

Joshua

Part 12 – A Strange Place to Find Church

Joshua 20-21

Safe Place (ch. 20)

- What does safe place look like?
 - A place to flee when in trouble (v.3)
 - A place where you can be heard (v.4)
 - A place that offers appropriate protection (v.5)
 - A place that accepts you with your baggage (v.6)
 - A place where cycles are broken (v.9)
- Primary marker: compassion

Scattered People (ch. 21)

- Levi lived among the people who needed to know who God is and what He requires (v.41)
- They were assigned
 - God planned for them and then gave them a place
 - Why? Because light should shine broadly, not just brightly
- They were different
 - Priests of God, those who met with God and showed Him to the people
- Primary marker: clarity

Safe and Scattered: sounds like church

- Safe – the most welcoming people (Romans 15.7)
 - Not compromise, but welcoming – welcoming them in their brokenness while calling it what it is
 - We can say it with clarity because our brokenness was revealed to us too – we’re guilty of treason, not manslaughter
 - Welcome with a sense of hope (no religion of good and bad but Kingdom of Life and Death)
 - Nobody is ever so broken that Jesus can’t heal them (even those who don’t think they are broken)
 - We of all people should be marked by hope – forgiveness and life are ours
- Scattered – gaining a hearing by living closely and differently (1 Peter 3.14-17)
 - No sandwich boards or Facebook rants – no political lens or misplaced expectation

- They're not looking to us or even for us anymore – so we get to participate in the conspiracy of God by taking the presence of God to the people and portraying Him accurately to them
- Clarity on race, nature of marriage, sexuality, character in leadership, God-given role of government and our response to it, orphan care, the Gospel
- Every city of refuge became a Levite city – the safe places were with the scattered people

Questions for Discussion

1. When you hear the phrase “safe place,” what immediately comes to mind?
2. What are three practical ways someone has shown you compassion? What did you learn from their compassion?
3. God has sent you as a missionary to your neighborhood, baseball team, and work site (along with a bunch of other places). What is one thing that needs to change about your routine in light of that missionary reality?
4. Reread 1 Peter 3.14-17. Now read 1 Peter 2.4-10. Where do you see a believer's identity? Where do you see a believer's purpose? How are they linked?
5. What is the area of culture that most needs biblical clarity in your opinion? What is the area of conversations you are having that most needs biblical clarity? What is your responsibility in both?