

BECOMING LIKE JESUS



# GOING DEEPER

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

MAY 6, 2018

## Discussion Guide

### LITURGY OF RHYTHM

#### 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

- DO YOU HAVE ANY TRADITIONS WHICH YOU KEEP? WHAT MIGHT THESE BE AND WHAT IMPORTANCE DO THEY PLAY IN YOUR LIFE?

#### 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 JEWISH RHYTHMS OF CELEBRATION AND SOLEMN ASSEMBLY.
- READ LEVITICUS 23 ALOUD, PAYING ATTENTION TO THE VARIOUS FEASTS AND FESTIVALS THE LORD COMMANDED THE ISRAELITES TO KEEP.
- WHAT COMMON THEMES EXIST ACROSS ALL OF THE FEASTS AND FESTIVALS? SEEK TO FIND AS MANY AS POSSIBLE.

- EACH OF THESE SACRED DAYS WAS MEANT TO TELL A PIECE OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE STORY. SABBATH REMINDED THE PEOPLE THEY WERE NO LONGER SLAVES (EXODUS 20.1-2), AND THE VARIOUS FEASTS AND FESTIVALS TOLD PIECES OF THAT STORY. WHAT KIND OF EFFECT MIGHT TELLING THE STORY OF GOD'S REDEMPTION THROUGH THE YEAR AND ACROSS THE YEARS HAVE UPON SOMEONE?
- WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE TO LIVE IN THE SAME MANNER TODAY, TELLING GOD'S REDEMPTIVE STORY THROUGH THE YEAR AND ACROSS THE YEARS?
- LIVING OUT THIS KIND OF RHYTHM IS UNCOMMON IN EVANGELICAL CONTEXTS. WHY MIGHT THIS BE THE CASE?
- DO YOU FEEL PICKING UP THIS RHYTHM MIGHT BE BENEFICIAL FOR A CONGREGATION OR GROUP? COULD YOU ELABORATE?
- WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE FOR A PEOPLE TO CONSIDER TAKING UP SUCH A RHYTHM?
- WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE TO KEEP SUCH A RHYTHM AS A GROUP?

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

### FEASTS AND FESTIVALS

THE LIVES OF THE ANCIENT JEWISH PEOPLE WERE PUNCTUATED WITH VARIOUS FEASTS AND FESTIVALS WHICH ARE STILL OBSERVED IN THE PRESENT. THE ORIGINAL FEASTS AND FESTIVALS WERE SPECIAL DAYS SET ASIDE TO COME AND EXPRESS GRATITUDE FOR SUCCESSFUL HARVESTS, TO REMEMBER THE SAVING ACTIONS OF GOD, AND TO SET THE JEWISH PEOPLE APART AS A HOLY/SEPARATE PEOPLE. NO FEWER THAN FIVE CALENDARS PRESCRIBING THESE SPECIAL DAYS ARE FOUND IN

THE TORAH INDICATING THE HIGH IMPORTANCE PLACED UPON HONORING THESE DAYS (EXODUS 23.14-17; 34.18-26; LEVITICUS 23; NUMBERS 28-29; DEUTERONOMY 16.1-17).

