

love most and know best. You may want to hit pause to have a conversation with those closest to you. Moses listened to his father-in-law and chose a path that would allow him to lead effectively for many years. What would fast-forwarding your life look like? Are you satisfied with what you believe your future will become? What adjustments or repentance do you need in order to change the story of your life? Write your ideas here.

### **Thursday, July 29**

Read Exodus 18:5-23. As we discussed in yesterday's devotion, Moses listened to the wisdom of Jethro. It was suggested in the message that we should ask two questions of ourselves in thinking of the stories of our lives. First, if I keep doing this (behavior), what story will I be telling? Second, is that what I want my story to be? While some consider this a morbid suggestion, you may want to consider what others would write about you in your obituary. What stories would they tell about your life? What would your children say about you? Your grandchildren? Your friends? Jethro knew that Moses would "wear himself out" and offered him advice on how to delegate the work that needed to be done. The good news here is we do not have to make positive changes in our lives alone! Who can be part of your team to change your behaviors? Who is among those who know you best and love you most? Write your thought here and thank God for the people in your lives, including your church family.

### **Friday, July 30**

Read Hebrews 12:1-3. The writer of Hebrews compares our lives to a race, where we are supported by a great cloud of witnesses. We are told to lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely. Some translations say to cast off or throw off the weight and sin! That's a great image as you consider what you need to get rid of in order to tell the life story you want to tell! Why not celebrate and share this "casting off" with others, gaining support for the next positive chapters of your life!

## **Message Notes – July 25, 2021**

### ***Life Changing Decisions – Stop\****

- I. Our life stories have a beginning, middle and end and there is a certain continuity and \_\_\_\_\_ to our stories.
  - A. The good news is we can \_\_\_\_\_ the trajectory of our lives in new and meaningful directions.
  - B. That involves starting new disciplines in our lives and it involves stopping and letting go of practices and habits that are holding us back from telling our life-stories.
  - C. It's really all about \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
  - D. A big part of becoming an adult is accepting responsibilities for your \_\_\_\_\_.
  - E. The point is every \_\_\_\_\_ we make, both big and small, affects different aspects of our lives.
- II. This Life Changing Decision to Stop is not just about stopping a bad \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. It is also about stopping to \_\_\_\_\_ through our decisions.
  - B. The interaction between Moses and his father-in-law is a great example of stopping to \_\_\_\_\_ a better course of action.
  - C. Do you have a \_\_\_\_\_, a mindset, an addiction, an \_\_\_\_\_ or something else in your life that is hijacking the story you want to tell?
  - D. The rest of the story is Moses \_\_\_\_\_ to his father-in-law.
- III. We need to consider the consequences of the decision and whether or not it will contribute \_\_\_\_\_ to the story of our lives that we want to tell.
  - A. We're truly not meant to do \_\_\_\_\_ on our own.
    1. We should also \_\_\_\_\_ an important element of Moses' decision.

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\*Exodus 18:5-23 and Hebrews 12:1-3

2. It wasn't that he did \_\_\_\_\_; in fact he did \_\_\_\_\_.
- B. Many times we have to \_\_\_\_\_ of what we've been holding so tightly so we can receive what God wants for us.
- C. You can ask yourself two questions.
1. If I keep doing this, what \_\_\_\_\_ will I be telling?
  2. Is that what I \_\_\_\_\_ my story to be?
- D. As you think about your life story, consider the implications of your actions by \_\_\_\_\_ your story.
- IV. Just pick one behavior to change. What is the one thing that's \_\_\_\_\_ the story you want to tell, that's \_\_\_\_\_ you back from your best story possible?
- A. We're told in Hebrews to "\_\_\_\_\_ every weight and the sin that clings so closely."
  - B. The good news is we don't have to do it \_\_\_\_\_.
  - C. You need to get rid of the \_\_\_\_\_ in your life so that you can clearly hear the story God desires for you.
  - D. Fast forward your story enough to learn what you must stop in order to change your story into an \_\_\_\_\_ that you would be proud to proclaim!

## ***Daily Devotional Guide***

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

### **Monday, July 26**

It was mentioned early in the message that the crux of the message is all about cause and effect. If you eat unhealthy foods non-stop from sunrise to sunset, you will gain weight. If you continue to party every night, drinking lots of alcohol, sooner or later it will affect your daily living; you work performance will

suffer as will your relationships. A big part of becoming an adult is accepting responsibilities for our choices. What choices have you made that have improved your life? What choices have you made that have injured relationships and held you back from your best self? Think about how cause and effect has affected your life. Write your thoughts here asking God for guidance and clarity on how your actions contribute to your quality of life.

### **Tuesday, July 27**

Yesterday we considered the cause and effect phenomenon in our lives and how we should take responsibility for how our actions affect our lives. Cause and effect has to do with looking at the past and seeing its influence on the present. We can also fast-forward our lives and consider the trajectory and end results of living the way we do in the present. The younger you are the more difficult this may be; often in our younger years, we consider ourselves invulnerable to ill effects of poor decisions.

If you fast forward your life from today – considering your eating habits, your exercise routines, how you spend your time – what do you imagine your future being like? What past mistakes and missteps will affect your future? What good decision have you made will improve the outlook of that future? Begin to think about life-changing decisions, even small ones, will change the trajectory of your life. Write your ideas here and give thanks to God that it is never too late to begin new and positive chapter in your life's story!

### **Wednesday, July 28**

Read Exodus 18:5-23. This message of stopping within our Summer Message Series titled Life Changing Decisions is now just about stopping destructive and unhealthy habits. It is also about stopping to think through our decisions. You need to weigh how a decision affects not only your life but the lives of those you