

A Cure for Fading Memories

October 2-8, 2011

PRAYER: Begin with a few moments of sharing thanks and praises in prayer.

Leaders, it's your call; you may choose to incorporate more information/scriptures as time allows for your small group lesson. "Watch yourself lest you forget..." (Deut. 6:12) This was the warning Moses issued to all Israel just before they entered the Promised Land. And this is the warning God wants us to hear today! It is good to memorialize the great acts of the Lord, provided that the memorials do not become idols. Each new generation must learn what God has done for His people so that they will obey His Word and trust Him for the future (Psalm 78:1-8). When you have living faith in a living God, the past is not "dead history." It throbs with living reality.

OPENER: What was one significant place in your formative years? What might you someday tell your child about it?

Which of your folk's childhood memories have you heard over and over again?

Read: Joshua 4:1-24

DISCUSS:

What difficulties are posed for the modern mind by this miraculous river-crossing?

Why did Joshua have the people set up a monument (vv. 6-7, 21-22)?

Why 12 stones (v. 5; 3:12)? Why from the river?

Why two monuments, one in (or by) the river where the priests had stood (v. 9) one taken to Gilgal (vv. 3, 19-20)?

How does this drama spotlight the role of the ark (vv. 7, 9, 10, 16, 18)? Of the priests (vv. 10-11)? Of Joshua (v. 14, see 1:5; 3:7)? But who steals center stage?

For what five audiences was this dramatic miracle intended (4:6, 7, 11, 13, 24; 5:1)

What prior miracle does this one recall (v. 23)?

Who survives as an eye-witness to both (see 5:4, 6)? For what two reasons are the new miracle staged?

PLAN for ACTION:

The stones on the shore reminded the people that the old life was buried and they should "walk in

newness of life" (Romans 6:4; Col. 3:1). Have you crossed the Jordan and set up your memorial of faith?

What "memorial stones" are there in your home – and in your personal life – that demonstrate that God exists and that we are dependent upon Him for life and existence?

What one life-changing encounter with God will you be sure to tell your kids?

In what ways do we talk about God? Is He a living reality or just a theological idea?

What "memorial" or other testimonial evidence would your co-workers, neighbors or family come across which might prompt them to ask what God is doing in your life?

Within your small group, what Jordan-like experience might well be "memorialized"?

Israel crossed the Jordan "on dry ground," but armed for war, signifying God delivers, but battles will flow. Are you battle-ready or battle-weary these days?

How can this group pray for you this week?

To view the complete teaching from the Sunday services
go to www.centralcommunity.org/media/index.html