

COMMUNITY GROUP LEADER GUIDE

SPRING 2021 WEEK 8

LEADER NOTES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

⇒ JOURNEY CLASSES SUMMER SERIES

Join us this summer for 4-week classes that will help you to deepen your faith, grow biblically, and be challenged to follow Jesus in new ways.

The first 4-week session will be an Old Testament Flyby—June 16-July 7
Wednesday Nights 6:30-8pm at the church studio (575 Dawson Drive)

*There will also be another 4-week class called Multiply—Discipleship in 2021
taught by Pastor Dustin—July 14-August 4th

Sign up today at www.journeythechurch.org/community

Email jeremy@journeythechurch.org for more info.

⇒ KIDZ ROCK

Children's ministry is back for our socially-distanced, in-person gatherings. All kids classes are now open! 10am on Sundays.

For more info email: ashley@journeythechurch.org

⇒ JUNIOR HIGH

Meets every Tuesday night 6:30-8pm at the church studio (575 Dawson Drive).

For more info email: ashley@journeythechurch.org

⇒ FIRESIDE HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY

Meets every Wednesday night 7-8:30pm. Instagram: @firesideatjourney

For more info email: journeyfireside@gmail.com

⇒ CARE CARDS

Submit your prayer requests: On the website: <https://journeythechurch.org/contact>

- Through the Journey app: Select the CARE CARD tile on the app homepage

⇒ WAYS TO GIVE

Thank you for your faithfulness in giving! You can either give online (through the website, by the Journey app, or even text to give—instructions can be found at <http://journeythechurch.org/give>) or you can mail in your giving to:

Journey The Church P.O. Box 235 Somis, CA 93066.

LEADER INFO

This is it for summer folks! Thank you for your faithfulness over the past 8 weeks and beyond! We've gone through some challenging stuff, but hopefully we grew and changed because of it too! We won't resume until September, but feel free to keep in touch with your group, do meet ups, BBQs, beach trips, whatever! You can always continue to meet or even as individuals or groups engage in some of our classes this summer (it's not too late to sign up!). Blessings on you!

And one note for the study tonight, don't forget the "Concluding Deuteronomy" section—feel free to jump ahead to it, but it's a definite don't-want-to-miss-it section.

HAPPILY EVER AFTER? THE HAPPIEST PLACE ON EARTH?

The fairy tales, the adventure, the magic—Disney—not to mention the \$154 single day ticket, lines to infinity and beyond, \$25 parking, and paying \$14 for air and sugar (aka cotton candy shaped like a mouse). Sure, it can be happily ever after and the happiest place on earth, but here are some true confessionals—5 of the craziest things witnessed in Walt Disney's Magical Kingdom :

5. This Inappropriate Memorial

"I worked custodial for a few months, and one of the stories I heard was after someone reported a weird dust/sand on one of the rides. Someone decided to spread their loved ones ashes on the ride. Yes, the ride had to be closed down and cleaned. I don't care how much your dear aunt Mary loved Disney, The Haunted Mansion is NOT a good place for her ashes!"

4. This Sea-riously Weird Observation

"While sitting with my friend in front of Small World, I noticed something was crawling slowly past me. It was an actual live lobster crawling along the pathway. As I shouted to my friend to look at it, one of the Cast Members walked nonchalantly up and grabbed the lobster saying, 'Now how did you get out?' He then proceeded to throw the lobster into the waters directly behind us. Long story short, Disneyland breeds their own lobsters."

3. This Money-saving Technique

"One warm day when I was working in Fantasyland, this dad was appalled at how expensive the little fan/spray bottle things were. He refused to buy one for his kids, claiming he had a better idea. A little while later when I was leaving, I saw him take a big gulp of water and then spit/spray it out onto his two little girls."

2. Bomb Dog

Someone had left an abandoned bag at the base of Space Mountain for more than 15 minutes, so we followed the normal security procedures and they brought a bomb dog "Pluto" out to sniff it. When our Pluto came to check the bag, he sniffed it and then sat down—which signals there is something wrong with this bag. So we had to evacuate all of Tomorrowland, literally all of the attractions/stores/restaurants, and all the cast members were standing at all the entrances freaking out because now of course we were sure a bomb was going to go off and we would all die. Turned out that the backpack was just forgotten, full of

carne asada burritos, and Pluto sat down because he thought he was getting a treat.

1. And This Guy With Seven Years' Worth Of Stories

"I worked there for seven years. I had a guy THROW HIS TODDLER AT ME. I had a guy take off his fake leg and swing it at my face. I had a young woman hand me a ziplock bag full of ashes and ask me, 'Where can I leave grandma?' I had numerous people ask me if I could turn on the A/C because they honestly believed Disneyland was in a giant glass dome."

What are your best/worst/craziest/fondest memories of Disney?

In your opinion, why or why not is Disneyland the perfect Happily Ever After and Happiest Place On Earth?

CALLED TO FAITHFULNESS: DEUTERONOMY

Deuteronomy contains Moses' last three sermons and two prophetic poems about Israel's future. Reflecting on the nation's past mistakes, Moses urges the people not to repeat those errors when they enter the Promised Land, but instead to live in faithfulness. Possessing the land of Canaan will fulfill the promises made to the ancestors, but if the people fall into idolatry or fail to keep the law, they will be exiled.

QUICK REVIEW

This week, as Jeff closed out our sermon series: Called to Faithfulness...

What stuck with you? What moved you? What was new to you?
What challenged you or confused you? What was your take-away?

DEUTERONOMY 34

Deuteronomy 34 (NLT) Then Moses went up to Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab and climbed Pisgah Peak, which is across from Jericho. And the Lord showed him the whole land, from Gilead as far as Dan; ² all the land of Naphtali; the land of Ephraim and Manasseh; all the land of Judah, extending to the Mediterranean Sea; ³ the Negev; the Jordan Valley with Jericho—the city of palms—as far as Zoar. ⁴ Then the Lord said to Moses, "This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have now allowed you to see it with your own eyes, but you will not enter the land."

