

Monday, FEBRUARY 15, 2010

In the services this weekend we looked at what it means to engage in the Journey of Living on Mission with God. The Digging Deeper will be just a little different than usual this week. Each day a different staff member from Calvary will lead you to consider a different aspect of the Journey you are on with Christ as we reflect on the messages that have been given so far this year. If you missed some of the messages, you can go online and listen, or pick up a CD at the welcome center.

We started this year by considering what it means to get rid of excuses. Would you please read Judges 6 as a reminder of that message?

Giving excuses to God is something that I (Pastor Chuck) can really relate to. The Lord came to Gideon in Judges 6:14 and told Gideon, "Go in the strength you have." In the same way, the Lord came to me in high school and called me into the ministry. The verse He used to call me is Acts 20:24 KJV.

It was then the excuses really started for me. I began to think of all the things that I would need to give up. Truthfully, all the things I had and wanted did move me, and I certainly *did* count my life dear unto *myself*. I did not count my life dear unto God. I pursued the life I wanted and kidded myself into thinking I was on mission with God. In my heart, I knew I was not.

Years passed and just like with Gideon, God waited patiently through all my excuses. When the moment came that I stopped and truly worshipped God and realized the strength He had given me to be on mission with Him, He was ready for me and I was ready for Him. I obeyed the Call into the ministry He had for me. I found the truth that Living on Mission with God without excuse is living a victorious life. Now I live in the power of God on a journey with Him where I discover Him in new ways every day as I stay on mission with Him.

Do I still give excuses?

Yup, I do. But not near as many, and not near as often. I still get scared sometimes. I still want some of the things that I know are not good for me. I get tired of the battle on this war-torn planet controlled by the devil—that pretender prince and I am tempted to fall back into my old ways. I rationalize those things with excuses. But He tenderly calls me back to the mission He has for me and the power He has for me to be able to live that mission. Have you found that to be true in your life?

Family Discussion Question: Am I on mission with God?

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 16, 2010

Discovering God and that He is Real!

What have you discovered about God through the series we are in?

I (Glenn Graf) declare that God is Faithful!

When I think of how the children discover God through the stories of the Bible I see them learn more and more that He is faithful to His people. The truth story of Moses leading the people of Israel out of Egypt is one of the first stories that children learn yet it perhaps will have the most impact on them as they actually begin asking how God is Real in their life. Here's how I have seen God in my life.

Have you had a "burning bush" moment? For myself, I would say that is what I experienced through the change of career direction in my life. I knew that God had placed me in my job. It was comfortable and I believe that I was accomplishing some good in my position, but there was a yearning to have a greater impact on the world. This then was my "burning bush."

Has God spoken to you in your daily work, bringing to life how real He is in your everyday experience? Are you prepared to hear from God as He is speaking to You? God continually met the people of Israel right at the place of their need to accomplish His work. This is what I believe He has done in my life - through a major change, yes, but a continuation of His plan for my life as I encounter Him deeper and greater engage with His people.

Deuteronomy 7:9 says, "*Know therefore that the Lord your God is God (Discover Him); he is the faithful God keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His commands.*" (Discover He is real!)

Wednesday, FEBRUARY 17, 2010

Here's the tough question God has asked me and after working through some hindrances in my life, I (Tess Cervenka) can finally answer...yes! "Am I enough for you?" We can quickly answer yes, some Christian mumbo-jumbo, or just ignore it, but when we believe our yes, there can be growth in our relationship with Christ.

Distractions are huge in life and I see them especially in the lives of our youth. It is difficult to be strong but is it possible? Yes! Because my relationship with Christ is enough. I don't need anyone else or anything else. I am connected to the vine growing in Him and bearing fruit because of Him. Focusing on the journey of living on mission with God, has brought many new realizations to light especially in the area of discovering that God is relational by seeing that He exists in a relationship within Himself.

Last fall in praying for our theme verse for youth group, John 15:5 was chosen. It is so interesting to see how God has unpacked and unfolded the truth of that verse in my life! How important is it to REMAIN in Christ? We do discover our relationship with Christ, but must stay there and remain in His perfect love so we do not wither away or fade out. I am witnessing our youth "get" this and it is exciting! A few weeks ago in youth group my point of the night was that the main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing. Take some time to consider this in your own life. The main thing is to love God with your everything—staying connected to the vine. Building a relationship with Him. Love your neighbor as yourself, building relationships with others. We cannot go at life alone first and foremost we need Christ, but secondly we need accountability. Who is this for you? Isolation is despair. Do you see the truth of that?

