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Living in HisStory: Revealing the True Wonder of Who God Is  
You Are Not Alone  
Joshua 10  
November 19, 2017, Adrian Moskal

So picture this: you are alone, downtown, and its 9:15 pm and you are alone. You are parked across the parking lot but its empty. You are leaving a store after a day of shopping but all of a sudden all you hear is your steps on the pavement. Then you hear another set of steps, and another, and another. Soon there are five large guys that look very intimidating and walking fast toward you. You feel a sense of panic, alone, and scared. You see this is the feeling that the Gibeonites felt in the passage that we are about to read. Our tendency, when we read our bibles is to identify with the protagonist or the hero. I am going to ask you to suspend that temptation. As we read along, put yourself in the shoes of the Gibeonites.

So we are going through this series, Living in HisStory and we have learned that we are not the protagonist. Yet, our culture tells us, frankly screams to us, that we are the centre of attention. What we have learned is, God is the hero. He is the hero in every story and every piece of scripture. We are following 3 threads, as we go through this sermon series:

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1. God is up to something. We are watching God engineer this massive rescue plan. He is rescuing us. He is rescuing mankind.
2. Satan is doing everything he can to thwart this plan.
3. Left to our own devices, we will move away from God and what he is doing.

So let me set the stage of where we are today. Last week we saw that the Israelites crossed the Jordan into the land that God had promised them. In the chapters that follow we see God give them some large victories against enemies who are opposed to what God is doing. Pastor Jeff also shared last week about the violence in the OT and gave it some context and perspective. If you missed last week, I suggest that you go back and watch it. It is important as we read the bible that we have it in context and it was laid out so well last week. Because if you don't, the violence can be quite distracting from what God is doing and we will miss the point.

God gave the Israelites major victories at the cities of Jericho and Ai.

The Gibeonites also saw what was happening and they could see that God was mighty and with the Israelites.

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**Joshua 9:3-6 NLT**

***<sup>3</sup> But when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, <sup>4</sup> they resorted to deception to save themselves. They sent ambassadors to Joshua, loading their donkeys with weathered saddlebags and old, patched wineskins. <sup>5</sup> They put on worn-out, patched sandals and ragged clothes. And the bread they took with them was dry and moldy. <sup>6</sup> When they arrived at the camp of Israel at Gilgal, they told Joshua and the men of Israel, “We have come from a distant land to ask you to make a peace treaty with us.”***

Joshua knew he couldn't make peace with those who lived close by because God had promised this land to them but the Gibeonites fooled them and made peace with them and asked to serve the Israelites.

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**Joshua 9:26-27 NLT**

***<sup>26</sup> So Joshua did not allow the people of Israel to kill them. <sup>27</sup> But that day he made the Gibeonites the woodcutters and water carriers for the community of Israel and for the altar of the Lord—wherever the Lord would choose to build it. And that is what they do to this day.***

So this is where we are when we arrive at our passage today.

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**Joshua 10:1-2 NLT**

***Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard that Joshua had captured and completely destroyed Ai and killed its king, just as he had destroyed the town of Jericho and killed its king. He also learned that the Gibeonites had made peace with Israel and were now their allies. <sup>2</sup> He and his people became very afraid when they heard all this because Gibeon was a large town—as large as the royal cities and larger than Ai. And the Gibeonite men were strong warriors.***

So we have the king of Jerusalem afraid of the Israelites because they have destroyed all of the cities they have come up against. He did not want them to be even stronger with these new allies from Gibeon.

Let's continue on. Adoni-zedek sends messengers to 4 other nearby kings to join him to attack Gibeon. You see, they know how powerful the Israelites are and he does not want them to have the Gibeonite force as well. Furthermore, this would also send a message to other kingdoms who might want to become allies with Israel.

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**Joshua 10:5 NLT**

***<sup>5</sup> So these five Amorite kings combined their armies for a united attack. They moved all their troops into place and attacked Gibeon.***

So how do the Gibeonites feel? Scared, afraid, lost, and alone. Kind of like we probably felt in my earlier example when we are threatened by 5 thugs in a parking lot at night and we are all alone.

That is a pretty hypothetical example though. Most of us, have never felt that. How about the youth that makes some bad choices and ends up pregnant. How does she feel? She can feel afraid, alone, and panicked. What will people think? What will her parents think? How do I get out of this predicament?

How about the spouse who has been married for many years and their loved one gets sick? And not just a little sick but really sick. It might be cancer, dementia, or heart failure? How do they feel? They probably feel alone and scared. Unsure what the next step would be. Just like the Gibeonites.

Let's read how the Gibeonites respond?

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**Joshua 10:6 NLT**

***<sup>6</sup> The men of Gibeon quickly sent messengers to Joshua at his camp in Gilgal. "Don't abandon your servants now!" they pleaded. "Come at once! Save us! Help us! For all the Amorite kings who live in the hill country have joined forces to attack us."***

They cry out for help. We need help right now. There are 5 forces bearing down on us. Don't forget us in our time of need.

This is the most logical response. Help me, I don't know what to do. This is too much for me to handle. This is more than I can overcome.

