

“Preparing for a New Thing”

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Special Guest [Pastor Darren Rouanzoin, Garden Church](#)

SERMON NOTES:

Pastor Darren invited us to consider when was the last time we had a major life transition.

- He asked us how we prepared for that event or transition
- He stated that He believes that God is up to something new in the world
- That there is so much happening in this moment, and that God is up to something
- Ultimately, he asked us to answer “How do we prepare for God’s new thing?”

He told a story of helping to move a friend from one house to another in one weekend

- The process of planning and strategy were long in advance of that moment.
- That weekend of shared transitional experience reminded him that in life:
 - **the greatest things often require the greatest sacrifice**

He told another story of preparing for his first son Ezra’s arrival:

- That the preparation underneath the surface in his wife’s body was changing to prepare for the new life God was about to happen. Prep of home, mind, life, for what was coming
- This is similar in how throughout history God’s greatest renewal movements were brought about by God preparing folks for what was to come

Mark Sayers was quoted: as saying “*Crisis Precedes Renewal...as we study how God brings renewal throughout history, we begin to see the pattern that crisis plays in renewal. A community may experience a natural disaster or war and be pushed back into God. An individual may experience a period of wilderness and isolation, crying out to God, who then comes to them in their pain. This person gains spiritual depth, being renewed, becoming an influencer for God. Crises, and the transitions that they bring, are one of the critical ways that God uses to move us.*” Sayers, Mark. *Reappearing Church* (p. 46).

- **Often the greatest crisis, the greater the chance for renewal**

In **Joshua 3:1-4**, we observed together that:

- The Israelites had wandered for 40 years, and Moses is about to die
- Joshua leads the people of God as they are about to go in to the promised land
- God gave it to them as a possession for their service to God, a fulfilled promised
- God got them to get up and leave where they are to go a few miles and encamp again
- This begged the question, How does God want them/us to prepare for God’s new thing?

Darren observed that God did this to shake up their comfort and remind them of who they are

- He disrupts there/ our comforts to re-establish their convictions
- To get them to anticipate the new thing God is going to do
- He reminds them of their forged identity when they live in to their faith
- **Comfortable living almost always leads to compromise (luke-warmness)**

- We settle in to what our finances, careers, dreams, social media, spouses, success gives us in meaning significance and purpose.

First thing we do to prepare: We must disrupt our comforts and reestablish our convictions

- To remember who we are, why we are here, and who God is

2nd thing to prepare: Joshua 3:5 says to “consecrate yourselves, before God does amazing”

- **We repent from compromise and pursue consecration**
 - To turn away from those things that take us away from God’s life for us
 - To be set apart for holy purpose of representing God to rest of nations
 - To be useful for his purposes
 - Holiness is simply about usefulness
 - Like Exodus 19 season: God is to descend and tells people “consecrate selves”
 - Prepare homes, lives, wash and be ready for God’s glory to dwell
- **The fruit of consecration in scripture is visitation**
 - Same as when Solomon’s temple is constructed, that God’s presence may dwell

Simon Ponsby: The Pursuit of the Holy: *“Canadian spiritual writer Henry Blackaby has said that God’s people can shape a nation if they are holy. He offered these challenging words that should cause all leaders like me to truly search themselves: ‘I believe there will be no revival (in society) without holiness in the leadership. None. Cry unto God all you want. He will not hear you. Pull together all the phrases that revivalists of other generations have quoted, and it will not make an ounce of difference to the heart of God. God is looking for holiness!’”*

Talking about Holiness:

- We as the church in the west, have accommodated to lukewarm spirituality under the guise of trying to be cool and relevant
- We look, act, and talk just like the world. Nothing different in how we handle conflict
- Holiness is standing with one foot in the sea of the world that is drowning, and another on the shore
- Nazirite vow in OT is a good example: to embody a symbol of covenantal faithfulness
 - “Corpse touching”: “Is there anything I touch, that brings me spiritual death?”

What do you touch that brings you spiritual death?

- Maybe God is asking you to reconsider your relationship with social media, binge watching, consumption, digital intake

How is God inviting you to prepare for new things by being holy?

“Every man is as holy as he really wants to be” -A.W. Tozer

Joshua 3:6-17: “...God will go into the water ahead of you...stop the waters in front of you...you will cross over with God’s presence on dry ground”

- We prepare for God’s new thing by **“obeying God’s word and following his presence”**
- God will do it again like he did when he parted the red sea, **but will require new faith**
- **You will have to step in to the flooding waters and trust God to make a way**
- Faith for them was about TODAY, not yesterday’s faith. It requires RISK TODAY.

