

Small Group Discussion Guide — September 19, 2021

- Series: En Route
 - Sermon: Return to the Route
 - Scripture: Deuteronomy 30: 17-20, Joshua 24: 15
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FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK

How have you submitted to the authority of Jesus in your life this week? In what area of your life is giving up authority to Jesus the hardest?

CONNECT

1. What stood out to you from this past week's service, and why?
2. How dependent are you on GPS? Do you turn it on even if you know where you're going? What is the appeal, or if you don't use it, why not?

ENGAGE

1. Read Deuteronomy 30:17-20.
 - What does it mean to "bow down to other gods"? Does it mean the same thing today to us as it did to the people of Israel in this text?
 - How do you read the tone of verse 18? As a threat? A warning? Why?
 - What is the choice offered in verse 19? What might be some reasons people would ever choose death or curses? How do you think this choice presents itself to us in 2021?
 - What does the passage tell us is meant by choosing life? What are some ways you have found this to be true in your own life?
2. Joshua 24: 15.
 - What are some reasons serving the Lord would seem undesirable?
 - What is the underlying assumption in this verse? What do you think about this?

APPLY

1. The Old Testament is filled to the brim with warnings against worshipping idols. Discuss how relevant you think this message is for us today. What are some idols we have as a culture? What idols do you struggle with, personally? What are some triggers that push you toward idols, and how do you relate to the idea that our hearts are "prone to wander?"
2. David listed the "ancient paths of God" as
 - Intimate and Growing Relationship with God
 - Growing Prayer Life
 - Consistent Engagement in Scripture
 - Obedience to God
 - Commitment to Community

How has our culture rebelled against these practices? Which ones do you focus the most time or energy on? Which do you tend to ignore and why?

3. Consider a time when you have taken the wrong route in your faith journey. How did you know you were on the wrong road? What steps did you take to head back to the route God planned for you? Are there steps you need to take today to get back on the right route?

PRAYER

Holy God, you made us, and we are yours. You love us and want the best lives for us. Help us to acknowledge you as Lord of our lives, to give up our vain efforts to go our own way, and to bring our hearts back in line with your plans for us. This day Lord, we choose to surrender all that we have and all that we are to you. In the name of your Son Jesus we pray. Amen.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Zechariah 1: 3-4

Jeremiah 6: 16

Jeremiah 18:15

GOING DEEPER

Take some time this week to really think about who or what is the god / God you have chosen, and who / what you are serving. How is that manifested in your life? Spend some time meditating on Zechariah 1: 3-4. Pray that God would reveal to you any hidden idols of your heart, so that you may surrender those to Him and choose, instead, the ancient paths of the Lord.

QUOTES

“Dear God, I cannot love Thee the way I want to. You are the slim crescent of a moon that I see and my self is the earth’s shadow that keeps me from seeing all the moon. The crescent is very beautiful and perhaps that is all one like I am should or could see; but what I am afraid of, dear God, is that my self shadow will grow so large that it blocks the whole moon, and that I will judge myself by the shadow that is nothing. I do not know you God because I am in the way. Please help me push myself aside.”

Flannery O’Connor

“The ancient writers knew well the desperate human problem of not knowing how to live, and they recognized the law revealed by Jehovah, Israel’s covenant-making God, to be the only real solution to this problem.”

Dallas Willard

“Sloth stops us from seeking God, and that means we do not find him. When Jesus said that all who seek, find, he implied that those who do not seek, do not find. Pascal put it this way: ‘There are three kinds of people in the world: those who have sought God and have found him and now serve him, those who are seeking him but have not yet found him, and those who neither seek him nor find him.’”

Peter Kreeft