



GOING DEEPER

DISCUSSION GUIDE

June 11, 2017

Discussion Guide

FAITHFUL COMMITMENT

CONNECTING:

45 MINUTES

(THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE YOUR GROUP WITH A WAY OF CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER SO THAT YOU MIGHT PARTNER IN THE WORK GOD IS DOING IN YOUR LIVES.)

- IN WHAT WAYS DID GOD MOVE IN YOUR LIFE THIS WEEK? IN WHAT WAYS DID YOU RESPOND TO HIM?
- WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE THIS WEEK? IN WHAT WAYS, IF ANY, DID YOU INVITE GOD INTO THIS CHALLENGE?
- HOW HONEST HAVE YOU BEEN WITH US? (GRACIOUSLY THANK GROUP MEMBERS FOR THEIR HONESTY IF THEY STATE THEY HAVE HELD BACK.)

GETTING STARTED:

10 MINUTES

- WHEN THE CHURCH SEEKS TO DO THE WORK OF GOD, DO PEOPLE ALWAYS RECOGNIZE THEM AS DOING THE WORK OF GOD? WHY MIGHT THIS BE THE CASE?

DIVING INTO THE TEXT:

60 MINUTES

(THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE YOUR GROUP WITH A SIMPLE ROAD MAP THROUGH THE TEXT. FEEL FREE TO USE THESE QUESTIONS IN WAYS THAT BEST FIT YOUR GROUP AND THE DYNAMICS OF YOUR OWN MEETING.)

- USING THE NOTES, DISCUSS THE CONCEPT OF HOLY WAR AND THE PURSUIT OF GOD'S GLORY.
- GIVE THE BACKGROUND OF JOSHUA'S ENCOUNTER

WITH GOD IN JOSHUA 5, THEN READ JOSHUA 5.13-15. SEEK TO PUT YOURSELF IN JOSHUA'S SHOES, EXPERIENCING WHAT HE EXPERIENCED. READ THE TEXT ONCE MORE.

- IN THE PASSAGE, HOW MANY SIDES ARE THERE TO THE UPCOMING BATTLE FOR JERICHO? SEEK TO FIND AS MANY AS POSSIBLE.
- IN THE TEXT, GOD'S SIDE AND THE ISRAELITES' SIDE ARE NOT EQUATED. WHAT, IF ANYTHING, SURPRISES YOU ABOUT THIS? COULD YOU ELABORATE?
- GOD INVITES JOSHUA TO "COME OVER" TO HIS SIDE IN THE UPCOMING BATTLE AND CAMPAIGN FOR CANAAN, WHICH INVOLVES THE SEEKING OF GODS' GLORY RATHER THAN A SIMPLE VICTORY OVER THE PEOPLE OF CANAAN (JOSHUA 6.17-19). WHAT IMPLICATIONS, IF ANY, DOES THIS INVITATION HAVE FOR HOW WE UNDERSTAND THE WORK OF GOD IN WHICH WE ARE CALLED TO ENGAGE?
- WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE TO SEEK THE GLORY OF GOD IN WHAT WE DO RATHER THAN SIMPLY SEEKING TO "WIN" FOR GOD?
- WHAT, IF ANYTHING, MAKES THIS DIFFICULT? COULD YOU EXPLAIN? WHAT MIGHT MAKE IT EASIER?
- CONSIDER CLOSING BY DISCUSSING, AS A GROUP, WHAT IT MIGHT LOOK LIKE TO SEEK GOD'S GLORY IN YOUR INDIVIDUAL LIVES. PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER. YOU MIGHT CONSIDER BASING YOUR PRAYER ON 1 CORINTHIANS 10.31.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

HOLY WAR AND GOD'S GLORY

THE PRACTICE OF HOLY WAR OR PLACING THINGS UNDER THE BAN (CHEREM) IS A RARE PRACTICE IN WHICH ALL ITEMS AND PEOPLE ARE DEVOTED TO DESTRUCTION. THE PRACTICE OF PLACING CITIES AND PEOPLE UNDER THIS SORT OF BAN WAS THE MEANS BY WHICH JOSHUA AND THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL TOOK THE LAND OF CANAAN. WHILE THE MODERN PERSON FINDS THIS PRACTICE SHOCKING AND PERHAPS REPULSIVE, ONE MUST REALIZE THAT THIS WAS NOT THE ISRAELITES' NORMAL MEANS OF MAKING WAR. TYPICALLY, THE ISRAELITES OFFERED A CITY TERMS OF PEACE WHEN THEY MARCHED AGAINST IT (DEUTERONOMY 20.10), IN KEEPING WITH THE LAW OF MOSES. HOWEVER, WHEN JOSHUA AND THE ISRAELITES TOOK THE LAND OF CANAAN, THEY DEPARTED FROM THIS COMMANDMENT.

