

BECOMING LIKE JESUS



GOING DEEPER

DISCUSSION GUIDE

APRIL 29, 2018

Discussion Guide

LITURGY OF FAMILY

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

- ARE YOU A PERSON WHO LIKES TO FOLLOW THE RULES? COULD YOU EXPLAIN?

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 COVENANTAL NOMISM, CHOOSING TO KEEP GOD'S LAW AS A RESPONSE TO RECEIVING GOD'S GRACE.
- READ DEUTERONOMY 6.1-25 ALOUD, SLOWLY. SEEK TO HEAR THE TEXT AS A MEMBER OF A GENERATION WHO IS BEING REMINDED OF THE TERMS BY WHICH GOD HAS CALLED HIS PEOPLE TO LIVE (DEUTERONOMY 5). READ THE TEXT ONCE MORE.
- MOSES WAS CONCERNED THAT UPON ENTERING THE

LAND OF PROMISE, THE PEOPLE OF GOD WOULD FORGET GOD (DEUTERONOMY 6.10-13). WHAT REASONS DID MOSES GIVE FOR HAVING THIS CONCERN?

- ONE MIGHT STATE THAT MOSES WAS CONCERNED WITH GOD'S PEOPLE BECOMING SATISFIED WITH THINGS FROM GOD RATHER THAN HUNGERING FOR GOD HIMSELF. IN WHAT WAYS, IF ANY, DOES THIS TEMPTATION STILL EXIST TODAY? COULD YOU ELABORATE?
- MOSES ENCOURAGED THE PEOPLE TO KEEP THE LAW (AT THIS POINT THE 10 COMMANDMENTS) AS A MEANS OF MAINTAINING THEIR FOCUS UPON GOD (DEUTERONOMY 6.1-2, 4-6). FURTHER, HE ENCOURAGED THE PEOPLE TO LOOK FOR CREATIVE WAYS TO HAND DOWN THIS WAY OF LIVING WITHIN THEIR FAMILIES (DEUTERONOMY 6.7-9). HE NOTED THAT LIVING IN THIS WAY POINTED ONE BACK TO GOD WHEN THEY ASKED WHY THEY LIVED IN THIS WAY (DEUTERONOMY 6.20-24). IN WHAT WAYS, IF ANY, MIGHT THIS EMPHASIS ON LIVING ON GOD'S TERMS ADDRESS ONE'S DESIRE FOR GOD? THINK OF AS MANY WAYS AS POSSIBLE.
- DO THE PEOPLE OF GOD TODAY PUT AN EMPHASIS ON LIVING ON GOD'S TERMS? COULD YOU ELABORATE?
- WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE TO SEEK TO LIVE ON GOD'S TERMS AND TO LOOK FOR CREATIVE WAYS TO HAND DOWN THIS WAY OF LIVING WITHIN OUR FAMILIES?
- HOW, IF AT ALL, MIGHT ADDRESSING WHY WE LIVE IN THIS MANNER POINT US BACK TO THE STORY OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE ACTION IN OUR LIVES?
- WHAT, IF ANYTHING, MIGHT MAKE THIS MANNER OF LIVING EASY? DIFFICULT?
- WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE TO SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER IN THIS WAY OF LIFE IN COMMUNITY?

