Title: Stepping Into Messy Situations | Walking by Fiath

Video: Jz1Zb57NUMg

0:00

[Music] Okay, good morning Christ Chapel. Great to be with you. Hello to all of

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you joining us at uh any of our campuses or if you're joining us online. Thanks for making worship a part of your day. I

0:13

want to go ahead and address the elephant in the room or rather the lobster in the room and that is me. Um

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because I know that Ken told you last week that I was sick and now I show up sunburn and you're like I don't know.

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Was he really sick? I really was sick. There was something going going through our house. I wasn't playing hookie or

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anything like that. I wasn't at the beach or anything. I hate the beach. I don't like sand, so I wouldn't go there

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anyway. Um, so I only work one day a week, so let's get to work. Open your

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Bibles, please. All right, open your Bibles. We're in Exodus chapter 32.

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Exodus chapter 32. We're going to finish out uh this chapter and this we're going

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to I I'll I'll tell you about how we're going to uh talk about this this week. But if you're opening one of the blue

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Bibles, it's page 72. Page 72. Uh you'll need a Bible. You do

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need your sermon notes. And also, I know that uh if you're at one of our venues, you were handed the communion element.

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So, if you'll just hold on to those. We're going to take those at the end uh right after the sermon. So, that'll be

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following up the sermon. So, it's should be I I hope this sets up a a worshipful

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uh time for you to uh celebrate the Lord's supper as we celebrate it together as a family. So, yes, thank

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thanks to Ken for filling in uh last week. We're going to pick up uh where he left off, but with a different

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perspective. And so, if I can just catch you up on where we were last week, we were at uh the base of Mount Si. So, we

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were at the base of Mount Si. uh Aaron who is Moses's older brother has

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acquiesced essentially to the the people's demands to make us gods. They

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they haven't seen Moses in a while. So they say make us gods and so they gather up a bunch of earrings and necklaces.

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Remember all of those were plundered from Egypt whenever whenever they left Egypt after God had set them free. So

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they're there. They mold it into this, you know, golden calf and that is what

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they begin to worship. Aaron says, "Uh, behold, Israel, the God who brought you

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out of Egypt." Which is just just crazy to think that all of the things that

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they had seen God do. Plus, they had literally just made that idol. And he's like, "Uh, this is what brought you out

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of Egypt." I mean, any you would just think logically that it's like this doesn't make any sense. And there was

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one person uh that we that was missing from last week's scene that was an

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important uh person throughout the book of Exodus. And who is that? Moses. Very

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good. Moses was missing. Where is Moses? Moses isn't in this mess. Moses is at

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the top of the mountain having literally a mountaintop experience with God. I

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mean, he's enjoying probably what I would imagine is like the greatest quiet time ever. And and he and God are just

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conversing and and they're talking and and Moses, I mean, Moses is getting the

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law from from God. And God is giving him this this great vision of of what it's

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going to be like when his people live by his his laws. when when they love mercy,

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when they do justly, when they walk humbly with God. And he's like, "Isn't this this is going to be amazing?" And

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Moses, I I know how Moses is feeling there. He's getting all fired up. And he's like, "This is going to be great.

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This is exactly what these people need. We we needed this to understand how you

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want us to live so that we can understand your and and have your favor and walk uh together." And then in in

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the middle of this wonderful time of communing with God, God interrupts this

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this quiet time and and he goes, "Hey, Moses, we're having a great time up here

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on the mountain, but you really need to go down the mountain because there's a

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mess down there. There's something going on." And and I'm sure Moses was like, "I

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don't think I really want to go, you know, but this is this is good, but he's like, no, you need to go down to to the

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base of the mountain and go see." And Moses walks from the mountaintop into

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the mess. And and when I think about Moses walking down there, um I I don't

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think he knows exactly what has gone on obviously, but I can only imag there's

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there's this picture of this meme that comes into my mind whenever I think of

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this. And I don't know if you've seen this before where um it's from the the show Community, but anyway, uh where

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this friend is walking in with all these pizzas. I imagine that's Moses walking down with the tablets, you know, the the

