

## Message Title: The Courage to Go

The Rock Anaheim – July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022

### INTRO + MISSIONS UPDATE:

- For those I have never met, my name is Jessica, this is my husband Kevin, and you'll see our two beautiful kiddos on the screen (PIC: Family | Cohen and Selah)
- We went with the intention of providing OSL discipleship training to the Foursquare Churches in the South Pacific. 17 countries with Foursquare churches there, and we had a whole itinerary laid out for our first year, which happened to be 2020.
- So we did 1 trip to Papua New Guinea, launched OSL Level 1 with a church in the Highlands. (PIC: OSL in PNG) And then the world locked down, and NZ closed their borders for the next two years.
- We did a number of OSL classes through Zoom and even Whatsapp (PIC: OSL Zoom)
- We helped coordinate 2 regional prayer gatherings and a women's conference online.
- We served a foursquare church in Auckland as (PIC: ANCC) lead pastors, discipling, teaching, and especially pouring into a community of young adults.

Moving forward we have 3 areas of focus, what we will be building over the next 5 years:

#### 1. HOUSE CHURCHES (SLIDE - HC):

God has highlighted a city in NZ named Nelson, where He has called us to plant ourselves and launch a house church movement, starting among the poor of that city. We are transitioning from our current church and home the remainder of this year, and moving in January.

#### 2. SOUTH PACIFIC (SLIDE: SP)

Now as the South Pacific gradually opens up, we will continue with our original plan and travel to the islands to provide discipleship training,

#### 3. MISSIONS IMMERSION Program for Young Adults (SLIDE: YA)

Get Connected to Missions at the Rock:

#### Slide: PRAY | GIVE | GO

- PRAY: Through your prayers you are partnering with us, every month we email our real prayer requests to the missions team
  - o Use that prayer guide, pray with your family. Real people, on the front lines.
- GIVE

- We are a tithing church and a missions giving church
  - You're missions giving enables us to do what we are doing
  - Your 10, 25, 100 dollars a month may not seem like a big deal – BUT it's a big deal (PIC: Kids at Christmas)
- GO
- We have a Quarterly Missions Connection on Zoom where you will hear from Rock and Solid Lives Missionaries, ask questions, be encouraged and supported on your journey towards deployment (sign up for at the missions table)
  - Missions Certificate through the BFAM Training Center – developed by or Foursquare Missions Team, exceptional... and will move you towards deployment.
  - Kevin and I are praying and looking for individuals and families to come and partner with us in the South Pacific, people who can come in on work visas. Jobs that are in high demands right now are teaching, nursing, construction, web development, social workers, and more.

#### SLIDE: Text for Info Slide

If you would like to connect in to what we are doing – getting our newsletter, joining the interest list – Text “missions” to 833-495-0935. Send you a link to a super brief form to fill out, give us your details to reach back out to you.

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#### Message Title: The Courage to Go

- I want to share with you today from the commissioning of Gideon
- Matthew 28 we see Jesus give us the “Great Commission”, a commission is an assignment that comes with the authority to carry it out.
- In Judges 6 we see Jesus give Gideon a commission, but what I love about this is we get to see the wrestling that happens of a real, ordinary person wrestling to find the courage to say YES to GO and do his assignment, and the encouragement that comes from the Lord as he wrestled.

Let's PRAY and we'll jump into the Word this morning.

#### Judges 6:1-2 ESV

The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord gave them into the hand of Midian seven years. <sup>2</sup> And the hand of Midian overpowered Israel, and because of Midian the people of Israel made for themselves the dens that are in the mountains and the caves and the strongholds.

- Where it says overpowered it means that The Midians had strength over the children of Israel, they are dominating and oppressing them
- It placed the Israelites into a lifestyle of hiding for survival... nothing there that we can relate too (well at least not until March of 2020)
- The children of Israel would try to get ahead, they would plant, but get ravaged by the Midianites and Amalekites until there was nothing, there was no sustenance

### Judges 6:6 ESV

<sup>6</sup> And Israel was brought very low because of Midian. And the people of Israel cried out for help to the Lord.

- **brought very low** – lost their strength. Another way it's translate is languish – suffer from being forced to remain in an unpleasant place or situation.
- But the cruelty and the stripping of their life has caused a deep emotional toll and they have lost their strength (it's external, but it's in here)
  - How many people in our world have lost their strength, their courage and will to fight for things to be better, because they have suffered for too long... they have lost their hope and therefore their joy, and in many ways they are hiding... hiding behind screens, hiding behind medication, hiding behind cynicism and anger.

When we come to Gideon, and find him hiding in a winepress, he is not a coward in his society – this is where life in society has ended up due to the oppression of the season. He is just trying to provide some kind of food for His family in the only way he can. But he like everyone else around him only has known for a few years fear, discouragement, a ravaging of his land and people.

I want you to see the similarities with our own moment and culture, and also so we understand where Gideon is coming from in the following interaction He has with God.