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

COVENANTAL NOMISM

IN THE MINDS OF MANY CHRISTIANS, JUDAISM IS UNDERSTOOD TO BE A RELIGION BUILT AROUND THE LEGALISTIC OBSERVANCE OF THE TORAH (MOSAIC LAW), AND CHRISTIANITY'S EMERGENCE FROM JUDAISM DEPENDED NOT SO MUCH ON DIFFERING UNDERSTANDINGS OF GOD'S PROMISES BUT RATHER HINGED UPON AN EMPHASIS ON GRACE AS OPPOSED TO MERITORIOUS WORKS TO ACHIEVE SALVATION. HOWEVER, THIS VIEW THAT CHRISTIANITY SOMEHOW DIFFERS FROM JUDAISM ON THE MATTER OF GRACE COULD NOT BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH. IN REALITY, THE UNDERSTANDING OF JUDAISM AS A GRACELESS RELIGION BASED UPON WORKS IS DRAWN FROM A DISTORTED UNDERSTANDING OF JUDAISM BY LUTHER WHO PENNED HIS MANY WORKS AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF A CORRUPTED FORM OF CATHOLICISM WHICH CALLED FOR MERITORIOUS WORKS TO EARN SALVATION. AGAINST THIS BACKDROP, LUTHER UNDERSTOOD PAUL TO BE ENGAGED IN A FULL-ON BATTLE WITH JUDAISM BECAUSE HE SAW IT AS OPPOSED TO CHRISTIANITY'S EMPHASIS ON GRACE.

IN REALITY, EARLY JUDAISM WAS A RELIGION COMPLETELY BASED ON GRACE. THE HEBREW PEOPLE UNDERSTOOD THEIR ELECTED STANDING TO BE BY GOD'S GRACE (GENESIS 12). THEY STATED THAT GOD'S REDEMPTIVE WORK IN THEIR LIVES WAS BASED ON GRACE (EXODUS 20.1-2). THEY EVEN VIEWED THE TORAH TO BE A GIFT OF GOD'S GRACE TO THEM MEANT TO POINT THEM BACK TO A GRACIOUS AND LOVING GOD (DEUTERONOMY 5-6). SO, WHAT ROLE DID OBSERVANCE OF THE LAW REALLY PLAY IN JUDAISM? THE ANSWER IS THE JEWS UNDERSTOOD THAT KEEPING THE LAW WAS THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO GRACE, A MEANS OF MAINTAINING THE ELECT STATUS GIVEN TO THEM BY GRACE RATHER THAN A MEANS OF EARNING GOD'S FAVOR. SOMETIMES THIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE LAW IS CALLED COVENANTAL NOMISM. COVENANTAL NOMISM IS AN APPROACH TO THE TORAH BASED ON A COVENANT WITH GOD ROOTED IN GRACE. THE JEWS KEPT THE LAW, DOING ITS GOOD WORKS BECAUSE THEY WERE RECIPIENTS OF THE RICH GRACE OF GOD, GRACE WHICH UNDERGIRDDED EVERY ASPECT OF THEIR ELECTION AND REDEMPTION. KEEPING THE LAW WAS THEIR SIDE OF ACCEPTING WHAT GOD HAD GIVEN THEM BY GRACE. EVEN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF KEEPING THE LAW WAS ROOTED IN GRACE. NO ONE WAS EXPECTED TO OBSERVE THE LAW WITH FLAWLESS PERFORMANCE. A SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM EXISTED WHICH GAVE LAWBREAKERS CONTINUED ACCESS TO GOD'S GRACIOUS FORGIVENESS AND RESTORATION.

WHEN PAUL ARGUED WITH THE JEWS, PARTICULARLY JUDAIZING CHRISTIANS, HE WAS NOT ARGUING AGAINST COVENANTAL NOMISM OR THE VIEW THAT ONE SHOULD KEEP THE LAW AS A RESPONSE TO GRACE. PAUL'S PRIMARY ARGUMENT WAS AGAINST "WORKS

OF THE LAW;" THAT IS, PAUL ARGUED THAT GENTILE CHRISTIANS DID NOT HAVE TO KEEP THE ASPECTS OF THE TORAH WHICH WERE DIRECTED TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE AS PHYSICAL MARKERS SETTING THEM OFF AS THE UNIQUE PEOPLE OF GOD. THESE INCLUDED THINGS LIKE CIRCUMCISION AND THE DIETARY LAWS. THE AUTHOR OF HEBREWS TOOK THIS SAME LINE OF THINKING AND APPLIED IT TO THE SACRIFICIAL COMPONENTS OF THE LAW NOTING THAT THESE HAD IN FACT BEEN FULFILLED BY CHRIST. HOWEVER, ONE SHOULD NOT TAKE THIS ARGUMENT TO BE A DISMISSAL OF THE LAW. THE ARGUMENT IS NOT THAT THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM WAS DONE AWAY WITH BUT, IN KEEPING WITH THE LAW, CHRIST WAS THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICE (HEBREWS 9-10).

