

LEAVING A LEGACY

I want to wish everyone a Happy Easter! **Jesus is ALIVE!** Can we celebrate that this morning? The TOMB is EMPTY and Jesus is resurrected!

Luke 24:1-6 (NIV) On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. **2** They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, **3** but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. **4** While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. **5** In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? **6** He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee:

Because of these 7 magnificent words “He is not here; he has risen!” we have HOPE this morning! Our hope includes forgiveness of SIN and the promise of LIFE EVERLASTING. Jesus not only overcame our sin but He defeated the grave!! This is the Good News we have been given and this is the news that we are to share with all those our life comes in contact with. This is our legacy! This is what we are to teach our children and pass on to the next generation!

As a result, Jesus commissions us to GO and tell this to others!

Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV) Therefore GO and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

This is the legacy that God has always challenged His people to leave. We have seen this since the Promise was given to Abraham in Genesis 12 and we see it here again in Deuteronomy 6. **God loves us and wants to have a relationship with us and He wants that to be declared to ALL.** As those who have benefited from that relationship we have a responsibility to pass it on and not let this Good News become overshadowed by our sin. Today as we close out the PROMISED LAND section of our journey through God's word I want to challenge us with what Moses challenged Israel with right before he passed the leadership torch over to Joshua for him to lead the people of Israel into the Promised Land. So, if you will find **Deuteronomy 6** I am going to **PRAY** for us and then we will get started.

Up to this point we have been following Israel's journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. Just like our faith journey it has been filled with many ups and downs. Over the last few weeks we have seen Israel go from crossing the Red Sea in a crushing victory over Egypt and Pharaoh's army to worshipping the Golden Calf. Last week we saw Israel arrive at the Promised Land only to refuse to enter in by allowing their FEAR to negate their faith. When we last left Israel God had told them that as a result of their lack of faith they would wander in the wilderness for forty years until all those who were 20 years and older had died with the exceptions of Joshua and Caleb. The Book of Deuteronomy is basically the final words of Moses to the children of Israel right before they prepare to enter the Promised Land for a second time and before Moses dies

and passes his leadership mantle on to Joshua. As we look at some of the final words of Moses to the children of Israel on this Easter Sunday our goal today is to show how God's people leave a lasting legacy long after our life is over. Here is what Moses said to Israel.

Deuteronomy 6:1-9 (NIV) **1** These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, **2** so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. **3** Hear, Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, promised you.

4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. **5** Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. **6** These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. **7** Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. **8** Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. **9** Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

One of the beautiful things about Easter is that there is HOPE! God wants to make all things new. He wants to bring the dead back to life. No matter where we come from and no matter what we have done, God's desire is for us to have a relationship with Him and He wants to use my life and your life to leave a legacy so that others may have access to that same hope! No matter what you walked in here with this morning and no matter where you happen to be in your relationship with Jesus currently, He wants to offer you and I an opportunity to experience the PROMISED LAND and to leave for the next generation that same hope. Of course when I am talking about the PROMISED LAND I am referring to the ability we have to engage in a relationship with God through Jesus the SON. What made the Promised Land so special for Israel was not just the land itself and what it had to offer but it was the presence of God in that place! Ladies and Gentlemen, Jesus is our PROMISED LAND and He wants you to experience His presence to the fullest! Not only can we have a relationship with God no longer bound by sin, but because Jesus makes all things new our life can count for something eternal in significance long passed our life on this earth.

So here is the question I have for you this morning. Whether you have been a part of the church all your life or whether this is your first time. **Do you want to experience all that the PROMISED LAND has to offer (The Promised Land being a relationship with Jesus)?** And **do you want your life to continue to have an impact long after you leave this earth?** If you do, notice the two actions God through Moses calls Israel to do!

First of all, notice that **GOD calls His people to be DISTINCT**. In other words, if they want to get the most out of that which God promised them they have to live a distinct way. And the same is true for us. The Promised Land is more than just a place to dwell. It is about the PERSON of God who desires a relationship with His people. Notice how they are to be distinct.

Deuteronomy 6:1 (NIV) These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess,

1) They are to be DISTINCT by submitting themselves to God's word!

A relationship with God has to begin with a distinct WORD from God. This defines for us who God is and what is required to have a relationship with Him. God is a distinct person not some mythical being that we can shape to our own liking. God's word is objective truth void of how we feel or of what we think is popular concerning God. It transcends ourselves and requires that we yield ourselves to it not the other way around. When you live your life according to God's word it will make you distinct just as it made Israel distinct from her neighbors. Moses is delivering to the people of Israel God's distinct word. It is not based on Moses and his opinion or thoughts. He is speaking what God is instructing him to teach and this is necessary if Israel is going to have a relationship with God. We must be careful that we read God's word with the purpose of allowing it to transform us and not the other way around.

Nate Pyle says this *"Seeing what we want to see in the biblical text is perhaps the biggest pitfall we face when it comes to reading the Bible,"*

If you want a relationship with God will you start by submitting yourself to God's word? Notice the second way they are called to be distinct.

2) They are to be DISTINCT by allowing God's word to establish a healthy respect for who God is.