- God first sends a prophet to let the people know that in this case it's their turning their back on Him that has brought on this oppression.
- But then God raises up a deliverer in Gideon. He appears to him as he is hiding and threshing wheat in a winepress and in verse 12 I says:

### Judges 6:12 ESV

<sup>12</sup> And the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, "The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor."

- We believe that the angel of the Lord was the pre-incarnate Christ, Jesus
- Jesus appears to Gideon and we watch a commissioning begin to take place
- Jesus starts by speaking two essential and foundational truths that are Gideon must grab ahold of to do what He is called to:
  - The Lord is with you – You are not alone
  - Mighty Hero – other translations say “Man of Valor”
    - **(Hebrew) Hayil** – Army, Strength, Might
    - The strength of the enemy had caused Israel to lose their strength
    - This is what Israel needed in this moment – they needed an army, they needed strength, they needed courage to face their enemy
    - Jesus is speaking over Gideon – I have made you as a carrier of my answer to the pain of the people in this moment – it’s who you are!
      - GOD is speaking that to YOU today. I have made you as a solution to the pain and trauma
    - I want you to notice that Gideon wasn’t like – of course, I have “man of valor” already tattooed on my forearm.
      - This isn’t what he was thinking and feeling about himself prior to this encounter

### Judges 6:13 ESV

<sup>13</sup> And Gideon said to him, “Please, my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers recounted to us, saying, ‘Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the Lord has forsaken us and given us into the hand of Midian.”

- Like all of us, what had happened to Gideon was speaking loudly to his heart, directing his internal dialogue...
- “I feel abandoned by God and handed over to the enemy”

I don’t know about you but I can relate to Gideon, I’ll hear God speak identity into my heart, and my experience will scream at me.

- Through tears telling God, this does not feel like what you promised. I feel abandoned, let down, and discouraged.
- We have such a compassionate GOD who can handle ALL of our questions, doubts, frustrations...
- He’ll continue to speak the empowering truth and direction that we need...

### Judges 6:14 (NLT) \*

<sup>14</sup> Then the Lord turned to him and said, “Go with the strength you have, and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I am sending you!”

- GO – your past pain is not your future destiny, but you have to move forward at my word. Take the steps I am telling you to take.
- You can't stay in this winepress anymore, the time to hide, to keep your head down, to just survive, and stay in your comfort zone is gone
- We never GO from Him, but we have to GO with Him to them.
- GO to your co-worker, GO to your neighbor, GO to the broken, the lost, and those made LOW, who have lost their strength
- GO in the strength you have
  - You have what is needed – You have the strength needed for the moment
  - You may not feel like you have what's needed... but when He says GO, you have it.
  - I AM sending you – The great I AM the alpha and omega, if He is sending me... I must be able to go, whether you feel like it or not.

### **Judges 6:15 ESV**

<sup>15</sup> And he said to him, "Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."

- Gideon is wrestling with self-doubt. Self-doubt that has been birthed from His experience, His pain, and His family. And He is struggling to hear God's call to Him through all of this self-doubt.
- What He knows about himself is not adding up to the mission that Jesus is giving him.
- How many don't step into the callings that God has for them because of self-doubt... and how many give up mid-way in the call because of it.
- Or we begin to and inevitably run into hard challenges, we fail at something, we experience rejection from others, things feel 10x harder than we anticipate, we compare our little progress with the leaps and bounds a friend is taking. We just want to crawl back inside our winepress, it's safe, no one can see me, I'm honorably taking care of my family, risk is low.

Yet, when I sit in the presence of Jesus, voicing my strong personal concerns, look at how He responds...His loving whispers

### **Judges 6:16 ESV**

<sup>16</sup> And the Lord said to him, "But I will be with you, and you shall strike the Midianites as one man."

- “I will be with you” – that is God’s guarantee of success, I’m not saying ease or comfort, but of success
- Where you come from doesn’t matter, what family issues you’ve had,
- It’s what He told Moses, David, and it’s what He is speaking to you today....
- “GO and make disciples of ALL Nations, baptizing them, teaching them to obey all He is commanded... HOW do we know we can do it?
- “Behold, I am with you always!”
- Because I am with you – you will defeat the Midianites, won’t be a contest.

The complexity in life, the hurts and wounds of people can diminish our ability to believe we can make a difference.

Jesus was painting a new picture in Gideon’s heart – You are a HERO, you are a liberator, You are anointed to heal the broken hearted at your work place, you have the strength needed to set the captive at liberty in your neighborhood, you are the man or woman of valor to lead that house church in your school....You have what it takes because you have HIM.

*The realization of 1. His Presence with Me, and 2. His Love and Validation of me - WHO He has uniquely created me to be... will produce the courage in me that I need to GO, and also the courage to STAY and keep fighting for the people I am called to love and reach.*

## **RESPONSE:**

- **MISSIONS:** If you feel like God has called you to the Mission Field, I want you to stand, and I want to pray for you.
- **COURAGE:** If God has been calling you to a new assignment (starting a house church) and your struggling to find the courage to do it, OR if you have stepped out but your struggling to find the courage to stay and keep at – I want you to stand.
  - Others around them, lay your hands on them, let’s declare courage over them today.