COVENANTAL NOMISM (THE IDEA THAT RECIPIENTS OF GOD'S GRACE KEEP GOD'S LAW) APPEARS IN THE TEACHING OF JESUS, JAMES, AND EVEN PAUL. THROUGHOUT THE NEW TESTAMENT, JESUS AND OTHERS MADE IT CLEAR THAT IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE, THE RECIPIENTS OF GRACE ENGAGED IN GOOD WORKS, WORKS WHICH GOD COMMANDED, AND THAT SOMEHOW THESE WORKS WERE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE AT THE FINAL JUDGMENT (MATTHEW 25.31-46; ROMANS 2.5-11; 1 CORINTHIANS 6.9-11; 2 CORINTHIANS 5.9-10; GALATIANS 5.19-21; JAMES 2.14-26; REVELATION 20.12). JESUS EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO STATE THAT GOD INTENDED THE LAW WHICH HE GAVE MOSES TO REMAIN IN PLACE AND THAT GOD'S PEOPLE WERE TO ORIENT THEIR LIVES IN KEEPING WITH THIS LAW. HOWEVER, JESUS WAS ALSO CLEAR THAT THE TRADITION BY WHICH THE LAW HAD BEEN INTERPRETED MISSED GOD'S ORIGINAL INTENT (MATTHEW 5.17-48). JESUS STATED THAT THOSE WHO LOVED GOD AND THEIR NEIGHBOR COMPLETELY KEPT THE LAW OF GOD IMPLYING THAT LAW-KEEPING WAS IN FACT AN EXPECTATION FOR THOSE WHO WERE CITIZENS OF GOD'S KINGDOM. HOWEVER, THESE CITIZENS NEED NOT WORRY ABOUT FOLLOWING LISTS OF RULES BUT RATHER COULD LIVE BY HIGHER PRINCIPLES WHICH WOULD LEAD THEM TO LIVES WHICH WOULD FULFILL THE TRUE INTENT OF THE RULES.

WHILE THE IDEA OF LAW-KEEPING AS THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO RECEIVING GOD'S GRACE IS CERTAINLY THE CENTRAL THEME OF COVENANTAL NOMISM, ONE SHOULD NOT UNDERSTAND KEEPING THE LAW TO BE WITHOUT BENEFIT WHICH LEADS ONE BACK TO THE EXPERIENCE OF GRACE. IT MIGHT BE EASY TO IMAGINE A SCENARIO WHERE A RECIPIENT OF GOD'S GRACE COULD TURN TOWARD A MERITORIOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, A WAY OF THINKING INSTILLED BY THEIR LAW-KEEPING. HOWEVER, THE KEEPING OF THE LAW ITSELF WAS MEANT TO LEAD GOD'S PEOPLE BACK TO GRACE. THE LAW OF MOSES LEADS GOD'S PEOPLE TO A LIFE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THE WORLD AROUND THEM. TO LOVE GOD AND ONE'S NEIGHBOR COMPLETELY CREATES A TRAJECTORY WHICH QUICKLY CREATES NOTICEABLE DIFFERENCES IN AGENDAS, ATTITUDES, AND

RHYTHMS OF LIFE. SIMPLY PUT, THE LAW OF MOSES CREATES SOMETHING OF A "SOCIAL CIRCUMCISION." GOD'S PEOPLE ARE DIFFERENT. IT IS THIS DIFFERENCE WHICH IS MEANT TO POINT BACK TO GRACE. GOD'S PEOPLE ARE MEANT TO ASK WHY THEY ARE DIFFERENT WHICH LEADS THEM TO THE STORY OF GOD'S GRACIOUS REDEMPTION WHICH LED TO THE LAW (DEUTERONOMY 6.20-25). IN OTHER WORDS, LAW KEEPING WAS ABOUT MORE THAN LEADING ONE TO A DIFFERENT LIFE BUT IT WAS ALSO A MEANS OF REHEARSING THE STORY OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE GRACE.

