

Joyful in Hope – Day Six, March 24, 2020, (thoughts and ideas to encourage and challenge)

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”
Romans 12:9

“O Sovereign Lord, why did you bring us across the Jordan River if you are going to let the Amorites kill us?” (Joshua 7:7)

The children of Israel had won a resounding victory at Jericho, shortly after crossing the Jordan River and entering the Promised Land. They were pumped! Their reputation, especially Joshua’s reputation, was spreading like wildfire throughout the land. But then, something went terribly wrong. Joshua sent a small group of warriors to Ai to overthrow and destroy that town, but the men of Ai chased Joshua’s warriors from the town gate to the quarries. Tails tucked between their legs, the Israelites were “paralyzed with fear, their courage melted away” (Joshua 7:5)

And so Joshua begins to question God. Can you blame him? I mean, the information he had been given indicated that this taking over the Promised Land was going to be kind of a cakewalk. God himself was going to do all the hard stuff. But now, I’m sure Joshua felt like he was getting a lot of mixed messages. The plan was starting to unravel, barely days after it had been set into motion. And now Joshua’s reputation is at stake. Israel’s reputation is at stake. Jehovah’s reputation is at stake.

Then God tells Joshua the reason for the defeat at Ai. Israel has broken the covenant. The people are not doing what they’re supposed to do. Someone is trying to take the easy way out, and pretend that the rules don’t apply to them.

Maybe you feel like you’re getting some mixed messages about what to do about the coronavirus. There’s a lot of confusion and uncertainty about how bad it is, how long it will last, who is being impacted, and just what you and I should do to keep ourselves, and others safe. Let me just encourage you to do the right thing. Obey the laws of the land. Don’t assume that you’re invincible, even if you’re doing something for someone else. (Pete, are you listening to yourself?)

Ok, I’ll get off my soapbox now. On this Tuesday, the first day of the “Stay at Home” Order, I pray that you will be especially considerate and kind to the people who are in your household. Cherish your time together. Play some games together. Find something wholesome to watch on TV together. Polish up those culinary skills together. Read your Bible together. Pray together.

“Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.”
Romans 12:10

I didn’t receive any prayer updates today, but I do want to remind you again that Communion sets are available in the church office. The west doors to the church building and the church office will be open every day from 10-12 and from 2-4. We put the sets in ziplock bags (10 per bag). Take what you need, or, if you would like some brought to you, we can do that (without breaking any rules). Blessings and Health, Pete.