



Sermon Discussion Questions

November 24, 2024

In the Wilderness

MOVE INTO THE FUTURE GOD'S PREPARED

Numbers 33:50-56

1. **Opening Discussion Questions:** (in a group setting you may not want to use all of these)

- a. What was the most memorable set of instructions you have ever received from someone you loved before setting out on a new stage of life or journey? Perhaps it was something as significant as what your parents told you as you left for college or got married. Or maybe something as simple as recommendations for the route on a road trip that you chose to ignore – and paid the price. Describe the experience. How did you react to the instructions at the time they were given? Did the passing of time change your view?
- b. Did your family have a rule, formal or otherwise, about how things were to be shared/allocated/divided between siblings and other family members? If you had a cake or pie was everyone given the same sized piece or was there some other approach? Were there ever situations where someone got preferential treatment (the oldest, the birthday child, etc.)? Did you always find the allocation or division to your liking?

2. **Sermon Outline/Key Points**

- a. God Gave Israel Clear Instructions to Move into Their Future.
 - i. God had prepared the land for them to conquer
 - ii. God gave clear instructions for His people's blessing
 - iii. God was clear about the consequences for disobedience
- b. God Has Prepared a Glorious Future for Us in Christ
 - i. Our future isn't an earthly country, it's an eternal inheritance!
 - ii. Don't be afraid of the future, move into it in Christ
 - iii. If you're struggling with fear, worry, or doubt about the future, think on God's promises
- c. Our Instructions Are to Make Disciples as We Move Forward
 - i. We aren't tasked with earthly conquest of countries or territories
 - ii. Your work that God's prepared is making disciples

3. **Study/Discussion Points:**

- a. *Sunday Afternoon*
 - i. As soon as possible after listening to the sermon set aside some time to ponder these questions prayerfully:
 - ii. What one thing most stood out to you in this sermon?
 - iii. What new truth did you learn or of what truth were you reminded?

- iv. After listening to the sermon, is there a Scripture passage you feel led to meditate on or commit to memory this week?
- v. What is one thing you feel God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
- vi. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?

b. Monday:

- i. Read Numbers 33:50-56.
- ii. Can you identify three separate instructions/commands that God gives the Israelites through Moses in these verses? These instructions repeat promises and commands that He gave earlier:
 1. Read Genesis 15:18-21. Where is this promise found in the passage?
 2. Read Numbers 26:52-56. Where is this instruction found in the passage?
 3. Read Exodus 23:23-33. Where is this detailed command found in the passage?
- iii. Why do you think God felt it necessary to remind the Israelites of these promises and commands at this particular time (the first 8 verses of Deuteronomy may help you answer)?
- iv. What did God promise Israel would happen if they didn't drive out the inhabitants? If you are familiar with the overall story of the Old Testament, how is this a prophetic statement? How and when is it fulfilled (see 2 Kings 17:7-20)?

c. Tuesday:

- i. One of the most common objections that non-Christians, and sometimes even professing Christians, have to the Bible is the way it describes God's instructions for dealing with the inhabitants of the land west of the Jordan. Read Numbers 33:52 and then compare it to these passages:
 1. Exodus 23:23-33 & 34:11-17
 2. Leviticus 20:1-5 & 22-26
 3. Deuteronomy 7:1-6, 12:29-31, 13:6-18, & 29:16-28
- ii. While Numbers 33:52 states it rather nicely, what was God's full intention for the people occupying the land?
 1. What are the two reasons for God's command that they be treated this way? (see Genesis 15:16, Exodus 23:25, and Deuteronomy 7:6)
 2. In what way was God's decision both a punishment for the sins of those nations and an act of mercy for the Israelites?
 3. Purely hypothetical, but how do you think Israel's history would have been different if they had obeyed God on this point?

d. Wednesday:

- i. Think back over yesterday's lesson where we considered God's command

regarding the inhabitants of the land and the consequences of disobedience.