AS THEY ARE LAID OUT, THE PRESCRIBED FEASTS AND FESTIVALS FOLLOW THE AGRICULTURAL YEAR. PASSOVER, THE OFFERING OF FIRSTFRUITS, AND PENTECOST OR THE FESTIVAL OF WEEKS WERE ALL SPRING FEASTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE BARLEY AND WHEAT HARVESTS. THE FESTIVAL OF TRUMPETS, DAY OF ATONEMENT, AND THE FESTIVAL OF TABERNACLES WERE ALL FALL FEASTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE HARVEST OF FIGS, GRAPES, AND OLIVES. TYING THESE FESTIVALS AND FEASTS TO PERIODS OF HARVEST GAVE THE JEWS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ACKNOWLEDGE GOD'S GRACIOUS PROVISION AS CAN BE SEEN IN THE PRESCRIBED GIFTS AND OFFERINGS ASSOCIATED WITH THESE DAYS. HOWEVER, THE PURPOSE OF THESE FEASTS WENT BEYOND A SPIRIT OF THANKFULNESS FOR FOOD. AS MOSES MADE CLEAR, THESE FEASTS AND FESTIVALS WERE MEANT TO REHEARSE THE STORY OF GOD'S DELIVERANCE OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL FROM THEIR BONDAGE IN EGYPT. PASSOVER REMINDED THE JEWS OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE MOVEMENT IN EGYPT (DEUTERONOMY 16.1,3). THE OFFERING OF FIRSTFRUITS WAS INTENDED TO REMIND THE PEOPLE THAT THE LAND IN WHICH THEY LIVED WAS A GIFT FROM GOD (DEUTERONOMY 26.1-2). PENTECOST TOLD THE STORY OF GOD'S GRACE EXPERIENCED BY A POWERLESS AND UNDESERVING PEOPLE IN THE EXODUS, A GRACE TO BE EXTENDED TO OTHERS (LEVITICUS 23.22; DEUTERONOMY 16.12). THE FESTIVAL OF TRUMPETS AND DAY OF ATONEMENT REMINDED THE ISRAELITES OF THEIR NEED FOR GRACE AND THE NEED TO DEPEND ON GRACE TO LIVE AS GOD'S SPECIAL PEOPLE (LEVITICUS 16.34). THE FESTIVAL OF TABERNACLES WAS INTENDED TO REHEARSE THE WILDERNESS WANDERINGS OF THE PEOPLE AS THEY JOURNEYED TO CANAAN (LEVITICUS 23.43).

IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE THAT EACH OF THESE FEASTS AND FESTIVALS REST UPON THE ONGOING OBSERVANCE OF SABBATH, THEMSELVES SPECIAL SABBATHS. GOD INTENDED THE KEEPING OF THE SABBATH TO BE AN ONGOING CELEBRATION WHICH ACKNOWLEDGED GOD'S CREATIVE SOVEREIGNTY (EXODUS 20.11). HOWEVER, MOSES TAUGHT THE ISRAELITES THAT THE SABBATH ITSELF TOLD THE STORY OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE MOVEMENT IN THEIR LIVES, THE SETTING ASIDE OF A DAY TO REST, A LOUD PRONOUNCEMENT THAT THE ISRAELITES WERE NO LONGER SLAVES (EXODUS 20.1-2).

GREAT CONTROVERSY HAS BEEN HAD OVER WHETHER CHRISTIANS SHOULD OBSERVE THESE JEWISH FEASTS AND FESTIVALS. EARLY FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST HONORED THESE FESTIVALS BECAUSE

THEY WERE PART OF THEIR JEWISH HERITAGE AND IDENTITY, AND BECAUSE JESUS OBSERVED THESE SPECIAL DAYS. IN HIS DEFENSE OF CHRISTIANITY (AGAINST CELSUS), ORIGIN DEFENDED THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S DAY (SABBATH), PASSOVER, THE FEAST OF PREPARATION, AND PENTECOST. HE ARGUED THAT NO ONE WAS FREE FROM THE FLESHLY PULL ON THEIR HUMAN NATURES AND THESE FESTIVALS AND FEASTS PROVIDED A MEANS FOR BELIEVERS TO KEEP THEIR ATTENTION ON SPIRITUAL REALITIES. HOWEVER, JOHN CHRYSOSTOM URGED HIS CONGREGATION NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE SPECIAL DAYS BECAUSE THEY WERE INHABITED WITH DEMONS!