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Ten Commandments. And then he walks in and he walks into his friends and this is what he sees is just this chaotic

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scene and like what is going on? I thought I was walking down and bringing

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good news, you know, bringing pizzas to the people. And no, the place is in

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chaos. If you don't understand the show, you don't really need to. It's just supposed to represent chaos. Uh that

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that's it. That's what's in my head when I imagine Moses going down to to visit

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uh the people and you go, man, how how could they do this? He's he's actually so angry that he ends up breaking the

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tablets, which I I think is symbolic of the people breaking their promise to God

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as uh Ken mentioned last week as he set up the whole thing. I mean, remember they had promised God you we are going

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to do everything you say everything. And then now they've quickly turned. And so

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I imagine that's symbolic of just not only the broken promise to God, but I

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think God's broken heart. I think I I literally think uh his heart was broken

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at at that time going, "Guys, come on." And Moses is the one who's representing

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God's heart at that time as he walks into this mess. Now last week certainly

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there were so many aspects that that I can relate to whenever I I think of I'm

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quick to to run to those things that I can create or those things that I can control etc etc make those idols those

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things that we say we can worship this and it'll provide me the safety security or whatever that I think that I need.

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Last week was really relatable, but I wonder if this week is relatable as well when we put you in the perspective from

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the point of view of Moses. Like, do you ever feel like Moses? And here's what I

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mean by that. You come, let's let's just uh we'll segment it this way. You come

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on a Sunday morning to to worship and you you worship the Lord. You pour out

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your heart to him. You open the Bible. You hear the scriptures. The God's word

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speaks to you. The Holy Spirit convicts. The Holy Spirit conforms you uh to the image of Christ in new ways. You find

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this new abundant life. You're refreshed by his word. You find this new life,

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this new motivation, this new perspective, this new vision for your week. And then you wake up on Monday

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morning and you walk into work and you go, "What is going on?

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What in the world?" Or maybe you walk into your HOA meeting Sunday nights and

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you go, "What is going on?" Or you walk onto a a sideline of one of the ball

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fields. What in the world? You you have this wonderful experience with God and

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you're so inspired. You're like, "This is how it should be." Yet you walk into

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a situation where you're walking around people who are not abiding by all those things, who haven't seen God the way

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that you've seen God, who haven't heard from God the way that you've heard from God, who haven't experienced God the way

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that you've experienced God. And your heart is broken. And you go, "Guys, what are we doing?

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This this this doesn't seem like it's the way that it's supposed to be." Now, when you experience that, I think you

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have the same options that Moses had. I think Moses had a few options when he

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stepped into that. He could have retreated back up the mountain and God,

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I'm done with you. I'm leaving. I'm going back up. It's me and God. That's

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it. And just I'm not going to mess with it. Or you can get really angry and

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start condemning people and shaming people. Don't you know better? Well,

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maybe they don't. I mean, there is a perspective where they the the people at the base of the

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mountain where they they saw like the the thunder and they they or they heard the thunder and they saw the lightning

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and and and all of those those things, but they hadn't seen God the way that Moses saw God. They hadn't heard from

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God the way that Moses heard from God. And so it would be unfair in my opinion,

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my humble opinion, it'd be unfair for Moses to place the same expectations upon them. Just like we can't put those

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expectations onto other people that haven't seen God or heard God or experienced God the way that you have.

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That that that would be an unfair expectation to put on them. So I don't think we should condemn them or shame

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them. The other option that we have is to really step into that mess and to step

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into it in a Christlike way. And that's what we're going to be talking about uh today. So today is actually going to be

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the last part of our walking by faith uh series. And so that doesn't mean we're

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done with Exodus. As Ken mentioned last week, we've skipped a large portion which is about the tabernacle. And

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there's a large portion to come where they're going to build the tabernacle. And so we're going to cover the

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tabernacle later on. It'll start uh around Thanksgivingish time. Okay? So we'll

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cover the tabernacle and that will finish out the year and that will finish out our study uh in Exodus. But today,

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we're going to finish this walking by faith series. And we're going to use it kind of as a a transition to a new

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series that we're going to start next week, which is our reach series, where we're going to be talking about the