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**Romans 8:28 NLT**

***28 Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."***

Now God could have let the Gibeonites do this on their own as they had fooled Joshua into this peace treaty. Also, God could have let Joshua figure it out on his own as he messed up with making the treaty. Yet, God has the amazing ability to use us through our mess ups and screw ups for his glory.

But, let's also remember who this story is about? We have seen that the hero is not us nor is it the Gibeonites. Let's review the promise God made to Joshua back in Joshua 1:

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**Joshua 1:5-6 NLT- 5**

***No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. 6 Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.***

We are living in His Story. God has promised this land to the Israelites, not because they are amazing or Joshua is wonderful. It is because it is part of God's plan to rescue mankind.

Let's continue on. The Gibeonites are crying out for help.

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**Joshua 10:7-8**

***So Joshua and his entire army, including his best warriors, left Gilgal and set out for Gibeon. 8 "Do not be afraid of them," the Lord said to Joshua, "for I have given you victory over them. Not a single one of them will be able to stand up to you."***

What do we see here: God's plan and he is in control. Let's continue.

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**Joshua 10:9-11**

**Joshua traveled all night from Gilgal and took the Amorite armies by surprise. <sup>10</sup> The Lord threw them into a panic, and the Israelites slaughtered great numbers of them at Gibeon. Then the Israelites chased the enemy along the road to Beth-horon, killing them all along the way to Azekah and Makkedah. <sup>11</sup> As the Amorites retreated down the road from Beth-horon, the Lord destroyed them with a terrible hailstorm from heaven that continued until they reached Azekah. The hail killed more of the enemy than the Israelites killed with the sword.**

So who won the battle? Was it Joshua and his amazing fighting army? God is at work here. He is up to something massive and using the Israelites to fulfill his promises. God is at work. Joshua took his army and travelled all night and the Lord put the Amorite armies into a panic. The Israelites must have been tired yet somehow they were able to rout the Amorites. God sent hail to aid in the battle that killed more Amorites than the Israelites killed. Clearly, this was all about what God did. Let's continue.

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**Joshua 10:12-14**

**<sup>12</sup> On the day the Lord gave the Israelites victory over the Amorites, Joshua prayed to the Lord in front of all the people of Israel. He said, "Let the sun stand still over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Aijalon."**

**<sup>13</sup> So the sun stood still and the moon stayed in place until the nation of Israel had defeated its enemies.**

***Is this event not recorded in The Book of Jashar? The sun stayed in the middle of the sky, and it did not set as on a normal day. <sup>14</sup> There has never been a day like this one before or since, when the Lord answered such a prayer. Surely the Lord fought for Israel that day!***

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A couple of things here:

1. Joshua prayed. Because he knew it was bigger than him, bigger than the Israelites and bigger than the Gibeonites.

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2. God hears us. You are not Alone. God is not a stoic god that is uninterested in what is going on. He is up to something and his rescue plan is massive.

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3. It might be His rescue plan but it is good for us. He is rescuing us.

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4. God is all powerful. He stopped the sun and moon in the sky on this day. We make a big deal of an eclipse that happens quite regularly. This is a one time thing. Miraculous. And the miraculous was recorded by more than the Israelites “recorded in the book of Jashar.” God killed them with hail.

Do you see the picture of the gospel in that story? You and I are Gibeon. We are enemies of God, and God has not made war with us—He has made peace with us through the blood covenant of His Son, Jesus Christ. Because of what he has done, he has turned us from enemy to friend. From enemy to child of God. Anyone who attacks us, attacks God. And anytime I feel like I’m surrounded and I’m attacked, what should I do? Like Gibeon, I should cry out and say, “Hey, Jesus! Remember your promise? Remember that you won’t fail or abandon me. I need You right here, right now. I’m in a battle; I’m surrounded. Save us! Help us!”

God has made promises to us

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**Hebrews 3:5b-6 NLT**

***I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.” So we can say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?”***

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**John 3:16,17 NLT**

***16 “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.***

***17 God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.***

God does not revel in our suffering or the evil in the world. In fact he hates it. He is dealing with it.

God actually did something about evil and suffering...His name is Jesus. He hears us, he is on mission.

And you might be sitting here thinking, I am drowning here and struggling and I feel so alone. I pray and I don't like the answer or I don't hear an answer.

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**2 Peter 3:9 NLT**

***<sup>9</sup> The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.***

God has a plan to reconcile his people to Himself.

We keep talking about it is his plan, his mission. And it is. BUT it is FOR US. For our good. He wants to rescue us.

My growth group leads one of our RiverKid Sunday Schools on Sunday afternoon. This week I got a text about which lesson we were doing and it was about being bold for God. After I let him know, he said, "I was afraid of that". I laughed as I texted but I also offered for us to do a different one this week as there is no real order to what we are teaching. I get back this text "**No, I guess I just have to be bold for God.**" Isn't that the truth. This is something we can say to ourselves every morning.

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Our part of the mission, after we have prayed, after we have listened is to ACT. To be Bold. To take a step towards him.