⁵ So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, just as the Lord had said. ⁶ The Lord buried him in a valley near Beth-peor in Moab, but to this day no one knows the exact place. ⁷ Moses was 120 years old when he died, yet his eyesight was clear, and he was as strong as ever. ⁸ The people of Israel mourned for Moses on the plains of Moab for thirty days, until the customary period of mourning was over.

⁹ Now Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. So the people of Israel obeyed him, doing just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

¹⁰ There has never been another prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face. ¹¹ The Lord sent him to perform all the miraculous signs and wonders in the land of Egypt against Pharaoh, and all his servants, and his entire land. ¹² With mighty power, Moses performed terrifying acts in the sight of all Israel.

What are your general thoughts about Moses?

What was it about his leadership style that made him effective?

Would you want him as your leader? Why or why not?

Moses took an active part in delivering Israel from Egypt and preparing them for the Promised Land. But Moses also failed, was fearful, endured tremendous hardship, letdown, and difficulty.

What in your opinion makes Moses perfect or not perfect as a leader?

PERFECTIONISM

What do you think is the difference between being called to perfection and called to faithfulness?

Because we believe in someone perfect (Jesus), the enemy has tricked us into thinking we can be perfect, or we need to be perfect. But God has called us to faithfulness, obedience, life pursuit of him and his ways—love, justice, goodness, etc.

Are you a perfectionist? Is this a struggle in your life and in your faith (which should be our life)? Why or why not?

Jeff offered **3 Things to Help With Perfectionism**

1. Take failures as learning opportunities.
2. Remind yourself of past victories
3. Accept that you are human, and remember the imperfection of past greats

Which help is most practical and necessary for you? Why?
How can you incorporate this into your life?

BUT WHAT ABOUT THAT “BE PERFECT” VERSE IN THE BIBLE?

In Matthew 5:48 NLT, Jesus says, “**But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.**”

However the CEB (Common English Bible) translates it: “**Therefore, just as your heavenly Father is complete in showing love to everyone, so also you must be complete.**”

The Greek term *teleios*, translated here in the CEB as “complete,” is sometimes translated as “perfect.” The Greek term refers here to the highest ethical standard, which is understood in terms of the love commandment. This is a fitting summary of the ethics of the sermon on the mount. And it should also be noted that the “Be perfect” verse in Matthew 5:48 is in the context of Jesus talking about loving enemies:

Matthew 5:43-48 (CEB) “You have heard that it was said, You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who harass you ⁴⁵so that you will be acting as children of your Father who is in heaven. He makes the sun rise on both the evil and the good and sends rain on both the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶If you love only those who love you, what reward do you have? Don’t even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing? Don’t even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸Therefore, just as your heavenly Father is complete in showing love to everyone, so also you must be complete.”

How can you “be perfect” or “be complete” in showing love to your friends/family/loved ones? Enemies?

VINCE LOMBARDI

The football great Uncle Rico, who once famously said, “How much you wanna make a bet I can throw a football over them mountains?... Yeah... Coach woulda put me in fourth quarter, we would've been state champions. No doubt. No doubt in my mind,” is most likely the second greatest football star in history.

The first—Vince Lombardi. He never had a losing season as a head coach in the NFL, compiling a regular-season winning percentage of 73.8% (96–34–6), and 90% (9–1) in the postseason for an overall record of 105 wins, 35 losses, and 6 ties in the NFL (super interesting stuff for you non-sports fans). Anywho, he famously said: “Perfection is not attainable, but if we chased perfection we can catch excellence.”

While many of us might not be trying out to get clobbered by 350lb defensive ends...

When it comes to our lives, how can chasing God’s perfection help us to catch faithful excellence?

In pursuing our perfect God with everything we’ve got, we naturally live out faithfulness in our everyday lives and circumstances.

CONCLUDING DEUTERONOMY

Deuteronomy urges its readers, the Israelites and us, to love God and to do the things that keep us loving God. How might that connect with your life? Since we are to love the Lord with our whole self, every aspect of your life that came to mind as you read the opening section of this session is relevant here. It is perfectly legitimate (and helpful) to ask yourself, “What am I doing—as a friend, in my family, in my vocation, as a citizen—to choose life?”

Renowned preacher Fred Craddock uses a money analogy to describe what faithfulness means in practical terms:

“To give my life for Christ appears glorious,” he says. “To pour myself out for others . . . to pay the ultimate price of martyrdom—I’ll do it. I’m ready, Lord, to go out in a blaze of glory. . . . We think giving our all to the Lord is like taking a \$1,000 bill and laying it on the table—‘Here’s my life, Lord. I’m giving it all.’

But the reality for most of us is that he sends us to the bank and has us cash in the \$1,000 for quarters.

We go through life putting out 25 cents here and 50 cents there. Listen to the neighbor kid’s troubles instead of saying, ‘Get lost.’

Go to a committee meeting.

Give a cup of water to a shaky old man in a nursing home.

Usually giving our life to Christ isn’t glorious.

It’s done in all those little acts of love, 25 cents at a time.

It would be easy to go out in a flash of glory; it’s harder to live the Christian life little by little over the long haul.”

If you really want to choose a life of faithfulness, then you will want to make the *everyday choices* that help you keep that commitment. If you truly want to choose a way of living that is congruent with God’s purposes, then you will want to do the *little things* that are compatible with that goal.

What are those little things? What are those daily choices?

What will you do to spend your quarters wisely?

What will you do to choose life . . . each and every day?

PRAYER REQUESTS