THE TEXT

DEUTERONOMY 6.1-25: REHEARSING REDEMPTION

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY IS A COLLECTION OF SERMONS PREACHED BY MOSES TO THE GENERATION OF HEBREWS PREPARING TO ENTER THE LAND OF PROMISE. GOD HAD DELIVERED THE PREVIOUS GENERATION OF HEBREWS FROM BONDAGE IN EGYPT. IT WAS THIS GENERATION WHO HAD RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO LIVE AS GOD'S PEOPLE IN THIS NEW LAND, BUT THROUGH THEIR DISOBEDIENCE THAT GENERATION WAS NOT ALLOWED TO CROSS THE JORDAN INTO THE LAND OF CANAAN. THEIR CHILDREN WERE THE RECIPIENTS OF THIS GIFT BUT AS THEY WERE NOT PRESENT FOR THE EXODUS FROM EGYPT OR THE GIVING OF THE LAW AT HOREB, THEY NEEDED TO BE TAUGHT THE LAW. THEREFORE, DEUTERONOMY IS IN MANY WAYS A REHEARSAL OF THE HIGH POINTS OF EXODUS, LEVITICUS, AND NUMBERS.

DEUTERONOMY 6 IS PART OF A SERMON WHICH BEGINS IN DEUTERONOMY 5. IN THIS SERMON, MOSES BEGINS BY REMINDING THOSE WHO ARE ABOUT TO CROSS THE JORDAN OF GOD'S COVENANT EXPECTATIONS. GOD HAD DELIVERED THE PEOPLE OUT OF EGYPT, OUT OF A LAND AND EXPERIENCE OF SLAVERY. IN RESPONSE TO THIS GRACIOUS REDEMPTION, GOD HAD GIVEN HIS PEOPLE A LAW BY WHICH TO LIVE, THE FRAMEWORK OF WHICH WAS THE 10 COMMANDMENTS. SIMPLY PUT, GOD ASKED HIS PEOPLE TO LIVE IN THE SPECIFIC WAYS HE OUTLINED IN THE LAW IN RESPONSE TO EXPERIENCING HIS GRACIOUS REDEMPTION AND PROMISE TO BE THEIR GOD, SOMETHING CALLED COVENANTAL NOMISM. HOWEVER, AS MOSES MAKES PLAIN IN CHAPTER 6, THIS RESPONSE OF LAW KEEPING WAS ABOUT MORE THAN LIVING IN A SPECIFIC MANNER. IT WAS MEANT TO REMIND GOD'S PEOPLE OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE GRACE.

AS MOSES PREPARED HIS PEOPLE TO ENTER CANAAN, HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THEY WOULD EXPERIENCE THE RICHNESS OF GOD'S GRACIOUS PROMISES AND QUICKLY FORGET GOD. THEY WOULD COME TO A PLACE WHERE IT WAS ENOUGH TO HAVE THE LAND, CITIES, HOUSES, POSSESSIONS, AND MANY OTHER GOOD THINGS GOD WAS GIVING THEM. THEY WERE SATISFIED WITH THESE AND WANTED NOTHING MORE. THEY WOULD NOT WANT

GOD OR SEEK HIM AS THAT WHICH WAS MOST IMPORTANT IN THEIR LIVES (DEUTERONOMY 6.10-13). IN ORDER TO AVOID BECOMING SATISFIED WITH THE GOOD THINGS FROM GOD RATHER THAN BEING SATISFIED ONLY WITH GOD, MOSES ENCOURAGED THE ISRAELITES TO KEEP THE LAW TO REMEMBER THE GOODNESS AND GRACE OF GOD.