When we are talking about God's Mission, he is going to accomplish the miraculous. At RiverKids, we already see what he is doing. We see him changing lives. We need to cry out to him like the Gibeonites when we are alone and afraid but we need to be bold like Joshua when we are following him.

So what does this mean for us? We have many places like Gibeon in Campbell River. How is God going to reconcile them to himself? I don't know, but he is going to use people like you and me.

How is he going to use us?

First, we must pray. We must ask him, where he is already at work. And then we must listen because he is not a stoic passive god. God is at work. Jesus came for a purpose and He gave us much to do.

Each of us have unique situations. Maybe, you feel alone and scared this morning because what is before you is too much to handle. In these cases we must cry out to God. We ask for help.

Or maybe God is calling you to help at Riverkids. Maybe he is calling you to help in our care home outreach. Maybe he is calling on you to help fund the mission in a bigger way than you are currently.

Last week, I saw a family walk out the door with 3 of the Giving Tree balls that are raising funds to fund the mission that God has given us. Both kids had a ball and so did mom and dad. What a great picture of discipleship in their family. There are balls that are \$2.50 and \$2500. Each of us can be a part of this plan.

Maybe he is calling you to walk across the street and invite your neighbour over for lunch or to church next Sunday? Whatever he is calling you to do, it has to start with prayer and with us listening because we are not alone. God hears us and is just waiting to use us in his Rescue plan. Then we have to act. We need to take a step. Jesus is the one who is going to do something miraculous. How did the most people die, hailstones. Not by the sword.

It is the Holy Spirit that is going to call them and change hearts. It wasn't until Joshua prayed and ACTED that God did the miraculous. In the summer I preached and you submitted names of people that you were praying for their salvation...are you still praying. Are you praying that God would open doors.

God does the miraculous everyday. Are you seeing it. Are you looking for it? Are you praying for it. Are you ACTING on it? We are not alone. God is at work. To be used, we have to be in motion and it has to involve some risk.





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**Objective of this study:** To see how God is at work in history, and today, and how he uses the most unlikely people, including us, to accomplish his purposes. [Remember, the main goal of each Growth Group is to allow God's Word to change your heart so that others would see Jesus in you and be likewise changed to be like him. He wants to change the world through us]

**Worship (5 – 10 minutes)**

1. Sing a song or two of praise and thanksgiving to God.
2. Spend five minutes in silence asking God to prepare your heart for how he wants to speak to you.
3. After the five minutes have someone interrupt the silence and read Psalm 91:1-6 meditatively to the group. Pause after each phrase letting God speak to you. Did anything “jump out at you”?

**Welcome (5 minutes)**

When you were growing up, when was a time you were truly afraid and alone? [It's really important when doing this study that we each think about ourselves specifically and ways we need to grow, not how Christians in general need to grow. Do the hard work of letting the Holy Spirit speak to your heart.]

**Word/Work (45-60 minutes)**

1. Read Joshua 10:1-15  
What stands out to you in the passage?  
How do you respond when you are scared, alone or lost? How did the Gibeonites respond (verse 6)?  
How did God respond to their cry for help (verse 7,8)? Where else in the bible have you seen God answer prayers for people who didn't deserve it? What is compelling about the battle in verses 9-11? Or in verses 12-15? Why is it important that it was recorded in non-Israeli literature?
2. a. How did Peter respond to being alone in Matthew 26:69-75?  
b. How did the apostles respond during after Jesus death in Luke 24:8-12?  
c. How do the apostles respond to Jesus and the mission after pentecost?

3. How do you respond to events that leave you scared, lost, or alone? Share if you feel that way now or have in the last 5 years?
4. What is your favourite OT miraculous feat that God accomplished? Share a time where you have seen God do the miraculous in your life or someone close to you? Why is it important to remember and share those moments where God does the impossible? How does it affect your faith and courage?
5. Where in Campbell River has God revealed to you places like Gibeon (places that need the supernatural to happen)? How might God use you here?
6. What do you need/want to remind yourself of this week? Consider things from this study and also what stood out for you from the sermon.

### **Prayer**

1. Spend some time in prayer. Start by worshipping God for who he is and what he has done.
2. Pray for areas in your life where you feel scared, lost or alone. Pray for areas in Campbell River that God has put on your heart and that need God to come and do the miraculous.
3. Here are some things you can pray about for the church:
  - A. That, as a church, we would actively and purposefully engage in the mission of Jesus in Campbell River.
  - B. Our church board and staff as they lead us to live out the mission of Jesus
  - C. River Kids ministry as they reach out to kids in our community.
  - D. Care home ministry as they bring the good news of Jesus to those who cannot come to hear it.
  - E. Our church finances. We are about \$40,000 behind. Pray that God would supply our needs so the mission can be carried on in Campbell River and around the world.
  - F. Our missionary of the month: - Jim & Kristi Miller with NAIM - check them out on our website and on the big chalkboard in the foyer. Pray about how you might be a part of supporting them.
  - G. For those who kids and families who will be impacted by Operation Christmas Child.