THE REASON FOR MAKING WAR IN A DIFFERENT MANNER CAME AT THE COMMAND OF GOD AND NOT AT THE BEHEST OF JOSHUA OR THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL (JOSHUA 6.17-19). GOD INSTRUCTED THE ISRAELITES TO COMPLETELY DESTROY THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND AND TO GIVE TO HIM ALL SILVER, GOLD, AND BRONZE. THIS INSTRUCTION WAS SO SERIOUS THAT DISOBEDIENCE BROUGHT ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCE OF DEATH (JOSHUA 7). WITH THIS EXAMPLE FRESH IN THEIR MINDS, THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL OBEYED GOD AND WAGED WAR BY COMPLETELY DESTROYING ALL THINGS AS THEY MOVED TO TAKE THE LAND OF CANAAN (JOSHUA 10.28-42).

GOD'S REASONING FOR HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO JOSHUA ARE NOT MYSTERIOUS BUT REVEALED IN SCRIPTURE. ONE OF THE REASONS GOD DESIRED THE ISRAELITES TO WAGE WAR IN THIS MANNER WAS TO PROTECT THE ISRAELITES FROM THE TEMPTATION TO WORSHIP OTHER GODS (DEUTERONOMY 7.1-4). HOWEVER, A MORE CENTRAL REASON WAS ISRAEL WAS SERVING AS HIS INSTRUMENT OF JUDGMENT UPON THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND. WHEN GOD HAD PROMISED TO GIVE THE LAND TO THE DESCENDANTS OF ABRAHAM, HE NOTED THE LAND WOULD BE GIVEN WHEN THE SIN OF THE AMORITES HAD REACHED ITS FULLNESS (GENESIS 15.16). THIS STATEMENT SEEMS TO IMPLY THAT THE LAND WAS BEING GIVEN TO ABRAHAM'S DESCENDANTS ONLY AFTER GOD'S RESPONSE TO THE SIN OF THE PEOPLE OF CANAAN HAD BEEN DEALT WITH APPROPRIATELY. THIS IDEA IS REAFFIRMED IN LEVITICUS AND DEUTERONOMY AS THE PEOPLE ARE WARNED AGAINST DEPARTING FROM THE WAYS OF GOD LEST THE LAND VOMIT THEM OUT AS IT HAD THE PEOPLE OF CANAAN (LEVITICUS 18.24-25; 20.23; DEUTERONOMY 9.4-6). IN THESE PASSAGES, IT BECOMES

APPARENT THAT GOD WAS NOT CAPRICIOUS IN HIS TREATMENT OF THE CANAANITE PEOPLES BUT WAS BRINGING A JUST JUDGMENT UPON THEM THROUGH THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL.

HOWEVER IMPORTANT THE CONCEPT OF JUDGMENT IS TO THE CONCEPT OF HOLY WAR, AND IT IS A CENTRAL TENET, EVEN MORE CENTRAL IS THE CONCEPT OF GOD RECEIVING GLORY. AT THE HEART OF GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS TO JOSHUA AND BEHIND THE STATEMENTS ABOUT JUDGMENT IS THE THEME OF GOD RECEIVING RIGHTFUL RECOGNITION, GLORY. THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND OF CANAAN WERE BEING JUDGED BECAUSE OF THEIR SIN; THAT IS, THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND HAD NOT HONORED GOD AND HIS WAYS. THEY HAD NOT GIVEN HIM GLORY. LIKewise, THE INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING HOLY WAR INVOLVED GOD RECEIVING THE BOUNTY OF WAR. ALL GOLD, SILVER, AND BRONZE WERE TO GO INTO HIS TREASURY (JOSHUA 6.19). SIMPLY PUT, GOD WAS TO RECEIVE ALL THE GLORIOUS SPOILS OF BATTLE. IN FACT, IT APPEARS THAT THE ENTIRE REDEMPTIVE MOVEMENT OF GOD IN THE EXODUS WAS AIMED AT HIM RECEIVING GLORY, BEING RECOGNIZED AND HONORED AS GREAT (EXODUS 14.4, 17; ROMANS 9.23).