CALVIN PROVIDED HELPFUL INSIGHT WHEN HE POINTED OUT THAT PAUL ADDRESSED WHETHER BELIEVERS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THESE SPECIAL DAYS IN COLOSSIANS 2.16-17. IN THIS TEXT, PAUL TELLS THE COLOSSIAN CHRISTIANS THEY SHOULD NOT ALLOW ANYONE TO JUDGE THEM FOR KEEPING OR NOT KEEPING TO THE PATTERN OF HONORING THE RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS. WHAT WAS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER IS THAT THESE SPECIAL DAYS POINTED TO A GREATER REALITY, JESUS HIMSELF. IN OTHER WORDS, FOLLOWERS OF JESUS WERE FREE TO OBSERVE OR NOT OBSERVE THESE DAYS, BUT THEY NEEDED TO REMEMBER THAT THESE DAYS WERE IMPORTANT PRECURSORS POINTING TO JESUS. IT IS THEREFORE NOT SURPRISING TO READ PAUL REFERRING TO JESUS' REDEMPTIVE WORK IN LANGUAGE THAT REFERS TO THE JEWISH FEASTS AND FESTIVALS (1 CORINTHIANS 5.7; 1 CORINTHIANS 15.20).

IN CHOOSING WHETHER TO HONOR THE JEWISH RHYTHM OF FEASTS AND FESTIVALS, IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT THE LAW POINTS TO A LIFE GOD INTENDED HIS PEOPLE TO LIVE (MATTHEW 5.17-48; 22.37-40). IT IS THEREFORE NOT THAT THESE SPECIFIC DAYS ARE IMPORTANT BUT THE LIFE TO WHICH HONORING THESE DAYS POINTS. THE LAW POINTS TO AN INTENTIONAL KEEPING OF A RHYTHM OF SPECIAL DAYS WHICH REMIND THE PEOPLE OF GOD OF HIS SOVEREIGNTY AND REDEMPTIVE ACTION IN THEIR LIVES. THEREFORE, A BELIEVER MIGHT CHOOSE TO HONOR THESE JEWISH DAYS, AS THE MESSIANIC JEWS HAVE CHOSEN TO DO, SO LONG AS THEY DO SO TO REMEMBER GOD AND HIS REDEMPTIVE ACTION. HOWEVER, A BELIEVER MIGHT CHOOSE TO HONOR DIFFERENT DAYS SUCH AS CHRISTMAS, EASTER, PENTECOST, AND OTHERS BECAUSE THESE TELL THE STORY OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE ACTION THROUGH CHRIST. WHICHEVER PATH IS CHOSEN, THE POINT IS TO LIVE BY A RHYTHM WHICH REMINDS THE BELIEVER OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND REDEMPTIVE ACTION.

## THE TEXT

### LEVITICUS 23: KEEPING A RHYTHM OF CELEBRATION

THE JEWISH PEOPLE ORDERED THEIR LIVES AROUND A RHYTHM OF CELEBRATION. ONCE A WEEK, THE PEOPLE OF GOD PAUSED FROM THEIR NORMAL WORK AND TURNED TO GOD WITH SOMETHING CALLED SABBATH. THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, THEY KEPT A RHYTHM OF PRESCRIBED FESTIVALS AND FEASTS. THE JEWISH YEAR BEGAN WITH THE FESTIVAL OF TRUMPETS, FOLLOWED BY THE DAY OF ATONEMENT AND FESTIVAL OF TABERNACLES. ALMOST HALF-WAY THROUGH THE YEAR, THE PEOPLE CELEBRATED PASSOVER, THE OFFERING OF FIRSTFRUITS, AND PENTECOST (THE FESTIVAL OF WEEKS). EACH OF THESE SPECIAL DAYS WAS A SPECIAL SABBATH, A DAY TO COME TOGETHER AND EXPRESS DEVOTION TO GOD FOR HIS PAST ACTS OF GOODNESS AND REDEMPTION.

WHETHER THE ISRAELITES WERE CELEBRATING THE WEEKLY SABBATH OR A SPECIAL SABBATH FESTIVAL, CERTAIN ELEMENTS WERE ALWAYS PRESENT. FIRST, THESE DAYS WERE UNDERSTOOD TO BE SPECIAL AND SET APART DAY MEANT TO BE OBSERVED BY ALL OF GOD'S PEOPLE (LEVITICUS 23.2, 3, 7, 8, 21, 24, 35, 36, 37). THESE DAYS WERE OPPORTUNITIES MEANT TO INCLUDE AND BRING TOGETHER THE ENTIRE NATION FOR A SINGLE PURPOSE. SECOND, THESE DAYS WERE MEANT TO BE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM OTHER DAYS. THE ISRAELITES WERE TO TURN ASIDE FROM THEIR ORDINARY RHYTHMS AND ACTIVITIES (LEVITICUS 23.3, 7, 8, 21, 25, 28, 31, 35, 36). FINALLY, THESE DAYS WERE TO BE HONORED THROUGHOUT THE LIVES OF INDIVIDUALS AND ACROSS GENERATIONS (LEVITICUS 23.14, 21, 41).