God is forming his people to hear God's word, just like Joshua was and lead out from it

- Josh 1:7-8 "be strong and very courageous...meditate on God's word day and night"
- His leadership was marked by formation in God's word in his daily life
- Exodus 33:7 shows Moses meets with God in "the tent of meeting" to be with God face-to-face
 - **but "Joshua, Moses' assistant didn't leave the tent after Moses' mtgs with God**

God is going to do something new and he is searching for leaders who are ready and willing to pack up camp and go where God leads because they already know something is about to happen

Will you be those followers of Jesus? Embodying the word of God and Spirit.

1. People with fresh faith, willing to do what God asks
2. Prepared for what God is about to do
3. Doing the work to pay the cost of daily faith
4. Stepping into the water of risk
5. Taking inventory of comforts and disrupting them
6. Repentant of compromise
7. Living fully in his Spirit

What do you need to do today to prepare for God's new thing?

- What "good things" do you need to give up in this Lenten season in order to pursue God
- To increase your hunger for God, for the power and grace to sustain you
- To experience the abundant thing God is about to do in and through your life

Supplemental Study: "Going Deeper"

Read Exodus 33:7-11. Consider the invitation God gives us to go in to "the tent of meeting" and to stay there. Think about how you can be someone who longs to maximize the opportunity to form intimacy with God. How you can be slow to get back to business each day, and instead be like Joshua who stayed in the tent. In what ways is God asking you to not "check in and out" from "practicing the presence of God?" How would doing so be transformative of your relationship with God by "seeing God face to face." How would this help you prepare yourself to be found ready for the new thing God wants to do in your life?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS (Small Group & Personal):

WARM-UP: “Together” *(use one or none)*

1. What is a favorite dessert food?
2. If you could have a super power what would it be and what would you do?

WORD: “Truth”

Leader: Questions below should allow for quick responses, evident by close reading of the text. Choose to use some or all of them (pending pace), as reading of the passage(s) will answer them as well.

- **Sermon Recap:** Pastor Darren invited us to consider how God might be preparing us for a new thing in the season ahead. By looking at Joshua’s call to help the people of God to consecrate themselves to be found ready for what God was going to do in their lives. He talked about how God wants us to become people who are set apart for holy purposes. Instead of being people who are caught up in the tides of both good and bad things, that God desires a steadfast, wholehearted, and intimate devotion to the things God cares about above else? He asked us to consider what it is that we touch that gives us death? To instead, embody the word of God and Spirit through becoming people with fresh faith willing to do what He asks of us. To do the work to pay the cost of daily faith. To step into the water of risk. To take inventory of comforts and disrupt them. To live fully in his Spirit.
- Read Joshua 3:1-17 together outloud:
Read in four chunks if helpful for observations: verses 1-4, 5-8, 9-13, 14-17
Then talk through applications after reading verses 1-17

Introduce or refresh SOAP to your group, then read the text and lead them through.

S- Scripture: Read the text

O- Observations: What stood out, what makes you curious, what questions do you have

A- Application: How does it or a part of this scripture speak to your life? What are the implications? Where do I relate? Where do I find myself? What is convicting?

P- Prayer: Pray the text in your own words, pray about what resonated with you, pray regarding your application...

APPLICATION: “Life”:

1. What might God be inviting you to stop or reduce in preparation of the new thing to come?
2. What do you need to repent of?
3. What other preparation do you feel invited into?

PRAYER “Truth” (options of how to pray in your group)

1. Pray for the preparation God wants to do to prepare for a new thing.
2. **How is God inviting you to prepare for new things by being holy?**
3. Do you have any other specific prayer requests?

COMMUNION “Together”

Lead your group in communion in a way that feels right.

- If needed, 1 Corinthians 11:23-27
 - **23** ...that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, **24** and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **25** In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS at ASC:

1. **Last Call: Young Adult Night:** On February 22, we will be hosting a Young Adult Virtual social, Brice will be speaking on “managing stress and anxiety”. Sign up [HERE](#), or via the website or the free ASC app.
2. **Invite a friend, sign up, and join us for our 1st In-Person All-Church ASC Watch-Party. 10AM at Collective Seattle:**
 - a. Feb 28: We'll also be kicking off our New Series “Habits”
 - i. Register [HERE](#)
3. **All-Church Prayer Calls:**
 - a. Wednesday's from 1230-1pm each week. 1-253-215-8782, 86546382360#
 - b. Friday Mornings from 6:30am-7am 1-253-215-8782, 86546382360#
4. **Get Involved:** If you are interested in serving at church, we have several opportunities for you to do so.
 - a. Hospitality: Help serve our production team when they record on Sundays
 - b. Media: Are you a photographer, a writer, editor or graphic designer, sound engineer, we have an opportunity for you to volunteer your gifts and talents. Email info@aseattlechurch.com and Amanda will connect you with the right ministry leader.
5. **Share testimony** of how God is moving in your life/your group in this season? [HERE](#)

6. How can we **come alongside you** in more specific ways as a church? **Let us know.**
7. Have you been **baptized?** If that is your next step in repentance and faith, **let us know.**