ONE OF THE PRIMARY PURPOSES OF GOD IS TO BRING HIMSELF GLORY. CREATION ITSELF DECLARES GOD'S GLORY (PSALM 8.1; 19.1-2), AND HE DESIRES THAT HIS PEOPLE GIVE HIM GLORY (PSALM 29.1-2; 115.1; 1 CHRONICLES 29.11; ISAIAH 42.8; 48.11). FOR GOD TO SEEK HIS GLORY, THE RECOGNITION OF WHO HE IS, IS NOT A SELFISH ACT ON GOD'S PART BUT A DESIRE FOR WHAT IS BEST FOR HIS CREATION. IT IS IN GOD THAT ALL LIFE AND DELIGHT IS FOUND (PSALM 16). THEREFORE, TO TURN TO GOD IN RECOGNITION OF WHO HE IS ALLOWS ONE TO PARTAKE OF WHAT IS GOOD AND TO DISCOVER TRUE LIFE, JOY, AND DELIGHT. IN THE CASE OF HOLY WAR, GOD SEEKS HIS GLORY BY CALLING THE ISRAELITES TO RECOGNIZE HIM AND HIS GREATNESS DEMONSTRATED THROUGH BATTLE. THIS IS NOT TO PUT THE ISRAELITES DOWN AS GOD SELFISHLY SEEKS HIS OWN EXALTATION BUT IS AN INVITATION FOR THE ISRAELITES TO RECOGNIZE AND EXPERIENCE THE GREATNESS OF THE GOD IN WHOM THEY MIGHT DELIGHT AND FIND LIFE; THAT IS, GOD IS INVITING THE ISRAELITES TO RECOGNIZE THAT EVEN AS THEY TOOK THE LAND THAT REAL DELIGHT AND LIFE WERE FOUND IN GOD AND NOT THE LAND. THEREFORE, THE INSTRUCTION TO HOLY WAR IS A FAITH BUILDING PRACTICE FOR THE ISRAELITES. IT IS THIS TURNING TO GOD WHICH IS CENTRAL TO THE ENTIRE CAMPAIGN IN THE LAND (JOSHUA 6.15), BUT IT WAS A LESSON LOST UPON THE ISRAELITES WHO QUICKLY TURNED AND GAVE UP THE GLORY OF GOD FOR IDOLS (PSALM 106.35-39) AND THUS, LIKE THE PEOPLE OF CANAAN, WERE EXPELLED FROM THE LAND.

THE TEXT

JOSHUA 5.13-15: *WHOSE SIDE?*

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA DETAILS THE PROCESS OF TAKING THE LAND OF CANAAN WHICH CONCLUDES THE EXODUS JOURNEY OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL, THE FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PROMISES TO ABRAHAM AND MOSES (JOSHUA 1.1-6). THE STORY OF THE TAKING OF THE LAND BEGINS AS THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL CROSS THE JORDAN AND REAFFIRM THEIR COVENANT WITH GOD (JOSHUA 3-5). IN THE REAFFIRMATION OF THE COVENANT THROUGH THE ACT OF CIRCUMCISION (JOSHUA 5.2-12), THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL AGREE NOT SIMPLY TO KEEP THE LAW GIVEN TO MOSES BUT AFFIRM THEY ARE GOD'S PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM. AFTER HEALING FROM THE ACT OF CIRCUMCISION, THE ISRAELITES PREPARE TO ENGAGE IN THE PROCESS OF TAKING THE LAND OF CANAAN STARTING WITH JERICO. HOWEVER, BEFORE THEY CAN BEGIN, GOD ENCOUNTERS JOSHUA TO REMIND HIM THAT IN THE BATTLES TO COME, THE END RESULT WAS NOT TO HAVE THE ISRAELITES TRIUMPH OVER THE PEOPLE OF CANAAN. RATHER THAN SERVING TO UNDERScore THE RIGHTNESS OR STRENGTH OF THE ISRAELITES, THESE BATTLES WERE TO UNDERScore THE GREATNESS AND GLORY OF GOD.

THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN GOD AND JOSHUA BEGINS AS JOSHUA AND THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL NEAR THE CITY OF JERICO. IT IS MOST LIKELY, THAT JOSHUA IS PREPARING HIS ARMY AND STRATEGIZING ABOUT HOW TO BESIEGE THIS ANCIENT FORTRESS. SOMETIME IN THIS PERIOD, A WARRIOR READY FOR COMBAT APPEARS TO JOSHUA. CERTAINLY, JOSHUA IS SHOCKED AND ASKS THE OBVIOUS QUESTION ABOUT WHOM THE WARRIOR IS FOR IN THE UPCOMING BATTLE. THE ANSWER MATTERS BECAUSE DEPENDING HOW THE WARRIOR ANSWERS, JOSHUA MAY HAVE TO FIGHT FOR HIS LIFE! IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THE QUESTION WHICH JOSHUA POSES TO THE WARRIOR INDICATES THERE ARE TWO SIDES IN THE UPCOMING CONFLICT, THAT OF THE ISRAELITES AND THAT OF THE PEOPLE OF JERICO; ALTHOUGH, JOSHUA MAY HAVE THE LARGER CAMPAIGN AGAINST CANAAN IN MIND AND THUS "ENEMIES" REFERS COLLECTIVELY TO THE PEOPLES OF CANAAN. REGARDLESS, JOSHUA VIEWS THE UPCOMING BATTLE/CAMPAIGN IN BINARY TERMS. EITHER THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL OR THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND OF CANAAN WILL BE VICTORIOUS. ONE WILL RISE AND THE OTHER WILL FALL. THIS KIND OF THINKING WAS PROBABLY UNDERGIRDed BY THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE ISRAELITES WERE GOD'S INSTRUMENT OF JUDGMENT, THE WRATH OF GOD BEING Poured OUT UPON THE PEOPLE OF CANAAN (GENESIS 15.16; LEVITICUS 18.24-25; 20.23). BECAUSE GOD WAS USING

ISRAEL TO JUDGE THE PEOPLE OF CANAAN MUST MEAN THAT IT WAS ISRAEL VERSUS THE CANAANITES, OR GOD THROUGH ISRAEL AGAINST THE CANAANITES.

IT IS THIS BINARY THINKING WHICH MAKES THE WARRIOR'S RESPONSE SO STRIKING. HE IS ON NEITHER SIDE. THE ANSWER INDICATES THAT ANOTHER SIDE EXISTS IN THE CONFLICT, GOD'S SIDE. WITH THIS ANSWER, THE WARRIOR REVEALS HIS IDENTITY AS THAT OF THE COMMANDER OF THE LORD'S ARMY. MUCH DEBATE HAS BEEN HAD AS TO THE IDENTITY OF THIS FIGURE. SOME ARGUE THAT IT IS AN ANGELIC BEING BECAUSE THE WORD FOR COMMANDER IS THE WORD "PRINCE." A PRINCE IS POWERFUL BUT NOT SUPREME, THEREFORE, THIS PERSON MUST BE ANGELIC. HOWEVER, THIS ARGUMENT FALLS APART WHEN THE FIGURE NOTES THAT THE GROUND IS HOLY IN HIS PRESENCE. THIS IS ONLY POSSIBLE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD HIMSELF (EXODUS 3.1-6). THEREFORE, IT IS BEST TO VIEW THIS FIGURE AS GOD HIMSELF APPEARING TO JOSHUA. SOME HAVE GONE FURTHER TO TRY TO IDENTIFY WHICH PERSON OF THE GODHEAD IS BEING REPRESENTED. WHILE INTERESTING, THE SPECIFIC IDENTITY IS NOT IMPORTANT, THE MAIN POINT BEING THAT GOD HIMSELF HAS APPEARED TO JOSHUA.

WHILE SOME MIGHT BE TEMPTED TO THINK THAT THE APPEARANCE OF GOD TO JOSHUA LEGITIMIZES THE BATTLE/CAMPAIGN WHICH IS ABOUT TO ENSUE (GOD IS AGAINST THE CANAANITES AND THEREFORE FOR THE ISRAELITES), NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH. GOD DOES NOT APPEAR TO LEGITIMIZE THE UPCOMING TAKING OF JERICO OR CANAAN. HE DOES NOT COME TO STATE THAT HE IS FOR THE ISRAELITES AND AGAINST THE CANAANITES. BEFORE THE BATTLE OR CAMPAIGN BEGINS, GOD APPEARS AND INDICATES THAT HE IS FOR HIMSELF, AND HE INVITES JOSHUA TO COME OVER TO HIS SIDE! IN TRUTH, THERE IS ONLY ONE SIDE, GOD'S SIDE.

