



Connect: LIFEgroup discussion guide

a Christian community of fresh hope

INTEGRITY: Finding Favour

Sun 31st Oct 2021

WELCOME: Last week's message focused on the idea of having Integrity in life even when you are facing challenges and the odds are against you.

- **What if anything surprised you from Vanessa's account of David and Goliath?**
- **What keys did you pick up from the story?**
- **What has God put in your hand to defeat the enemy?**
- **Will you approach life differently... how?**

DISCUSSING THE MESSAGE:

This week's message continues exploring living a life of Integrity, considering how being true to who God calls you to be, encounters God's favour.

- **Would you define integrity any differently from you thought of it before, based on what you have learned in this series so far?**

The Ark of the Covenant represents the presence of God and moved with the people of God. How people relate to the presence of God has consequences – both good and bad. A description of the Ark can be found in Exodus 25 – experts vary in determining its weight, being anywhere between 100kgs and 300 kgs. God had called for the Ark always to be carried by the Levites - priests and worship leaders. David chose not to ask Levites to carry the Ark, as God required, putting it on a cart instead.

Read 2 Sam 6:1-9

- **How would you sum up what has taken place here?**
- **Uzzah has chosen to go along with David's choices and receives the consequences – when have your decisions impacted others or have the decision of others impacted you?**
- **What is the outcome for David of handling God's presence inappropriately?**

1. There is joy in the presence of God.

Read 2 Sam 6:10-15

- **What do we learn from these verses?**
- **What is the outcome for David of handling God's presence appropriately?**
- **What should our response be to the presence of God?**

According to one definition, "Joy comes from the Holy Spirit, abiding in God's presence and from hope in His word." Joy is not dependent on our circumstances, but on who God is.

Read 2 Sam 6:16

- **Why do you think Michal had contempt for her husband David?**
- **Have you ever felt judged for being enthusiastic about your relationship with God?**

As people with a New Covenant relationship with God it's not so much that we have to go and find the presence of God, more that the presence of God comes to us, and we can choose to engage with God.

Read John 1:14; John 15:4-5; 1 Cor 3:16; Acts 3:20-21

- **What do these verses reveals about the presence of God?**
- **How, where and when do you engage with the Presence of God.**
- **In what ways do you experience refreshing that comes from the presence of the Lord?**

The "Kingdom of God," is the place where we allow the King to have Dominion in our lives, the choice to engage, in response to God's calling, is in our hands.

2. We honour God by living out the best version of ourselves.

Read 2 Thess 1:11-12

- **How do these verses indicate we can honour God?**
- **What is the outcome of honouring God?**

3. As an outcome of love for God, we put God first and give thanks for God's favour.

Read 2 Sam 7: 18-29 and 2 Cor 1:19-22

- **How is David impacted by God's blessing and how does he respond?**
- **What does it mean to you that "all God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ?"**
- **How has God identified people who are followers of Jesus?**

Are we Spirit-filled, followers of Jesus who allow the King to have Dominion in our lives? The choice to engage, in response to God's calling, is in our hands.

Our response:

Our choices have consequences – either immediately or in the long term. Jesus Christ made a choice that has a bearing on every human being, everywhere in all of human history – Jesus paid the price set YOU and I free and God provides resources for Christians to live a life in freedom.

Pray together: (revisiting the Armour of God prayer)

Dear Lord, as I get out of bed today, I know I'm stepping onto a battlefield.

But I also know that you've given me everything I need to stand firm.

So, in the power of your Holy Spirit, I put on the armour of God:

First, wrap your word around me like a *belt of truth* and safeguard me from error.

Let the *breastplate of righteousness* keep my heart and emotions safe. I pray that I won't be governed by my feelings, but by truth.

I put on the *shoes of peace* to guide my steps. Plant my feet in your truth. Empower me to stand firm against attack.

Next, I take up the *shield of faith*. Protect me from Satan's fiery arrows. Place me shoulder to shoulder with your army to oppose the devil's schemes.

I place the *helmet of salvation* on my head. Protect my mind and imagination. Guard my eyes, allowing no sin to creep in. Focus my thoughts on the things of God.

Finally, I take up the *sword of the spirit*, your Word. Help me to read the bible in a fresh, exciting way so I will always be ready to deflect attacks and pierce hearts with your truth.

I know I will face assaults today, Lord. But you've empowered me to stand firm. Give me strength for the battle today.

In Jesus' mighty name. Amen

This week why not engage with the 5 x 5 x 5 process – take 5 mins for 5 days and dig deeper in 5 ways.