ON THE SURFACE, THE KEEPING OF THIS RHYTHM OF HONORING SPECIAL DAYS GAVE STRUCTURE TO THE LIVES OF THE ISRAELITES, MARKING THE SEASONS OF THE AGRICULTURAL YEAR. AS SUCH, THESE DAYS GAVE THE JEWS REGULAR OPPORTUNITIES TO ACKNOWLEDGE GOD'S ONGOING GOODNESS AND PROVISION. HOWEVER, THE PURPOSE OF THIS RHYTHM OF CELEBRATION RAN MUCH DEEPER THAN ORGANIZING THE YEAR. THE KEEPING OF THIS RHYTHM OF CELEBRATION WAS MEANT TO REHEARSE GOD'S STORY, TO BREAK INTO THESE HIGH POINTS OF THE AGRICULTURAL YEAR AND REMIND THE JEWS OF WHAT GOD HAD DONE IN THEIR LIVES. THE KEEPING OF THE WEEKLY SABBATH ACKNOWLEDGED GOD'S CREATIVE SOVEREIGNTY AND THE REALITY THAT HE INTENDED LIFE TO FOLLOW A SET RHYTHM (EXODUS 20.11), BUT IT ALSO WAS THE REGULAR REMINDER THAT THE JEWS WERE NO LONGER SLAVES. THEY WERE FREE NOT TO WORK SEVEN DAYS A WEEK BECAUSE GOD HAD RESCUED THEM (EXODUS 20.1-2). AS SPECIAL SABBATHS, THE VARIOUS FEASTS AND FESTIVALS REHEARSED VARIOUS PARTS

OF THE STORY OF GOD'S RESCUE. THE PASSOVER RETOLD THE STORY OF GOD'S MIRACULOUS DELIVERANCE OF THE ISRAELITES FROM THE HANDS OF THE EGYPTIANS (DEUTERONOMY 16.1, 3). PENTECOST AND FIRSTFRUITS REHEARSED THE STORY OF GOD'S GRACIOUS PROVISION IN GIVING THE JEWS THE LAND OF CANAAN (LEVITICUS 23.22; DEUTERONOMY 16.12; 26.1-2). THE FESTIVAL OF BOOTHS REMINDED THE ISRAELITES OF THEIR WILDERNESS WANDERING (LEVITICUS 23.43), AND THE FESTIVAL OF TRUMPETS AND DAY OF ATONEMENT REHEARSED THE NEED FOR AND GIFT OF GOD'S GRACE (NUMBERS 29; LEVITICUS 16.34). WHEN THE JEWS KEPT THESE FEASTS AND REFLECTED UPON WHY THEY KEPT THEM, THEY CAME FACE TO FACE WITH THE STORY OF WHAT GOD HAD DONE IN THEIR LIVES, A FORM OF WORSHIP.

### 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. BECAUSE THIS IS TRUE, GOD WANTS ME TO WANT HIM THE MOST, BUT MOST OF THE TIME I DO NOT. MY HEART IS BENT AWAY FROM HIM, LONGING AFTER THINGS FROM HIM MORE THAN FOR HIM. SO, I AM LEARNING TO REORIENT MY HEART THROUGH WORSHIP, REHEARSING GOD'S STORY SO I MIGHT BE REMINDED OF HIS LOVE AND LONGING FOR ME. ONE WAY OF DOING THIS IS BY LIVING BY A RHYTHM OF CELEBRATION AND SOLEMN ASSEMBLY.