HAVING RESTATED THE 10 COMMANDMENTS, MOSES REMINDED THE ISRAELITE PEOPLE THAT THEY WERE TO CAREFULLY KEEP THE LAW HE TAUGHT THEM AS A MEANS OF MAINTAINING THEIR DEVOTION (FEAR) TO GOD. IT WAS THIS DEVOTION TO GOD WHICH WOULD IN FACT GIVEN THEM A GOOD LIFE (DEUTERONOMY 6.1-3). MOSES CALLED THEM TO REMEMBER THAT FOR THEM THERE WAS BUT ONE GOD AND HIS PEOPLE WERE TO BE FULLY DEVOTED TO HIM (DEUTERONOMY 6.4). HOWEVER, ONCE MORE, MOSES NOTES THAT IT IS KEEPING THE LAW AND IMPRESSING THE KEEPING OF THIS LAW ON FUTURE GENERATIONS THAT WOULD SERVE TO MAINTAIN THIS SINGLE-MINDED DEVOTION TO GOD. THE ISRAELITES WERE FIRST TO ENSURE THEY KEPT THE LAW AND THEN TO ENSURE FUTURE GENERATIONS KEPT THE LAW THROUGH THE USE OF THEIR WORDS, ACTIONS, AND EVEN PHYSICAL REMINDERS OF THE WAY GOD'S PEOPLE WERE TO LIVE (DEUTERONOMY 6.5-9).

THE KEEPING OF GOD'S LAW WOULD LEAD TO A GOOD LIFE IN THE LAND BUT IT WOULD ALSO SERVE TO REMIND THE PEOPLE OF GOD'S GRACE. AS THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL WERE SURROUNDED BY NATIONS WHO LIVED DIFFERENTLY, IT WOULD NOT BE UNUSUAL FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS TO ASK WHY THE ISRAELITES LIVED SO DIFFERENTLY. IN THESE INSTANCES, MOSES NOTED THAT PARENTS WERE TO INSTRUCT THEIR CHILDREN THAT THEIR KEEPING OF THE LAW WAS A RESPONSE TO THE GRACIOUS REDEMPTION OF GOD, THEIR LAW-KEEPING POINTING TO THE WORK GOD HAD DONE IN THEIR LIVES, A WORK OF GRACE (DEUTERONOMY 6.20-25).

REAL LIFE WITH BLAKE:

WHAT DO I WANT? HOW I ANSWER THIS QUESTION WILL HAVE A POWERFUL SHAPING INFLUENCE ON MY LIFE. WHAT I WANT THE MOST WILL DEFINE ME THE MOST. THEREFORE, IF I DESIRE TO BE LIKE JESUS, I MUST WANT JESUS. THE PROBLEM IS THAT I DO NOT ALWAYS WANT JESUS. OFTEN, I AM SATISFIED WITH THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD. I AM BEGINNING TO DISCOVER THAT THIS IS NOT TO BE UNEXPECTED. GOD HAS SO GRACIOUSLY FILLED THIS WORLD AND MY LIFE WITH GOODNESS AND RICHNESS THAT IT IS EASY TO BECOME SATIATED. THE THINGS OF GOD CAN EASILY DIMINISH MY DESIRE FOR GOD. ONE MIGHT SAY IT IS EASY TO SETTLE FOR THE GOODNESS OF GOD RATHER THAN SEEKING AFTER THE GOOD GOD. THEREFORE, I MUST WORK TO INCREASE MY DESIRE FOR GOD, BUT HOW DOES THAT WORK? THE ANSWER IS WORSHIP, A REGULAR RHYTHM OF WORSHIPING IN MY EVERYDAY WHICH BRINGS ME FACE TO FACE WITH THE NEVER-STOPPING, ALWAYS-AND-FOREVER LOVE OF GOD. WHAT