Deuteronomy 6:1-2 (NIV) 1 These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, **2** so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you,

The word of God establishes for us His holiness in light of our sinfulness. This should create a healthy tension in our lives where we realize that God is holy without sin and we are not. It should not cause us to reject it but instead to embrace it and see it as good for our life. This is a good tension to have but because we don't understand or know the nature of God we run away from Him. Without discovering our brokenness we don't see our need to be fixed. But we also need to understand that God is the only one who can fix us. So rather than run from Him we need to run to Him. Because He is holy and we want to have a relationship with Him we cannot remain as we are. Something must change! A healthy fear of the Lord should create in us a desire to do something about the sin in our lives that is an offense to Him and that hinders our relationship with Him.

Are you running from this tension or are you allowing God to use it to show you your need for Jesus? Does it cause you to turn away from God or does it lead you to confession and repentance? Notice the third way they are called to be distinct.

3) They are to be DISTINCT by allowing God's word to set boundaries for their life.

Deuteronomy 6:1-3 (NIV) **1** These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, **2** so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. **3** Hear, Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, promised you.

If Israel chooses to live by God's word it really will benefit their lives in the Promised Land. In other words they will get more out of Promised Land experience if they let God's word guide and set boundaries for their lives. The same goes for any relationship. When we set proper boundaries for our relationships we always get more out of them and enjoy them to the fullest. And this is true with God as well. Remember this is not about a place. It is about a person! God's word is essential for us to get the most out of our relationship with Jesus.

Do you want the most out of your relationship with Jesus? Then we must let God's word set the boundaries for that relationship. Notice the fourth and final way they are called to be distinct.

4) They are to be DISTINCT in their expressions of love for God.

Deuteronomy 6:4-6 (NIV) **4** Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. **5** Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. **6** These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.

Their love should be demonstrated by a sole devotion to God and God alone! The way they live their life doesn't just address their outward actions but it is to impact them at the heart level. It impacts what they meditate on with their mind. When God's word gets a hold of our heart attitudes we will stand out from those around us.

John 14:15 "If you love me, keep my commands. How we live says a lot about who we love!

John 15:14 You are my friends if you do what I command. Do our actions identify our relationship?

Relationships rise and fall on LOVE. How's your love for Jesus?

So, the first action God calls His people to is to be DISTINCT. But notice the second action He calls them to.

GOD calls His people to be DISCIPLE-MAKERS

If we are enjoying a relationship with Jesus then we should want to share that with others. Especially our children. As disciple-makers we should **talk about God's word** through the everyday activities of life. **Deuteronomy 6:7 (NIV)** Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Just as words were cut into a stone tablet we should teach in a manner that etches this on the hearts of our children. We cannot compartmentalize our relationship by relegating it only to a worship service on Sunday. It needs to be discussed and applied to all of our life.

As disciple-makers we should **meditate on God's word daily** by keeping it before you whether working with your hands or with whatever you look upon with your eyes so that you are constantly reminded of it and are influenced by it. **Deuteronomy 6:8 (NIV)** Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. The idea here is to let God's word guide and direct the work of our hands and may it be that which we always have our eye on to guide us through life.

As disciple-makers we should **model God's word** in our home and with our life. **Deuteronomy 6:9 (NIV)** Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. The idea here is to let the word of God hang on our life. Put into practice. That's what made Jesus so effective in discipling those who followed Him. He lived out the word of God. In fact, He is referred to as the WORD made FLESH.

John 1:14 (NIV) The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

May we live in such a way that we would let the Word made Flesh (JESUS) live through us!

Worship Team Comes Back Up

Invitation:

So here is what I want us to do today!

First of all, I want to invite you to the Promised Land. (Honey sticks are to remind us that Jesus is our Promised Land) If you do not currently have a relationship with Jesus I want you to invite Him into your life today. He is our PROMISED LAND. He is the place of abundant peace and hope where you and I truly belong and where we will find rest from our wilderness journey! He loves you and He died for you so that you could have forgiveness of sin and the hope of eternal life. He wants you to live with Him forever in a land of no more sorrow and no more pain! Would you heed His call to be DISTINCT by **submitting yourself to God's word and letting your**

obedience to His word become your expression of love for Him. (Give people an opportunity to respond)

If you have a relationship with Jesus and in light of the great commission that we read earlier in **Matthew 28** as well as God's call to being a disciple maker found in **Deuteronomy 6** I want to challenge you to be a disciple-maker!

Luke 9:23-24 says this, *"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it"* A true follower of Christ is devout because he or she commits every part of his or her life to loving and living for God. This is not done out of obligation or to earn salvation or God's favor. Instead, we give everything to God because He gave everything to us as demonstrated in the Easter story of His death, burial and resurrection.

How much of the Gospel are you willing to live out in your daily life? You can't expect to be the kind of disciple maker Deuteronomy is calling you to be if you only give the Lord 2 hours a week on a Sunday morning.

Parents let me ask you this. Does your child know the Lord as well as they know their tablet?

Let's get rid of:

- 1) Fear
- 2) Pride
- 3) Selfish Desires
- 4) Prioritizing our pleasure over His presence
- 5) Apathy

And let's leave a legacy that will outlive our time on earth. After all JESUS is ALIVE, do you believe that?! IF SO Let's GO MAKE DISCIPLES. If you are willing, will you stand with me and repeat this after me:

Lord, today I deny myself, take up my cross and follow YOU.

I recognize that You are the PROMISED LAND that gives us rest from our wilderness journey.

I am committed to talking about Your word through the everyday activities of my life.

I will make meditating on Your word a daily priority.

I will seek to keep it before me always so that I am constantly influenced by its teachings

I will seek to model Your word with my life and thus teach my children and others as Jesus taught His disciples.

May I leave a legacy that will impact generations until Christ returns.

Let's pray!