A quick poem for you then I am signing off - thanks for your love and support.

We're created for love and desire it/
Searching high and low but still don't find it/
We build relationships with those that fail us/
and our hearts become cold and calloused/
We feel there's no way out of this hurt and pain/
crying and fighting until we go insane/
The truth is—there is a perfect all consuming love/
attainable only from our Maker above/
When our relationship with Christ is enough/
we won't be content chasing worthless fluff.

Thursday, FEBRUARY 18, 2010

“Majesty, worship His majesty. Unto Jesus be all glory, power and praise. Majesty, kingdom authority flow from His throne, unto His own, His anthem raise”

In singing this song I (Dave Cousens) am instantly taken back to my boyhood church in England, where I can picture hundreds of worshippers standing to exalt God as King. It is an image that has stuck with me as I moved from a monarchy to a democracy. Do we ever stop to think about what it is like to be a child of the King, living in His Kingdom?

Discovering God’s reign is to discover what it means to truly worship God. Have you ever noticed how many hymns and songs exalting God have to do with Him being King of our lives? Even the Psalmist, a man after God’s own heart, cries out in worship of our King (Psalm 145). Stop a moment and read Psalm 47, a Psalm written by the sons of Korah. Answer the question in your own heart today, who is this King of glory in my life?

Somewhere in our high school years we lose the respect and trust of authority. We begin to realize that the world and its freedoms are there for the taking. Though we may have entered a relationship with Christ at some point, we soon lose sight of the King and worship becomes dull or boring. It intrigues me that Disney does such a good job of capturing the hearts of children and yet one of the main themes through each story is kings, kingdoms, princesses, etc. As we grow up we realize that the epic movies that grab our hearts do so because they have the same thematic elements. We must realize that “God has placed eternity in our hearts” (Ecclesiastes 3:11) and that the journey of life involves knowing our role in His love story. He is the King, His realm is now, and we are called to discover His reign! So what attributes of a king do I claim today, what have I already discovered about my God and KING? ... words like Sovereign? Ruler? Just?

Finally, the heart of a worshipper is to exalt the King of Kings and recognize what it means to live in the reality of His realm. You see, life is not just about waiting to spend eternity with our King, but about living in the reality of His Kingdom here on earth. Christ has come, His Kingdom is established, and knowing Him means having a direct relationship to the King of Kings - is this enough to cause you to worship today?

Friday, FEBRUARY 19, 2010

At the core of “Discovering God is Relevant” is the fundamental issue of TRUTH. Consider Colossians 2:8 “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world, rather than on Christ.” Look closely. Do you see almost every aspect of American life undermines the truth of God? Prominent scientific thought / business success theory / the prevailing political culture / the legal system / health care guiding principles / entertainment, etc. all are developing their “worldview” and value systems apart from God’s truth. Do you see that? Here’s a fundamental life question: where do you turn for TRUTH in life...practical, life guiding, decision making truth? What truth paradigm is shaping your world view?

Consider 2 Timothy 2:15 “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” What aspect of human truth is outside of the scope of this? Is science, math, physics, biology, law, politics, business ethics, family relationships, marriage, or any other aspect of life untouched by this challenge? God is saying HE is the originator of all truth, the ultimate judge of all truthfulness and He will hold every human accountable for what they have done with His truth!! (2 Cor. 5:10; John 16:13; Eph. 4:14,15; Col. 1:3-6; James 3:1).

Consider 2 Timothy 4:1-5 carefully. The challenge to know Truth, defend Truth, proclaim Truth, and prioritize truth is clear! Add John 1:14 “The Word (Truth) became flesh and made His dwelling among us...full of grace and truth.”; John 14:6 “I am the way, the TRUTH and the life, no one comes to the Father except by Me.”; and John 17:17 “Sanctify them (set apart for holy use) by Your truth, Your word is truth.”. Do you understand Jesus Christ (God Incarnate) is living Truth and God’s Word is Truth?

Finally, consider Isaiah 45:18,19 “He who created the heavens, He is God...He says ‘I am the LORD and there is no other...I speak the truth, I declare what is right.’. Who/what is your TRUTH Foundation upon which you are building your life? Do you use the Bible as your Truth filter for ALL aspects of life?

Pastor Doug Anderson

FEBRUARY 15 - 19, 2010

Contemplation from a Scenic Overlook



journey
Living on Mission with God

A Disciplemaking Tool
DIGGING
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