



Table Group Weekly Experience

September 20, 2020

Mixer

What is your favorite thing about this Fall season?

Connect

1. Wilderness Rule #3: In the wilderness, we have to choose soul care over self-pity or we will self-medicate. Give an example of what you/your family did to practice soul care this week.
2. What is an obsessive something that you need to have control over in order for you to have enjoyment, and why? What is the reality? What could you change to bring about the result you are looking for?
3. What is your biggest takeaway from the *Into the Wild* message series in regards to how you can finish 2020 well?

Sermon Questions

Numbers 21:4-9, Matthew 4:1; John 3:14-16; Hebrews 12:1-2

1. Discuss Numbers 21:4-9. What came to your mind when God sent poisonous snakes as His response? Why is vs 6 such a shocking and unexpected thing for God to do? Pastor Jared described it as a "severe act of God's mercy." What did He mean? How are God's mercy and love related?
2. Is God a different God in vs 8 than He is in vs 6? Has this question ever been a stumbling block for you? Do you fear the God who would allow "more snakes" in your life even though you prayed for Him to remove them? How did this story of the Israelites bring the assurance of His goodness into your story?

3. Pastor Jared showed us a correlation between Numbers 21:8 and John 3:14-16. He referred to Jesus as a "new kind of Moses." What did he mean? How was Moses a foreshadow of the Jesus to come?
4. Wilderness Rule #4: In the wilderness, focus on what you can control. You can't control where your feet are going, but you can control where your eyes are looking. Pastor Jared taught that to have calm, we need to have something beautiful to look at. Why is the cross of Jesus Christ that beautiful thing? How can we see the cross of Jesus Christ as a healing place?
(If you still are not sure about Jesus, let your group help you, or ask your table group leader to talk one-on-one.)

Go Deeper

Around The Church at RB, we believe Jesus is for everyone. You might remember back to last year at this time, we did an all-church study called *Seriously* and why we take Jesus seriously. If you have your book from last year, pull it out and go through it again and see what has changed in a year's time.

If you remember back to that study, Pastor Jared did a message using buckets and what we put into them and carry around with us: buckets of convictions, beliefs and opinions. We defined the conviction bucket this way: A conviction is what you would die for. Beliefs are the things we would certainly fight for, but not necessarily die for. And our opinions are the things we would express, leaving room to be wrong.

As a church that follows Jesus, John 3:16 is the central thing we would put in our conviction bucket:

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

But the Israelites, freed from slavery in Egypt by The God (not a god) who loves them and is their Savior, had their buckets all confused. It seems that their conviction bucket had a whole lot of opinions created by untrue beliefs. And their story is our story - we are carrying around the wrong bucket and it is heavy and exhausting. This week, spend some time cleaning some things out that don't belong in any of our buckets and put in the right things. Reflect on these questions to guide you:

1. If John 3:16 is in your conviction bucket, how is that the answer for when you face the dangers of the wilderness? Do you find any inspiration from Matthew 4:1?
2. If John 3:16 is not in your conviction bucket, are there beliefs or opinions in the other buckets holding you back? Can you find someone to talk these out with?

3. Looking back at the Israelites' story in Numbers 21, why was verse 7 pivotal to their story? What is repentance, and why is it pivotal to your relationship with God?
4. In John 3, Jesus has a conversation with Nicodemus in which Jesus tells him a person must be 'born again' to see the Kingdom of God (vs 3). Nicodemus is confused. What does Jesus mean in verses 5-6? What has been your belief about how a person gets to heaven? What needs to be pulled out of your belief bucket, and what would you replace it with? What scriptures would serve as your new focus - like the snake on the pole, like the Son of Man lifted up before you? What is the hope?
5. As you organize your buckets this week, look back on what was shaken out of your tree in the Into The Wild series. If you can get Jesus squarely in your conviction bucket, then try putting these verses in your beliefs bucket: 2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 John 3:1, and Romans 8:38-39. What other verses could you put in your beliefs bucket?
6. Finally, take a look at your opinions bucket. Has it gotten any lighter? If the Israelites' story is your story, the patterns of looking at life and God are the same. Spend some time seriously reflecting on every word of John 3:16. Put your name in that verse and see how that helps this week!

Pray This Week

Pray for clarity this week, personally and globally. 2020 is a roller coaster of emotions during an uncertain time, but despite the uncertainty there is clarity. The clarity is God, who is ever present, ever knowing and will not forsake us. May you cling to the clarity of our loving God!