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specific definitions of what we mean by reaching out to those who don't yet know

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or walk with Jesus. So, we're going to spend five weeks in in our reach series

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uh talking about those specific definitions, our approach trying to equip and inspire you to reach those the

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800,000 in our own backyard who don't yet know or walk with Jesus. So, that will be the next five weeks to come. But

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we're going to use this as a as a a transition because really there are a

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lot of principles that are uh that Moses embodies some correlations that are

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going on here in Exodus 32 that are going to correlate with the approach that we're going to be having into reach

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as Moses steps into a people that haven't seen God the way that he saw God, that hadn't heard from him the way

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that he had. And these approaches are going to you're going to see these fleshed out over the next few weeks. And

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so we're going to use that uh as a transition. So what I want to do today is I want to uh kind of carry you

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through the end of Exodus chapter 32. I'm going to just highlight some of the

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things that that Moses does as he sees this messy situation and these people

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that are really in a desperate situation. And I'll ask you some some more introspective questions along the

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way and then we'll finish with how Jesus lived this out for your sake and mine

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because I know often times we don't want to step into that mess. But it's a place

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that we're called to step into. It's a place that you've been before and it's a

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place where Jesus met you at some time in your life. And so uh that's the outline for today. But we're going to

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pick up here in verses uh 7 and 9 where I want to show you the first step of

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faith uh that that Moses took. So I can show you how to walk by faith as we step

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down from the mountaintop into some messy situations. So uh verse 7 it says,

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"And the Lord said to Moses, go down for your people whom you brought

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out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves." And the Lord said to Moses,"I have seen this people and

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behold it is a stiffnecked people." Uh the first uh step that we

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take, walking by faith steps in and identifies with people who haven't seen

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God. Steps in and identifies with people who haven't seen God. Now certainly when I

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say that they haven't seen God, they they have seen evidences of God. I'm not trying to uh, you know, overplay that or

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exaggerate that they haven't seen anything of God. They certainly saw the pillar of cloud, the pillar of fire, all

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of those things. But there's no doubt, if we can agree on this, that Moses had seen some things that the people hadn't

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that that there was a different category there. And we'll learn more about that.

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Uh, you actually see that in Exodus chapter 33, uh, which we're not going to cover today. But Moses had seen some

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unique things. He had a unique experience with God. Yet in order to step into their lives, he had to first

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identify with them. And he had to step in and identify with them because they were in a bad spot. If you look at that

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word corrupted, when he says, "Hey, your people have been corrupted." Uh it's

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actually that word is used a few other times in the the Hebrew and the Old Testament, but I want to highlight two

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of them because one of the times that it's used is in Genesis chapter 6. In Genesis chapter 6, if you will remember,

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that is when God tells Noah basically, man, this this world is I mean it is

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crazy corrupted and I am starting over. He also mentions the same thing with

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Sodom and Gomorrah. uh same same word corrupted there and in both of those uh

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sin was condemned uh sin was put down the people of faith

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carried through and that's essentially what God is telling Moses right now is

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Moses hey this is th this is corrupted the people have been corrupted and God

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he even says Moses as they're conversing there I I'm I'm ready to start over with just you and a few other people of faith

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I mean we're back to the same same situation. And Moses had to identify

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with the people. It even says that they were stiff necked. They were they were unresponsive.

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They they they weren't responding to to the things that they had seen of God.

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And you go, "Well, how is Moses supposed to identify with that?" Well, let's remember Moses's story. Had Moses been

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corrupted by sin? Remember Moses? We've been studying the book of Exodus this entire year. So, I know it's been a

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while since we covered this, but remember Moses makes it through the Nile as this miracle child. He's the one that

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God like goes into this covert operation to plant him in the palace so that he

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can save the people. And what does Moses do? Murders a guy. It's like, well,

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there goes that plan. So, he's corrupted himself by sin. And

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then when we talk about stiff necked and unresponsive, let me take you back to the the burning bush. You remember the

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burning bush and God says, "Hey, you're going to deliver my people." And what does Moses say? Not me. Send somebody

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else. It it's it's not me. I I can't go.

