul. Write the definition of heart and soul in this context.
- Evaluate your dedication to obedience to God. Would you be like the Israelites who followed other gods whenever there was no leader?
- Look back on the troubled times of your life. In whom did you trust?

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