AS JOSHUA RECOGNIZES THAT HE IS IN THE PRESENCE OF SOMETHING MORE THAN HUMAN, HE HEARS THE INVITATION TO TAKE OFF HIS SHOES BECAUSE THE GROUND UPON WHICH HE IS STANDING IS HOLY. JOSHUA'S OBEDIENT RESPONSE IS AN ACT OF REVERENCE AND WORSHIP, RESPECTING THE NATURE OF THE ONE BEFORE HIM. THE OUTCOME OF THIS ENCOUNTER IS SEEN IN THE IMMEDIATE PREPARATIONS AGAINST JERICO AS JOSHUA INSTRUCTS THE ISRAELITES THAT THEY ARE TO ENGAGE IN HOLY WAR WHICH GIVES ALL GLORY AND RECOGNITION TO GOD. SIMPLY PUT, IN THIS ENCOUNTER, GOD INVITES JOSHUA TO SEEK HIS GLORY. THE UPCOMING CAMPAIGN IS NOT ABOUT THE ISRAELITES BEING ON TOP. RATHER, THE UPCOMING CAMPAIGN FOR CANAAN IS ABOUT GOD BEING ON TOP.

REAL LIFE WITH BLAKE:

WE ARE GOD'S FAITHFUL PRESENCE IN THE WORLD, HIS HANDS, HIS FEET, HIS BODY DOING THE WORK HE DOES. IN THIS TASK, IT IS EASY TO BEGIN TO VIEW THINGS IN BINARY TERMS OF RIGHT AND WRONG. BECAUSE WE ARE DOING THE WORK OF GOD, WE ARE "RIGHT" AND EVERYONE ELSE IS "WRONG." I SUPPOSE WE COULD THINK OF OUR ROLE IN THE WORLD IN THESE TERMS SO LONG AS WE ARE FIRMLY ROOTED IN GOD'S WAY AND NOT OUR OPINION. HOWEVER, WHEN WE DO, WE QUICKLY BEGIN TO THINK IN TERMS OF US COMING OUT ON TOP. OUR WORK IN THE WORLD BECOMES ABOUT OUR ASCENT TO POWER, OUR WAY BEING DONE, AND OUR NAME BEING RECOGNIZED BECAUSE WE ARE "RIGHT." WHEN THIS BEGINS TO HAPPEN, THE WORK WE ARE DOING BECOMES LESS AND LESS THE WORK OF GOD AND MORE AND MORE OUR WORK. WE MAY BE "RIGHT" BUT WE ARE NOT GOD'S HANDS AND FEET, HIS BODY. ACTUALLY, WE STOP BEING "RIGHT" THE MOMENT OUR WORK BECOMES ABOUT US BEING ON TOP OR IN POWER. THIS IS BECAUSE THE WORK OF GOD IS NEVER ABOUT US COMING OUT ON TOP. THE WORK OF GOD IS ABOUT GOD COMING OUT ON TOP.

MOST OF THE TIME WHEN WE THINK IN TERMS OF "RIGHT" AND "WRONG" WE THINK IN TERMS OF SIDES, OURS AND THEIRS, AND SOMEONE HAS TO PREVAIL. BUT IN TRUTH, THERE IS ONLY ONE SIDE, GOD'S, AND HE IS THE ONE WHO MUST PREVAIL AND HIS PREVAILING ISN'T ABOUT "RIGHT" AND "WRONG." HIS PREVAILING IS IN TERMS OF GLORY. WHAT GOD WANTS MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IS TO BE GLORIFIED, TO BE RECOGNIZED FOR WHO HE IS BECAUSE WHO HE IS IN HIS ESSENCE IS THE MOST WONDERFUL OF DELIGHTS, THE ONE SOURCE OF TRUE LIFE, JOY, AND DELIGHT. AS WE DO HIS WORK IN THE WORLD, OUR WORK IS NOT ABOUT PROVING WHAT OR WHO IS "RIGHT" OR "WRONG." OUR WORK IS TO ENSURE THAT ALL PEOPLE KNOW AND SEE THE GLORIOUS NATURE OF GOD (1 CORINTHIANS 10.31). AT THE END OF THE DAY, THIS ISN'T ABOUT SIDES OR US OR COMING OUT ON TOP. THIS IS ABOUT GOD, THROUGH AND THROUGH.