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So, Moses is been corrupted. Moses has been stiff necked. Moses has to identify

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with the people in order to be able to step into their mess. Because when we identify with people, we oftentimes have

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compassion for people because we realize we've been there too. Which leads to our

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first uh introspective question. And it's this. Do you have a humble heart

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that can identify with others? Do you have a humble heart that can

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identify with others?

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Just just practically speaking, and I think I've seen this in friendships. I think I've seen this in in family

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relationships. If if you want to be helpful, the best place to start is

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being humble. Humble people are oftenimes helpful.

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And and humble people are the ones you ask for help. I I I I don't usually want

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to ask the prideful person for help. I I feel like I'm only going to be belittled or, you know, made fun of or whatever.

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But humble people, I have no problem going, "Man, help me. I I need plenty of it."

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Humility helps a a lot. And the humility that Moses has to have here is this this

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starting from from the same starting point of I get you people. I get you. I

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I've been there. I I I've been in a mess myself in a mess. So so much of a mess

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that remember he fled to Midian for 40 years. He he didn't think God wanted

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anything to to do with him. And certainly these people when they're caught in this idolat idolatry, I'm sure

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that they think God doesn't want anything to do with me. And here's Moses, this bearer of good news, this

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bearer of of grace and and mercy. Now certainly there are going to be

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consequences for sin, but he steps in to identify with the people first and

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foremost. And that's got to be our approach as well. We have to be humble

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people. We're not experts. We don't have it all together. We're not perfect or

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anything. But we know someone who is. We we we know someone who who has helped

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us, who has transformed our lives, who has saved us out of our own mess. It

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reminds me of 1 Corinthians chapter 6. If you remember 1 Corinthians chapter 6, Paul is talking to believers, talking to

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saints in the faith. And and he's he's telling them, hey, there are some folks

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that will not inherit the kingdom of God. And he goes through and he begins listing these people who uh their lack

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of faith manifests in these specific ways in 1 Corinthians 6. But then he he he kind of summarizes that section by

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saying, "And such were some of you."

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That's the state you were in. Remember, you see, as we begin to think, and this

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is why I want to use this week as a transition into our reach series of what we're going to be talking about. Such

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were some of us. We have all been in a state where we didn't know who God was.

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Where God didn't have a hold of our hearts, where our minds were set on other things that were of this world. We

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where we were not going to inherit the kingdom of God. Where we were enemies of

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God. But he stepped into our lives and other

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people stepped into our lives humbly. Do you have a humble heart that can first

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identify with people and go, "Yeah, I know how you got there cuz I've been there, too. I I can understand that. I

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can see that." It starts those steps of faith that we take to step into messy

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situations around us, step into other people's lives, just like somebody stepped into ours, begins with

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identifying with others. Second, walking by faith doesn't just step in and

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identify with others. It steps in and intercedes for people who need God.

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Steps in and intercedes for people who need God. Now, when I use the term

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intercede, I know that that's not a term you use every day. um if you do that's

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kind of strange but uh intercedes what what I mean by that is to to mediate or

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to try to reconcile two two parties or or two two people specifically when one

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is offended and remember the one being offended here is is God and and Moses is

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going to step in and he's going to try to intercede for these two groups of of or for God and and the Israelites to try

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to reconcile them and mediate their their differences. In verses 11 and 14,

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it says, "But Moses implored the Lord his God and said, 'Oh Lord, why does

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your wrath burn hot against your people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty

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hand?" And the Lord relented from the disaster that he had spoken of bringing

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on his people. So Moses uh implores the Lord. So it's this this idea of this

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this intercession. He's speaking on behalf of the people trying to to plead

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his people's case to the Lord. And he's basically throwing himself on the mercy

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of the court because uh in this situation, God is judge and jury.

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He he is the one you're pleading your case to. And he says, "Hey, would you please relent from it from from the

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consequences of sin that I know that this deserves? I I totally understand it, but please, Lord God, relent.

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Please, please, please." And he he he makes his plea based really on two

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particular things. The first one is the witness to the rest of the world. He

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says, "Would you not destroy your people?" Because what would that say to the Egyptians?