GOD INSTRUCTED THE JEWISH PEOPLE TO LIVE BY A RHYTHM, A RHYTHM WHERE THEY PAUSED TO ACKNOWLEDGE GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND HIS REDEMPTIVE WORK IN THEIR LIVES. LATELY, I HAVE BEEN PONDERING WHAT IT MIGHT LOOK TO LIVE IN A SIMILAR WAY. THE JEWS LIVED BY A RHYTHM THAT INTENTIONALLY BROKE INTO THE NORMAL PATTERNS OF LIFE, EVEN THE HIGH POINTS OF LIFE, TO POINT THEM BACK TO GOD. THEY DID IT AS A COMMUNITY, TOGETHER, AND THEY MADE THESE DAYS SPECIAL, BREAKING FROM ANYTHING WHICH SMACKED OF THE ORDINARY. THEY DID IT TO TELL A SINGLE STORY, THE STORY OF REDEMPTION.

IF I WERE TO LIVE IN THE SAME MANNER, I MIGHT START WITH CHRISTMAS, AND INCLUDE EASTER AND PENTECOST, BUT THEN WHAT? IT DOESN'T TAKE LONG BEFORE I REALIZE THAT I HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO STRUCTURE MY LIFE IN THIS MANNER. EVEN ON THE DAYS I CAN IDENTIFY, I MUST ADMIT THAT MUCH OF WHAT IS INVOLVED SMACKS OF CULTURE AROUND ME. IN OTHER WORDS, THEY ARE NOT REALLY ALL THAT SPECIAL. THINK FOR A MOMENT. HOW IS CHRISTMAS SPECIAL WHEN THE WAY I HONOR IT LOOKS JUST LIKE THE WORLD? IS THAT SPECIAL OR IS THAT

KEEPING THINGS IN THE CATEGORY OF ORDINARY? I AM BEGINNING TO THINK THE ANSWER IS THE LATTER. THE WHOLE LIVING BY A RHYTHM OF CELEBRATION IS QUICKLY OVERWHELMING UNTIL I REALIZE THAT I DON'T HAVE TO REINVENT THE WHEEL. THE CHURCH LONG AGO DEVELOPED SUCH A RHYTHM, A CALENDAR OF SPECIAL DAYS AND SEASONS FOR THE VERY PURPOSE OF RETELLING GOD'S STORY OF REDEMPTION. IT IS JUST NOT A PART OF MY STREAM OF CHRISTIANITY, BUT I CAN DRAW FROM OTHER STREAMS!

FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, THE PEOPLE OF GOD HAVE LIVED BY A SET RHYTHM OF CELEBRATION AND SOLEMN ASSEMBLY, TELLING GOD'S STORY WITH A REGULAR PAUSING AND REHEARSING OF WHAT GOD HAS DONE, IS DOING, AND ONE DAY WILL DO. CHRISTMASTIDE AND EPIPHANY LEAD THE PEOPLE OF GOD TO REHEARSE THE STORY OF CHRIST'S BIRTH. LENT CALLS BELIEVERS TO REFLECT UPON CHRIST'S PASSION. EASTERTIDE IS A REHEARSAL OF THE RESURRECTION, PENTECOST THE REHEARSAL OF THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. ORDINARY TIME REHEARSES THE DAILY INTERACTIONS OF GOD IN OUR LIVES, AND ADVENT POINTS TO THE FUTURE COMING OF CHRIST AND JUDGEMENT. THEN IT STARTS AGAIN BECAUSE THE STORY DOES NOT CHANGE. WE JUST NEED TO BE REMINDED. THE FRAMEWORK ALREADY EXISTS. I DON'T HAVE TO CREATE IT. WHAT I REALLY NEED IS A PEOPLE WITH WHOM TO CELEBRATE, A PEOPLE WITH WHOM I CAN LIVE IN RHYTHM. I FIND THIS HARDER. SOME OF THIS DIFFICULTY STEMS FROM OUR PROTESTANT UNFAMILIARITY AND DISTRUST OF ANCIENT RHYTHMS OF THE CHURCH, ONE OF THE MORE TRAGIC OUTCOMES OF THE REFORMATION. HOWEVER, I FIND THE MOST DIFFICULT ISSUE IS THE CONFLICT WHICH PURSUING ANY RHYTHM CREATES.

