

# 7/30/23- SERIES-MORE THAN" (#9)

## PASTOR JEREMY

Are We  
Trapped?

-or-

Are We  
Holy?

Potential  
Loss of  
Identity

Why/How  
to  
'Set Apart'

- Pastor Jeremy: We, as a Church, are filled with "high capacity people".....we work hard/play hard- - hectic summertime.... juggling jobs, vacations, etc. but always striving 'for the best'. BUT, that 'crushing' lots of our worldly activity presents a potential trap in which we might just assume the same 'playbook' and positive end results will just 'spill over' to our spiritual lives.
- God has, however, a different 'playbook'.....(for a deeper relationship with Jesus). How do we set our lives apart for God? Deut: 7:6 - -*"For you are a people holy to the LORD, your God. The Lord, your God, has chosen you to be a people for His treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth".*
- Backdrop: God had chosen Abraham...makes covenant with him... eventually, his many descendants become enslaved in Egypt....God anoints Moses as leader to head them to 'promised Land' where the Canaanites have MORE THAN everything in riches, crops/livestock, material things, military, as well as different customs/belief systems (idols, etc.) Taking over this land- -by force- - might be viewed as a 'tall order' but, of course, not for God. Yet, He wanted the Hebrews to understand, FIRST, who they - - as a people - - were.
- Can we relate? Many of us come from different ethnic backgrounds and need to familiarize and, in some ways and over time, adjust lifestyle/ customs ...even some everyday practices. Our culture can, in ways, be overpowering notwithstanding the 'first generation's' best efforts to retain their family value systems .
- For the Israelites, the cultural differences they would face in the New Land would be very, very significant (human sacrifice, idol worship, wicked practices, etc.). So God knew His people would be at risk and absolutely needed to retain their separateness and their unique identity. Indeed, so crucial was this dilemma, God would order the Israelites to destroy the Canaan population..... No covenants with them, no peace agreements no intermarriages, etc.
- The (unacceptable) alternative was to start worshipping their gods, melding families together, giving in to all their unholy practices, customs, etc. Within a few generations, their identity would be lost!!
- Hence, Moses' words in verse 6 (above). When Moses refers to the Israelites being "Holy" which means 'set apart' or 'treasured'. Why did God 'set them apart'....because He is the personification of 'Holy'.
- Questions: Have we (Christians) become so assimilated into our world that we are not seen different...not 'set apart'..... a melding our Christian values with worldly values. Are there any lines that we draw to make ourselves distinct from non-believers? ...in our role(s) as parents, business people, coaches, teachers, executives, teenagers, etc. Why should we set ourselves apart?.....because we are part of God's Kingdom...intrinsicly set apart by His Holiness with a Spirit that persuades us to imitate Christ.

LIVE  
Like  
CHOSEN!

God's  
Unbroken  
Promises  
&  
LOVE

Choose  
Him!!

- LIVE LIKE WE ARE CHOSEN PEOPLE: Deut 7:7-9- *"It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set His love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know, therefore that the LORD is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations."* **BECAUSE GOD HAS KEPT HIS PROMISE AND WE ARE CHOSEN PEOPLE!**
- Pastor Jeremy gives examples of promises (made or broken in his life (ie. fish/son story). So what IS a "promise"....it is an assurance that someone will do what they said they would do. In this regard, **OUR GOD....THE GOD OF THE BIBLE....ACTUALLY KEEPS HIS PROMISES!** So we can make decisions today based on a future that is certain....guaranteed by God's promises! So we can live in confidence, hope, joy...no matter what our current struggles!
- Embraced.....we have a Savior, Jesus Christ, who loves us!!!!
- Why were we chosen?.....to show the world the 'way' .....ie. ...under God's Kingdom, we ALL get to be His son/daughter.....projecting love, hope and joy in the midst of earthly challenges....for God's glory.
- Jeremy tells personal story of his Mariah proposal with the point that, while he had chosen his wife-to-be, she, in turn had to chose Him. **GOD CHOSE US.....WE CHOOSE HIM** (a response to His invitation)..... a synergistic covenant **BUT HE CHOSE US FIRST!**
- Jesus, in His love, gave us His all....how could we not respond by giving **OUR ALL?!**