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What would that say to the Egyptians whom you just delivered the Israelites out of their land, out of slavery? And

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if you brought them out here and destroyed them, that wouldn't be a good witness to the world about your

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character, God. And so he he pleads on God's character. The second thing that he pleads based upon is God's promises

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to the patriarchs. He says,"Remember the promises that you made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That would you please

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continue to keep your promises to your people?" And when I think of those those

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two things about how Moses is interceding on behalf of people, I think the those are two great things to pray

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for when we plead for God's mercy, to rely upon his character and to rely upon

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his promises. Which leads me to your next introspective question. Uh, do you

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have a prayer life that regularly intercedes on behalf of others?

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Do you have a prayer life that regularly intercedes for others?

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when when we pray for other people and and

24:02

you might find this to be true. So you can come up to me and say, "Cody, you're wrong." But

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if if I were to categorize the the the prayer request, the main prayer requests

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that that I hear just just floated around, it's usually in one of three

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categories. Uh first is safety.

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Second is opportunity. Like would you open this door, give them

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a better opportunity, a better job, a better whatever safety, you know, on a trip or whatever it may be. Um, opport

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safety, opportunity, and then healing if if somebody is in, you know, like a

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really desperate state because we don't want to run to prayer too quickly.

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I meant that sarcastically. Okay. I just want to make sure you know it can't fell

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pretty flat. Just want to make sure you understand what I mean here.

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But those those three are are really the things that that I hear being shared or

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or prayed for most. And I I'm I'm the same. I I'm guilty of that. Meaning

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asking for that, but also just just praying for that. But when I look at biblical prayers, like biblically, what

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do people pray for? Um, if they're if they're praying for those things, like

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if if they're praying for safety, um, they're they're really just praying that

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God would provide opportunities to be able to preach the gospel more. Or if they're praying for opportunities,

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they're praying for open doors for opportunities to share more about God.

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And if they're praying for healing, they're praying for that. so that God would be glorified. When when I look at

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at biblical prayers, it's more about salvation. It's more about people coming to know Christ. It's more about

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sanctification. people being conformed to the image of Christ or um keeping

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people from temptation like they wouldn't fall into temptation and be tripped up uh by the enemy like like

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their biblical intercession seems different than often times the prayers

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that we pray in our regular Christian circles. It just seems different. Which tells me that that there's probably one

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of two things going on. First, we're not sharing honestly what's going on.

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We're not sharing honestly what's going on in our life. And it's easy to say, "Oh, pray for safety. Oh, pray for this

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opportunity." We we we kind of mail it in on prayer requests. Or uh secondly,

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we we don't really take seriously what's the condition of the condition of

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people's hearts, like what's really going on. Or we I guess third we have

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the wrong aim in life. The wrong aim in life is not to be uh healthy and

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successful and wealthy. Hey, if God does all those things, praise God. Give him

27:04

glory. Awesome. But that's not the aim of our lives because this isn't all we

27:10

have. And so when we pray for for folks, what are we praying for? Are we praying

27:16

that we would look more like Jesus? And when we come together with brothers and and sisters and when we gather together

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and we go, "How can I pray for you? Are we really going pray for me because I was short with my wife and I need to be

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reconciled to her and my heart needs to be changed. I need forgiveness."

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And then pray for me that I go and I have that conversation. Pray that an opportunity opens up to have that

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conversation and pray that that goes well. That I would be reconciled to her. I mean like

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and you go that Cody that's not that that big of a prayer request is it is it not?

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I I don't know. I mean I think it I think it is for for God to be

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glorified for marriages to be reconciled for those kind of things to happen. Like those are those are God glorifying

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prayers. like the there there are those things biblically that we need to be

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praying for because when he says here that he implored the Lord

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that word implored it's an interesting word um to me it when you trace its

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meaning it actually has a lot of different meanings but one uh when when you break it down some of the meanings

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of implored mean sick or grieved

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or weak meaning and when when you apply it to this implored it means I am in

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this context I am sick Lord for the condition of the people like I'm grieved

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at their condition I am grieved at my own condition I am

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weak I have nothing to bring you Lord I I have I have nothing that that I

29:03

deserve but I am going to throw myself on the mercy of the judge and jury the

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God who I know wants to maintain his witness to a lost world and who wants to

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uphold his character as a promise maker and a promisekeeper. And I'm going to throw myself at your feet, Lord. And I'm

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going to put this person whom I love at your feet. Please, plea. I implore you. I am

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grieved for them to work in their life.

