

JOY in the JOURNEY III



“That’s Just a Suggestion, Right?” – Numbers 20:1-13

Sermon Idea: *As icons/image-bearers of God’s presence on the journey with Jesus, we can lead others to the joy of Christ or lead others away from the joy of Christ depending on the care we take in ‘driving’ his image down the road.*

Intro: Speed signs usually irritate us when we are late for an appointment or in a hurry. Any confessions?? But they are there to save lives – ours and others. In our journeys as Christ’s image bearers we are often in a hurry to push Kingdom agendas -- meaning doing things our way and in our timing. What can we learn from Moses and Aaron in the Old Testament?

Read Numbers 20:1-13 and DISCUSS:

1. Moses had a mess on his hands. What arguments and complaints did the people heap on Moses and Aaron? Were they legitimate? Vv. 1-5. How would you feel if you were Moses?
2. Moses and Aaron were desperate and went to the right place – before the Lord on their faces – for help. What was God’s directions? Were both God and Moses to have roles to play? What is the importance of the Moses’ staff? Vv. 6-8.
3. Things get interesting in vv. 9-11! What are the signs of trouble in the words they addressed to the people? Water came from the rock...as God promised but what was the difference between God’s way and Moses’ solution? What was at the heart of Moses’ failure? V.12
4. Does God sometimes honor our misguided human efforts to do his will? Why would he reward Moses and Aaron with this success even though they disobeyed?
5. What issues and circumstances is the church, are we, facing that are irritating, confusing, making us impatient and even angry?
6. We want to accomplish things for God, often good things ...why do we get impatient, in a hurry, want to do things our way instead of God’s way? In what areas of life could we apply the lesson of “slowing down...and letting God?” (Could this apply to: family needs, health concerns, future decisions and plans, culture battles, politics, evangelism?)
7. Why do we trust our own efforts, the help of others rather than trust God to work? And yet, why does God include us as instruments of his work? What is our role?
8. What is at stake when our timing and efforts take center stage? (See v. 12) How can we ensure that people give glory to and see the character of God through us?
9. How can we as individuals/church honor God, represent his character in us, sense and display his joy – in the midst of Covid 19, family and institutional plans, election season.

Jesus and His Timing and Methods: *“Martha said to Jesus, ‘If you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Your brother will raise again.’ ... Jesus looked up and said, ‘Father, I thank you that you have heard me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.’ When he had said this, Jesus called with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out!’*