DOES THIS WORSHIP LOOK LIKE WHEN IT COMES TO THE TEMPTATION TO BECOME SATISFIED WITH THINGS FROM GOD RATHER THAN MAINTAINING A HUNGER FOR GOD HIMSELF? MOSES SAID IT LOOKS LIKE KEEPING THE LAW AND TEACHING MY FAMILY TO KEEP THE LAW. KEEPING THE LAW MIGHT SOUND LIKE A STRANGE THING FOR A CHRISTIAN TO SAY. ARE WE NOT FREE FROM THE LAW? ACTUALLY, JESUS SAID "NO." WE ARE FREE FROM THE "WORKS OF THE LAW," THOSE ASPECTS WHICH WERE CLEARLY GIVEN TO THE JEWS TO SET THEM OFF AS A UNIQUE PEOPLE. BUT GOD'S PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN EXPECTED TO KEEP THE LAW AS A RESPONSE TO RECEIVING GOD'S GRACE. GOD'S GRACE MAKES A PEOPLE GOD'S SPECIAL PEOPLE, AND GOD'S SPECIAL PEOPLE LIVE ON GOD'S TERMS. THEY KEEP THE LAW. WE DON'T DO IT WITH LISTS OF RULES BUT BY FOCUSING ON LOVING GOD AND NEIGHBOR, BUT ACCORDING TO JESUS THIS LEADS US TO KEEP THE LISTS OF RULES. MOSES' POINT IS THAT IN KEEPING THE LAW AND TEACHING MY FAMILY TO KEEP THE LAW SOMEHOW DEVELOPS A DESIRE FOR GOD. SOMEHOW CHOOSING TO LIVE ON GOD'S TERMS AND CALLING MY FAMILY TO DO THE SAME IN CREATIVE WAYS STIMULATES DESIRE. SOUNDS IMPOSSIBLE, OR AT LEAST HIGHLY UNLIKELY, BUT MOSES WAS SMARTER THAN ME. MOSES SAID THAT KEEPING THE LAW WASN'T JUST ABOUT KEEPING THE LAW. KEEPING THE LAW INVOLVED ASKING THE ALL-IMPORTANT QUESTION, "WHY?" WHY DO WE KEEP THE LAW? IT IS HERE THAT LAW-KEEPING BECOMES WORSHIP.

WHEN I CHOOSE TO LIVE ON GOD'S TERMS AND LEAD MY FAMILY TO DO THE SAME WE WILL FIND OURSELVES LIVING DIFFERENTLY. THIS DIFFERENT REMAINS DIFFERENT UNTIL WE ASK "WHY?" WITH THIS QUESTION DIFFERENT BECOMES WORSHIP. TO ASK "WHY?" IS TO REHEARSE A STORY, THE STORY OF GOD'S GRACIOUS REDEMPTION. TO ASK "WHY?" CAN ONLY BE ANSWERED TRUTHFULLY BY SAYING, "GOD RESCUED US, AND WE LIVE IN LIGHT OF GOD'S RESCUE." THIS IS WORSHIP, A REHEARSAL OF GOD'S STORY, AND IT IS A STORY WHICH REMINDS ME AND MY FAMILY OF GOD'S LOVE BECAUSE GOD'S RESCUE IS BY GRACE. WE DID NOT EARN IT OR DESERVE IT, BUT GOD REACHED US WITH HIS NEVER-STOPPING, ALWAYS AND FOREVER LOVE, AND IN RESPONSE WE LIVE DIFFERENTLY. WE LIVE ON GOD'S TERMS, A WAY OF LIFE WHICH REMINDS US OF THE GOD WHOSE GRACE MADE THIS POSSIBLE.

