

Life Group Lesson

Joshua Celebration • Week of November 20

Introduction

Have you ever noticed silence can be deafening? Most of us are not used to silence and we find it hard to obey when the Lord says, “Be still and know that I am God.” It is difficult to be still and we would rather not be alone with our thoughts. Perhaps that is why we stay busy and check our phones every couple of minutes (or more). Yet, as good as it can be to stay busy and productive, there is something valuable about taking time daily to turn off constant stimulus and quieting ourselves before God. We learn that He is Emmanuel, God with us; that He is sovereign and in control when our world is spiraling out-of-control. Mostly, we see that He is *for us* and has made a way for us to know Him through Jesus.

As His children, slowing down long enough to spend time with the Lord is how we get to know Him better and actually get more accomplished. Christ Church is about accomplishing the tasks before us. We understand we are on-mission for Christ. We know that prayer and staying grounded in Scripture is key to knowing what God’s heart is for the communities where we live and work. Fully-devoted followers at Christ Church commit to a six-fold covenant: Worshiping, Inviting, Serving, Tithing, Learning, and Praying. Learning (through personal Bible study and Life Groups) and Praying are two key components of commitment as we mature in our faith and begin to know God better.

Joshua Celebration is a time when we intentionally stop and ask: ‘Lord, where do you want me to serve? How will I take a step closer toward you in this coming year?’ If you are already a part of a Life Group, perhaps it is time to say, ‘Lord I am willing to facilitate or host a Life Group!’ How is your prayer life, your one-on-one time with the Lord? Do you schedule an intentional time with the Lord for prayer, discernment, praise and intercession.? Just as two-way communication is an integral part of deepening a relationship, prayer is (1) you sharing your heart with the Lord, and in turn (2) hearing what the Lord has to say to you. Listen to the words of Joshua, as he spoke on behalf of the LORD upon the conquest of Canaan. Standing in the Promised Land, Joshua reminds the people of God’s faithfulness and challenges them:

*“ When you crossed the Jordan River and came to Jericho, the men of Jericho fought against you... But I gave you victory over them... It was not your swords or bows that brought you victory. I gave you land you had not worked on, and I gave you towns you did not build—the towns where you are now living. I gave you vineyards and olive groves for food, though you did not plant them. So fear the LORD and serve Him wholeheartedly... Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord!
(Joshua 24:11-15).”*

Background

Doing anything for God takes faith. Getting to know the Lord personally takes faith. When we quiet ourselves and remember that every good thing we have is a gift from the Lord, our faith is strengthened to trust God yet again. As we stop and meet with Him through His Word and in prayer, our faith is made stronger and have a greater glimpse of His glory, majesty, and power. This week as we focus on Learning and Praying, we are reminded that to even open the Bible and begin to study God’s Word, and then to meet with Him in prayer, takes faith—

“Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen... And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to Him must believe that God exists and that He rewards those who sincerely seek Him” (Hebrews 11:1a, 6).

Reading the Text

Read Hebrews 11:17-19, 27-34

1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?
2. What are you going to do about it?
3. How can we help you?

Reflection

Learning and praying is how an invisible God becomes visible. As you live into your faith, you will see that you can trust the Lord. The Lord is personally interested in you and He will show you how to live out your love for Him *and* how to love others. God becomes visible for others *through you* as you serve others in His name. Throughout Scripture, God calls His children to be people of word and deed (see Ezekiel 33:20, James 2:17). We don’t just say we love God, and others, we actually put legs to our prayers and words and serve other people. Hear God’s Word, then by faith, actually *do* what it says. “For if you listen to the word and don’t obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don’t forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it” (James 1:23-25).

Are you living into Christ Church’s six-fold covenant – Worshiping, Inviting, Serving, Tithing, Learning, and Praying? Make the Lord your strong *quiet* fortress in this crazy, loud world. Enjoy His fellowship. Soak in His Word, His promises. Make yourself available for the Holy Spirit to flow through you in order to bless the people around you. When Jesus taught about prayer and how to pray, He showed us how to –

Joshua CELEBRATION

Text: Hebrews 11:17-19, 27-34

Pray Privately – “But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you” (Matthew 6:6, see also Matthew 14:23, Mark 2:35).

Pray Regularly – “After saying these things, Jesus crossed the Kidron Valley with His disciples and entered a grove of olive trees. Judas, the betrayer, knew this place, because Jesus had often gone there with His disciples” (John 18:1-2).

Pray Genuinely – “When you pray, don’t babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. Don’t be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask Him!” (Matthew 6:7-8).

Pray Specifically – “When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask Him to send more workers into His fields’” (Matthew 9:36-38).

In Closing

Close by asking ‘the Lord who is in charge of the harvest’ to raise up workers for the fields that are white unto harvest. Ask Him to bless Christ Church and the Joshua Celebration: to stir the hearts of His people to rise up and serve others in Jesus’ name.

Pray for this nation. Pray for this world. Pray for people to turn to the Lord.

Close by Praying together the Lord’s Prayer.

Close in a Time of Prayer asking:

How can I pray for my fellow Life Group participants this week?

One Year Bible Readings

November 20: Ezekiel 40:28-41:26, James 4:1-17, Psalm 118:19-29, Proverbs 28:3-5
November 21: Ezekiel 42:1-43:27, James 5:1-20, Psalm 119:1-16, Proverbs 28:6-7
November 22: Ezekiel 44:1-45:12, 1 Peter 1:1-12, Psalm 119:17-32, Proverbs 28:8-10
November 23: Ezekiel 45:13-46:24, 1 Peter 1:13-2:10, Psalm 119:33-48, Proverbs 28:11
November 24: Ezekiel 47:1-48:35, 1 Peter 2:11-3:7, Psalm 119:49-64, Prov. 28:12-13
November 25: Daniel 1:1-2:23, 1 Peter 3:8-4:6, Psalm 119:65-80, Proverbs 28:14
November 26: Daniel 2:24-3:30, 1 Peter 4:7-5:14, Psalm 119:81-96, Proverbs 28:15-16

Plain Truth:

Learning and _____ make an invisible God _____.

1. Learning and studying _____ us to a deeper _____ of God.

2. Prayer _____ our spiritual _____ so the Invisible God becomes _____.

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