

Sermon Based Small Group: Joshua

Ready to Serve: Joshua 3:3, 4

Introduction

- A video small group is a different experience. We have not been this way before. Briefly update each other on how your week has gone.

Reviewing the Teaching

- Read Joshua 3:3, 4. "You have never been this way before." That just about sums up our present situation.
 - For Israel, what did that mean?
 - What does it mean for us right now?
- Romans 15:4 - *"For everything that was written in the past [Old Testament] was written to teach us, so that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might live in hope."*
 - We live in a new and frightening situation. Talk about why we have hope.
 - Is that hope real?
- Our mission hasn't changed:

Bring Jesus into life in our networks and neighbourhoods.

We've sharpened it a bit to say that we want to help everyone in our church family live in the **hope & love** of Jesus and together to make the hope & love of Jesus real in our networks and neighbourhoods. The next section, SERVE, will guide this discussion.

SERVE

- **See** past self to the God who loves & leads you
 - Do you trust that Jesus is leading you home?
 - What does following God look like right now?
- **Emotional** calm through the hope of God
 - Do you have any "go to" Scriptures that help you maintain "emotional calm" in a crisis? What has helped you work these into your heart?
- **Release** resources with good boundaries
 - What practices or structures might you implement in order to maintain a "ready to serve" posture for the long haul?
- **Validate** someone with encouraging words
 - **transcend** the impact of the virus by making kindness and encouraging words contagious.
- **Engage** with others in every way possible
 - Are there any things you, or we as a group could do to serve together, maintaining the appropriate social distancing rules?

Digging Deeper

- You do not have time to go through this in your small group. But it is something extra to think about.
- The teaching used the required distancing from the ark as a window on the "original" / "core" social distancing issue. Are there other ways this current situation provides a window on or is an illustration of spiritual truth?
- Israel had been this way before, but they turned back. They had come a long way, from Egypt, across the sea, into the wilderness, but they stalled out.
 - Is that a metaphor that describes us?
 - Why does our sinfulness cause us to stall out?
- The ark in the middle of the river is a symbol of terror and a symbol of hope. How can it be both?
 - Why do we need to "social distance" from God? How does God's holiness affect sinful people?
 - Pastor Mel mentioned that the ark contained the 10 Commandments. How do these "flatten the curve"?
 - Mark 5:25 ff is the story of the unclean woman touching Jesus. Jesus turns the ultimate violation in the ultimate cleansing. What does that mean?
 - Josh Ryan Butler (The Pursuing God): *"Rather than transferring her impurity to him, he transfers his purity to her."* Read Hebrews 4:16. Salvation is the ultimate cure for the virus of sin. How does salvation affect our social distancing from God?
- Hope is a powerful Bible word. We use hope to mean a wish, but in the Bible it describes a certainty. In Joshua, Israel had a certainty. When they crossed the river, the flood returned. There was no stalling, no going back.
 - What was their hope?
 - When we think that we have not been this way before, what is our hope? What is certain about it?

Prayer

- "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that your hope may overflow to everyone around you by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13)
- We live in a place where people are terrified. Ask God to make you a person of hope.
- Ask God to show you how to SERVE this week.