Personal Devotions

Week 5: Paul A Cannonball of Faithfulness

Monday Read Psalm 51:10-15

The word "repent" means to turn to a new direction.

This Psalm describes how David had to repent from serious sin and after he repented he gave praise to God in celebration. Over these past five weeks, we have learned that being "all in" for God's kingdom means turning from certain things in our lives and turning to the vision of God. This process can be scary and nerveracking. But when we turn to the mission of God, we can enjoy a genuine celebration for the work God is doing among us. What are some of the parts of your life that you have turned from in order to fully celebrate the work of God? Take a moment to praise God for the opportunity to commit to God's work.	

Read Acts 16:19-34 Tuesday

Any follower of Jesus will face rough waves at some point in time.

	The church planters Paul and
	Silas encountered this first-
	hand. Their Cannonball for
	the mission of God led them
	straight to a prison cell. But
	as they faced these difficult
	times, they celebrated by
	singing hymns and praying
	to God. Their overwhelming joy at the work of Jesus
	overpowered the trials they
	faced in prison. It is easy
	for rough waves to cloud
The second secon	the vision God has for us.
	What are some of the rough
	waves you anticipate from
	your Cannonball? How can
	you keep focused on God's
	vision through the trials you
	may face? Be sure you have
	shared your Cannonball
	Commitment with someone
	who can celebrate with you
	in good days and in difficult
	days.
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Wednesday Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

God has given us what we own.

we are called to give	THE SECOND SECOND THE SECOND S
generously to others and to	
the work of God's people.	
We begin investing in a	
mission that is bigger than	
ourselves. Paul teaches that	
this generosity not only	
benefits others, but it also	
"overflows in thanksgiving to	
God." A Cannonball disciple	
is one who invests in the	
next steps of God's work	the state of the s
financially, emotionally, and	
spiritually, so that God might	
be glorified and praised by	
all people. Is your giving a	
chore or a cheerful gift? Does	
it help your perspective to	
remember that God is the	
source of our ability to give	
and God's praise is the final	
outcome of our generosity?	
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Read Luke 15:11-32 Thursday

Have you ever gone a long time without seeing someone?

get off the airplane or out of the car? The father that Jesus describes in this story is thrilled to see his long-lost son. His son has found his way home and the father celebrates by throwing a feast with music and dancing. In that moment the elder brother had a choice, to resent all the attention or to join in the party. Who are some of the people you can be encouraging as they make Cannonball decisions? Make it a priority, this week, to encourage someone you know who has made a Cannonball decision.
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Friday Read Luke 15:1-10

The heavens rejoice over every Cannonball decision that is made.

but Jesus reassures this truth through these two stories. Deep plunges that are taken by Christ followers are recognized by the heavens above. When we climb the steps of the ladder, stare out into the horizon, and toss ourselves into the water, we can celebrate with the angels in the heavens because of the work God is doing on the earth. As you consider Cannonball decisions you have yet to make, be sure to know the angels are waiting to celebrate as you continue to plunge into the life God has for you.	
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Week 5

Watch Week 5 LIFE Group Video. Videos can be found at communitycannonball.com.

Opening Discussion Questions

- 1. Have you ever been scared or nervous about making a commitment? When? Why?
- 2. How has a commitment you made shaped you for the positive?

Further Discussion from Scripture

Read each Scripture passage below and discuss the questions as a group. You may want to have each group member journal their answer first in the lines provided below before discussing together, as a means of encouraging all to participate more deeply.

Our Source Of Being Able To Give Generously Comes From God And God Alone

Read Philippians 4:4-7

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Paul often makes statements like this when he is seeking to reinforce a particular belief or a particular teaching of Jesus that possibly isn't being followed or needs to be followed more closely.

In this particular case, Paul is impressing upon the Philippians that they need not be anxious about their situation - that they need to receive their source of comfort from God alone.



1.	Am I giving in a way that still challenges me, or has it become comfortable and routine?
2.	As you think and pray about your commitment, what are some new learnings you've discovered through this Cannonball study?
3.	What will this commitment mean for you spiritually?
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Generosity Has The Power To Transform How We Relate To Others And How Others Relate To God

Read Acts 2:42-47

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."

Generosity has the power to transform how we relate to others and how others relate to God. This passage is potentially one of the most profound and transformative points in Scripture in sharing with us what a church community could and potentially should look like.

4.	As you hear about these behaviors of the Early Church—how generous they were, how devoted they were, and how transformative and "all in" their generosity was, what thoughts and aspirations come to mind for you?
5.	Have you ever experienced the generosity of a community of people surrounding you in a time of need, much as is described in the second chapter of Acts?



6.	What are some changes you want to make for your generosity in response to this?

When We Are New In Christ, We No Longer Live For Ourselves: We Live For Him

Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

"Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. If we are 'out of our mind,' as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."



7.	When we are new in Christ, we no longer live for ourselves; we live for Him. There is hope in this truth, as well as challenge. Are you truly living in Christ and living your life as though He is your one source, or might you need to renew your commitment to Him? How is the old self truly gone?
8.	If Christ's love truly compels us, we therefore should be responding
	accordingly in our devotion to Him. Falling more in love with Him makes us more generous. How is this true of your life?
9.	If you were to make a significant Cannonball commitment in your giving, how would that transform and change other things that you currently spend your money on? What would that do to your "spending portfolio" of sorts? How might that change where your heart is?

Through this five-week study, we have discussed what it means to jump "ALL IN" to the mission of God. We have been challenged to take the different aspects of our lives and plunge them into God's vision. And we have been given the opportunity to make some decisions. Take a few minutes to write some of the Cannonball decisions you have made over the past five weeks. Share these Cannonball decisions with the group so that you can celebrate together. No need to share amounts of giving, just stories of decisions associated with your Cannonball commitments.