REAL LIFE WITH YOU:

WHAT DO YOU WANT? THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST FORMATIVE QUESTIONS WE MIGHT ASK ON THE JOURNEY OF DISCIPLESHIP BECAUSE WHAT STIRS OUR HEARTS SHAPES OUR LIVES. ON THE JOURNEY TO BECOME LIKE JESUS, A HEART FIXED UPON JESUS WILL RESULT IN A LIFE WHICH MIRRORS JESUS. HOWEVER, OUR

HEARTS STRUGGLE TO REMAIN FIXED UPON JESUS. NO AMOUNT OF LOGIC OR PROMISING CAN CAUSE OUR HEARTS TO DO OTHERWISE. HOWEVER, WORSHIP CAN DO FOR OUR HEARTS WHAT LOGIC AND PROMISES CANNOT. WORSHIP, THE REHEARSING OF GOD'S STORY IN OUR DAILY LIVES CAN STIR OUR HEARTS, CALLING THEM BACK TO CENTER AS WE REMIND OURSELVES OF WHO GOD IS AND WHAT HE HAS DONE, IS DOING, AND WILL DO. BUT HOW DO WE WORSHIP IN SUCH A MANNER? WE DO SO BY INTENTIONALLY STRUCTURING OUR LIVES SO THAT OUR LIVES TELL GOD'S STORY, BRINGING US FACE TO FACE WITH THE MIGHTY LOVE OF GOD WHICH WOOS OUR HEARTS TO HIS OWN.

ONE SUCH MEANS OF WORSHIPPING IS IN THE INTENTIONAL KEEPING OF GOD'S LAW AND THE INTENTIONAL PASSING DOWN OF THIS WAY OF LIFE TO OUR FAMILIES. IT IS IN THE LIVING OF LIFE ON GOD'S TERMS THAT WE FIND OURSELVES SEPARATE FROM THE WORLD, OUR ATTITUDES, AGENDAS, EVEN OUR LIFE-RHYTHMS DIFFERING NOT JUST IN SCOPE BUT IN SUBSTANCE. HOWEVER, THIS WAY OF LIFE BECOMES WORSHIP WHEN WE ASK WHY WE LIVE IN THIS MANNER. TO ANSWER WHY LEADS US TO THE STORY OF GOD'S REDEMPTION, A REDEMPTION ROOTED IN GRACIOUS LOVE. SO VERY OFTEN WE MISS THIS POWERFUL MEANS OF WORSHIP BECAUSE WE DO NOT SEEK TO LIVE A LIFE ON GOD'S TERMS OR WHEN WE DO WE DO NOT ASK WHY WE LIVE IN THIS MANNER. THIS WEEK YOU MIGHT CONSIDER AN AREA IN WHICH YOU MIGHT SEEK TO LIVE ON GOD'S TERMS AS A FAMILY. THIS MIGHT BE AS SIMPLE AS PICKING UP THE RHYTHM OF SABBATH OR EMPHASIZING THE NECESSITY OF THE OBEDIENCE OF CHILDREN. IN SO DOING, BE SURE TO LOOK FOR CREATIVE WAYS TO DO THIS WHICH GO BEYOND YOUR WORDS, WAYS WHICH INVOLVE YOUR OWN ACTIONS. IN ADDITION, DO NOT FORGET TO ANSWER THE ALL-IMPORTANT QUESTION "WHY?" ANSWERING THIS QUESTION IS WHAT MAKES LIVING ON GOD'S TERMS WORSHIP BECAUSE IT LEADS YOU BACK TO GOD'S GRACIOUS REDEMPTION. WE LIVE ON GOD'S TERMS BECAUSE GOD HAS RESCUED US FROM THE WORLD AND THE WAY IT LIVES TO LIVE IN HIS KINGDOM. THIS LEADS TO A NEW LIFE, A LIFE ON HIS TERMS. HEARING THAT GOD HAS REDEEMED US LEADS US TO RECALL THAT HIS REDEMPTION IS ROOTED IN LOVE AND IT IS THIS LOVE WHICH WOOS OUR HEART BACK TO HIS.



SENIOR
PASTOR
BLAKE
SHIPP



twitter.com/blake_shipp

©2018 UNION CENTER CHRISTIAN CHURCH