1. In what ways does God's command to drive out the inhabitants of the land reflect His holiness and justice? Is there any reason to think that these attributes have changed since the time of Moses (see Numbers 23:19, 1 Samuel 15:29, Psalm 102:25-27, and James 1:17)
2. What application do you see to Christian life today? If God expected the Israelites to obey and drive out the inhabitants of the land is there any reason, we should think He does not expect us to follow His commands, particularly those of the New Testament?
- ii. God's commands come in both negative ("Thou shall not ...", e.g., Exodus 20:3-7 & 13-17)) and positive ("Thou shall ...", e.g., Deuteronomy 6:4-5 & Leviticus 19:18b) forms. When you think of obedience which do you tend to focus on most?
 1. What are some of the New Testament examples of each form?
 2. When you recognize sin in your life is it most often for doing what you have been commanded not to do or is it for not doing what you have been clearly instructed to do?
 3. Read Romans 6:15-18. Which form of God's commands would being "slaves to sin" seem to most apply? Which form would "become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching" seem to relate most?

e. Thursday:

- i. Reread the focal passage, Numbers 33:50-56. What particular blessing did God promise the Israelites would be in their future?
- ii. Read Ephesians 1:3-14. According to this passage, how do our blessings compare to those promised to the Israelites?
 1. In this passage Paul talks about our blessings in terms of our redemption, our forgiveness, our adoption, our inheritance, and our assurance (guarantee). How do you understand each of these? In your view, which is most significant (important)?
 2. Compare Romans 8:12-17.
 - a. What is a necessary precondition to being an heir (receiving an inheritance – see also Galatians 3:29 & 4:7)?
 - b. According to both the Ephesians and Romans passages what role does the Holy Spirit play?
 3. Three times in Ephesians 1:3-14 Paul repeats God's purpose in giving these blessings. What is His purpose (see verses 5-6, 12, & 14)? If (since) that is God's purpose, how should it influence the way we live?

f. Friday:

- i. We saw yesterday that the Holy Spirit is the guarantee of our adoption and our inheritance. Read Galatians 5:16-26.

1. How does this passage relate the Holy Spirit's work in our life to the subject of obedience and disobedience we considered earlier in the week?
 2. Which type of God's command (negative or positive) does the list of "works of the flesh" represent? When Paul says in verse 18 that we are "not under the law" is he giving us permission to do such things (see Romans 6:15)? What is he actually telling us (see Romans 3:23-24)?
 3. When we read the acts of the flesh listed in verses 19-21 we sometimes tend to focus on the first few and the last couple. Why would we be likely to do so? What changes if we focus instead on the middle part of the list?
- ii. The Israelites had much they could be afraid of as they entered the Promised Land but God repeatedly commanded that they "fear not." (Deuteronomy 1:21, 3:22, & 31:6-8, and Joshua 10:8).
1. Why should we not fear the future God has planned for us?
 2. What help do Romans 8:31-39 and 1 John 4:15-19 provide as we face uncertain futures?

g. Saturday:

- i. Read Matthew 28:18-20 and Matthew 5:44 & 22:32.
 1. How are these two commands related?
 2. Is it possible to obey one and ignore the other? Can I really make disciples if I don't love others? Conversely, if I love others as myself can I avoid making disciples?
- ii. God provides a slew of examples of what it means to "love others as myself" in the "one another" commands. Use a concordance to locate some of these commands. How does obeying these "one another" commands promote making disciples (see John 17:21-23)

4. Application:

- a. As Protestants we place great emphasis on the truth of Ephesians 2:8-9 which teaches that we are saved by grace, not by our actions. While this is absolutely true and cannot be over-emphasized, we must not ignore the next verse in Ephesians: "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Are you obeying God and performing the good works He has prepared for you?
- b. Think about this statement: "If we do not drive sin out, sin will soon drive us out—out of God's will, out of God's blessing." Are you missing some of God's blessings because of unrepentant sin? What active steps are you taking to drive sin out of your life, and prevent it from returning? Who do you rely on to do so?

5. Prayer Points:

- a. Adoration – Psalms 8:1 and 29:1-2
- b. Confession – Proverbs 28:13 and 1 John 1:8-10
- c. Thanksgiving – Psalms 95:1-2 and 100:4-5
- d. Supplications –Matthew 21:22 and John 16:19