IT IS HARD TO REMEMBER THIS AS I GO ABOUT LIFE. I WANT TO SERVE GOD, BUT I ALSO WANT THINGS TO BE ABOUT ME. I WANT TO BE PRODUCTIVE, TO BE A PERSON OF VALUE AND WORTH, TO BE KNOWN AS SOMEONE WHO MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD. I CAN BE ALL OF THESE THINGS, BUT WHEN MY WORK BECOMES ABOUT THEM IT CEASES TO BE GOD'S WORK. GOD'S WORK, OF WHICH I AM A PART, IS ENSURING THAT GOD GETS ALL GLORY BECAUSE THIS IS THE BEST THING FOR ALL OF US. HOW I KEEP THIS STRAIGHT IN MY LIFE IS THE MOST DIFFICULT OF CHALLENGES. IT BEGINS WITH A COMMITMENT EACH DAY TO SEEK THE GLORY OF GOD. BEYOND THAT, I AM STILL LEARNING, BUT I AM STARTING TO CATCH WHEN I GO AFIELD. WHEN I NOTICE MYSELF GETTING ANGRY OR BOTHERED BECAUSE I AM NOT GETTING MY WAY, OR I

AM FRUSTRATED THAT MY VOICE IS NOT BEING HEARD OR I DON'T HAVE A SEAT AT THE TABLE, I HAVE MOVED INTO A WORK THAT IS NOT GOD'S WORK. I READILY CONFESS AND SEEK TO MOVE BACK TO BRINGING GOD GLORY, THOUGH I MUST ADMIT, I VERY OFTEN FIND MYSELF BACK IN MY OWN CAMP MORE READILY THAN I WOULD LIKE TO ADMIT. HOWEVER, THE MORE I RECOGNIZE WHOSE GLORY I AM SEEKING AND TURN IN RESPONSE, THE MORE THE DESIRE TO SEEK GOD'S GLORY BUILDS IN ME. AT THIS POINT, IT IS ENOUGH, FOR IN THIS I CAN SEE GOD AT WORK IN ME.

REAL LIFE WITH YOU:

WE ARE GOD'S FAITHFUL PRESENCE, HIS HANDS, FEET, HIS BODY, DOING HIS WORK IN THE WORLD, AND HIS WORK IS TO BRING HIMSELF GLORY. IT IS EASY TO FORGET THIS BECAUSE WE OFTEN MAKE THE DOING OF GOD'S WORK ABOUT WHO IS "RIGHT" AND WHO IS "WRONG." THIS KIND OF THINKING, THOUGH NOT TECHNICALLY WRONG, LEADS US TO A WAY OF BEING IN WHICH WE SEEK TO PREVAIL. THIS IS WHERE IT ALL GOES WRONG, BECAUSE THE POINT IS NOT TO PREVAIL. THE POINT IS TO GLORIFY GOD AND TO BRING THIS GLORY TO THE WORLD. THIS IS THE SOLE JOB OF THOSE WHO BEAR THE IMAGE OF GOD, TO BRING THE FULLNESS OF HIS GLORY TO THE EARTH. THIS MEANS THAT IF WE ARE TO FAITHFULLY SERVE AS GOD'S PRESENCE WE MUST COMMIT OURSELVES TO GOD AND HIS GLORY AND NOT TO PREVAILING. THIS COMMITMENT IS NOT ONE WE MAKE ONCE. IT IS A COMMITMENT WE MAKE EVERY DAY, EVERY MOMENT. WHEN WE STRAY, AND WE WILL, WE CONFESS AND RETURN BY RECOMMITTING OURSELVES ONCE MORE. THIS WEEK, TAKE A DAY AND SEEK TO WORK FOR THE GLORY OF GOD IN EVERYTHING YOU DO (1 CORINTHIANS 10.31). YOU MIGHT DO THIS BY OFFERING THIS SIMPLE PRAYER BEFORE EVERY ACTIVITY OR ENCOUNTER: "GOD, I WANT TO BRING YOU GLORY." IF YOU FIND YOURSELF GROWING FRUSTRATED BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT GETTING YOUR WAY, PAUSE AND CONFESS YOU HAVE BEGUN TO SEEK YOUR GLORY. RECOMMIT YOURSELF ONCE MORE TO THE GLORY OF GOD. YOU MIGHT CONSIDER JOURNALING YOUR EXPERIENCE AND TALKING ABOUT IT WITH GOD.



SENIOR
PASTOR
BLAKE
SHIPP