AS A PEOPLE, WE LIVE BY A SINGLE RHYTHM. WE GO AND GO UNTIL WE DROP. THEN WE GO AGAIN. WE ARE NOT A PEOPLE (I AM NOT A PERSON) WHO LIKES TO STOP. THERE SEEMS TO BE NO BENEFIT TO STOPPING. WE ARE NOT "ACCOMPLISHING" ANYTHING. CONVINCING MYSELF AND OTHERS TO STOP, TO SET ASIDE TIME, TO LIVE BY A RHYTHM OF ANY SORT IS MORE THAN DIFFICULT. BUT I AM BEGINNING TO WONDER IF IT JUST MIGHT BE WORTH IT. IN MY GOING, I BECOME WEARY. I WONDER WHERE GOD IS. I WONDER WHAT GOD IS DOING. I WONDER IF HE WILL EVER FULFILL HIS PROMISES. GOD SEEMS SO DISTANT, BUT THEN AGAIN, I AM NEVER STOPPING. PERHAPS IN MY STOPPING, MY STOPPING WITH OTHERS, I MIGHT REMEMBER. I MIGHT REMEMBER WHAT GOD HAS DONE, IS DOING, AND ONE DAY WILL DO. I MIGHT REMEMBER AND IN REMEMBERING I MIGHT ENCOUNTER, ENCOUNTER THE GOD I FEEL IS SO VERY DISTANT FROM EVERYDAY LIFE. IT JUST REQUIRES THE STOPPING TO CELEBRATE AND REMEMBER.

## 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. IF WE WANT TO BECOME LIKE CHRIST, THEN WE MUST LEARN TO WANT CHRIST. THIS REQUIRES WORSHIP, THE CONSTANT AND INTENTIONAL REHEARSAL OF GOD'S STORY SO THAT WE MIGHT BEND OUR DESIRE TOWARD GOD. ONE MEANS OF DOING THIS IS CHOOSING TO LIVE BY A RHYTHM OF CELEBRATION AND SOLEMN ASSEMBLY. THIS PRACTICE IS BASED UPON THE JEWISH YEAR WHICH WAS MARKED WITH WEEKLY AND SEASONAL GATHERINGS TO REHEARSE THE STORY OF GOD'S REDEMPTION IN THEIR LIVES. THE CHURCH HAS A SIMILAR CALENDAR. THIS CALENDAR BEGINS WITH THE BIRTH OF CHRIST AND MOVES THROUGH THE HIGH POINTS OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE WORK THROUGH CHRIST ENDING WITH THE SECOND COMING AND REPEATING AGAIN. WHILE THIS RHYTHM HAS EXISTED FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, MANY EVANGELICALS ARE WARY OF THIS RHYTHM, A TRAGIC RESULT OF ONE OF THE DARKER ASPECTS OF THE REFORMATION. HOWEVER, WE NEED NOT FEAR ANY RHYTHM WHICH REHEARSSES THE STORY OF CHRIST! WE NEED NOT FILL IT WITH ACTIVITIES WHICH DO NOT FIT OUR OWN CONTEXT OR THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK. IT IS THE INTENTIONAL LIVING OUT OF A RHYTHM WHICH TELLS THIS STORY WHICH IS IMPORTANT, BUT THIS TAKES COMMUNITY. THIS IS WHERE THIS KIND OF LIFE GENERALLY FALLS APART. BUT WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE TO GATHER WITH FRIENDS OR A SMALL GROUP TO HONOR THIS RHYTHM OF REMEMBERING AND REHEARSING? WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE TO DO THIS AS A FAMILY? WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE TO ENCOURAGE LEADERS TO GUIDE CONGREGATIONS TO KEEP THIS RHYTHM? ANSWERING THESE QUESTIONS IS NOT ALWAYS EASY, BUT THE RESULTS CAN BE WORTH THE WRESTLING, FOR IN THEIR ANSWERING WE FIND A PEOPLE, OUR PEOPLE WITH WHOM WE JOIN TO TELL GOD'S STORY.



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