



## The Journey

**Opening:** Reducing stress - Medical testing proves that Rednecks have the lowest stress rate because they don't understand the seriousness of medical terminology. Some examples:

- Artery ..... The study of paintings
- Bacteria ..... Back door to cafeteria
- Barium ..... What doctors do when patients die
- Node ..... I knew it
- Outpatient ..... A person who has fainted
- Pelvis ..... Second cousin to Elvis
- Terminal illness ..... Getting sick at the airport
- Tumor ..... One plus one more

**Intro:** “The journey of a thousand miles begins with a first step” Lao-tse

**July 4<sup>th</sup>** 1776 marks that first step for the United States of America journey. It started a journey that has lasted for 239 year. Fifty-six delegates of the Continental Congress signed their names on a document that would be called the Declaration of Independence.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—

56 delegates courageously signed that document putting their life and futures at risk because of their convictions, and their relationship with Almighty God.

They took a step in doing the impossible facing down a giant ... The British military was the most powerful in the world.

**Another Journey** is documented in The Book of Leviticus ... the 3<sup>rd</sup> book in a set of five books known as the *Torah* or the Pentateuch which means 5 scrolls.

Leviticus is the continuation of a journey of independence that began in Exodus. People who were slaves with no national identity, were destined by God ... to become a nation called Israel.

Leviticus contains detailed instructions for how they were to worship God and govern themselves.

It explains a sacrificial system that would provide forgiveness of sins ... pointing to the ultimate sacrifice of the perfect sacrifice, Jesus Messiah the Lamb of God.

**Leviticus 11:44-45** (MSG) <sup>44-45</sup> “Make yourselves holy for I am holy. ... I am GOD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Be holy because I am holy.”

Perhaps the first question we should ask ourselves is what is holiness?

- What does God mean when He says ... I Am holy?
- How do faulty, imperfect human beings, approach holiness?

### **E. Peterson:** Leviticus Introduction

"Holy means that God is alive on God's terms, which exceeds our experience and imagination."

### **Imagination –**

Think about the imagination of a child ... its fertile ground where just about anything is possible.

- Fairy Tales can make a child's eyes grow large with wonder
- Kids put the magic in Christmas –they get excited at the idea of a tooth fairy or a leprechaun with a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow.

My grandkids enjoy play time with me because my imagination is still powerful. I can turn a empty water bottle into police officer - a toy dresser into a super hero called "Cabinet Man" or a paper plane into a rocket ship.

They identify with the child that's still alive in me.

### **Ephesians 3:20** (NLT)

"Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think."

**Holiness** sets God apart from our ideas and our plans, it stimulates our imagination.

### **Isaiah 55:8-9** (NLT)

<sup>8</sup>"My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the LORD.

"And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine.

<sup>9</sup>For just as the heavens are higher than the earth,

so my ways are higher than your ways

and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.

Leviticus is a book of details, with hundreds of rules, provisions and principles, so much so that it's easy to get lost in the details and lose sight of the LORD. (Lose sight of forest for the trees)

If we're not careful we replace the truth of God with religious exercises.

God is mysterious ... anyone who says otherwise is kidding themselves. He cannot be cornered, tamed or manipulated. (Just the Concept of a Triune God)

He does things His way and His way rarely falls into a pattern that we had anticipated or expected.

He's Holy ... high and lifted up ... but not standoffish or remote

We struggle in this journey we're on, trying to understand him.

⇒ **Eugene Peterson** ... "Holy refers to life burning with intense purity that transforms everything it touches into itself."

God calls for us to be a holy people? But how do we accomplish that in real life terms?

### ☆ Personal Story

Two weeks ago Jen and I were in Mather hospital – she was being prepped for eye surgery. While we waded through all the essentials we could hear the conversation through the thin curtain of the young woman next to us – she had had several miscarriages and was having surgery in hopes of preventing another. There was a lull in Jen's testing I began to pray for her – her name was also Jennifer. I looked up to see my Jennifer praying as well. We were both moved to pray for this person we had never met.

God cared about that young woman and I believe He put us there at that moment to pray for her. Here's the amazing thing ... she'll never know the prayers that were being offered up for her –prayers orchestrated by a Holy God!

Throughout this journey of life, the holiness of God speaks to us, directs , prompts, urges us to do something that seems impossible

- We don't have the words to comfort someone who is suffering
- The answers to solve their problem
- We don't have the money, time or ability to get the job done

But God's holiness always reshapes us. His words stir our imagination to do something ... to take a step of faith into a place that seems so unsure

He always offers hope ... This is not all there is ... He whispers, This is not the end

In **John 6** ... a little boy overhears the conversation between Jesus and his 12 disciples.

The disciples looked at the five thousand people on the hillside who had been there all day long and were hungry. Their solution ... send them home Lord. ... get rid of the problem

But the little boy heard Jesus words ... "You feed them" And so he brought his own food, two dried fish and five, flat barley loaves, to Jesus.

Peter's reaction probably our reaction ... what good are these?

What was the result of this? He was given back more than he gave ... He was blessed but so were five thousand others

Yesterday I stopped a red light (always a good thing to do)

license plate of car ahead of read IAMNOT OK (U.S Marine Corp)

First thought was this poor guy ... but what can I do? God wants to stimulate your imagination to believe for and do greater things for HIM.

This week the **Holy Spirit** is going to speak to you about something He wants you to do ... the question is ... How will you respond this time?

Closing song Colton Dixon - *Through All of It*