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Not just to get them to work safely and back home safely. That's awesome. Please Lord, do that.

29:41

But then some are are you in tune with the spirit of God that you pray the

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prayers of the spirit of God? Those are the things that he is calling

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you to pray for other people. Do you have a prayer life that regularly intercedes on behalf of others? And then

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finally, the last uh step of faith that that Moses takes as he steps in to his

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people, walking by faith steps in and intervenes to speak into people who haven't heard God.

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Remember, they haven't they haven't heard God the way that Moses heard God.

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You know, when I think about um when when you show up into situations

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that where things are are when ungodly things are going on, when you show up,

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sometimes those things stop. And that is good. It's good to show up.

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But when you speak up, you begin to point people in the right direction.

30:45

So showing up is great. Speaking up is the next step. And that's the next step

30:50

that Moses takes in verses 25 and 26. And when Moses saw that the people had

30:56

broken loose, I'll talk about that term in a second. For Aaron had let them break loose to the derision of their

31:02

enemies. Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, "Who's on the Lord's side?

31:09

Who's on the Lord's side? Are are you with him or are you against him? Who who's speaking up here?" Moses

31:17

is speaking up and he's saying, "Guys, I I've got to call you to a decision

31:24

because if you keep going down this path, it's not going to be good for you. It's not going to go well for you. You

31:31

need to turn. You need to get on the Lord's side." Um, when it talks about a

31:36

broken loose, it it means they were out of control. Just completely out of

31:42

control. And you remember this cuz they started they had this feast where it seems like they were taking on all of

31:48

the idol worship that they had learned in Egypt where there was this uh uh

31:56

there was basically prostitution worship. I mean that's what was going on. And that's that was a term that was

32:01

used in here when it says they were they were playing. They weren't playing there. There there was much worse things

32:09

going on. Um there was a terrible they had broken loose. They were out of control. No restraint. Anything goes and

32:17

we'll call it worship. Worship to this golden calf. And Moses

32:22

has to step in and go that's not worship. That's not good. That's not good for you. So who is on the Lord's

32:31

side? And when you think about Moses stepping in to ask the question, I mean he had every right to ask that question.

32:37

Every right to. uh he he was one he was related to these folks. These were his

32:44

relatives. Uh two he had journeyied with them all the way from Egypt and he had

32:50

brought them out into and carrying them on. He's going to lead them uh to the promised land. But also another reason

32:57

why he had the right to ask that question was well he was called and set apart to do that. But also he was he was

33:05

experiencing the consequences of their sin. I mean, it was going to affect him as

33:11

well. And so, he has every right to step up and go, "Hey, you need to turn from

33:17

what you're doing and get on the Lord's side uh quickly." So, here's my introspective question.

33:24

Do you have a close relationship that can intervene for others sake?

33:30

Do you have a close relationship that can intervene for others sake?

33:35

And when I say a close relationship, I mean certainly yes, a close relationship with the Lord because you

33:42

need his heart to speak his word. You need his his spirit to speak through

33:49

you. You need to understand his heart. But also, do you have a close relationship with others? Are are are

33:55

you living in proximity with folks that that you can speak into their life in a

34:01

humble, loving, and gracious uh way?

34:07

Because if not you, then who? I we we'll do we're going to we're going

34:14

to talk about this over the next few weeks, but as as God brings someone to

34:20

mind that you're like, man, they're the the way that they're living, I understand it. I've been in the same

34:25

mess before, but it's not good for them. And God has a a different way that he's

34:30

calling them to live, that he wants them to live, that will bring them life. If if if you don't talk to that person,

34:36

then who will? Who are they going to listen to?

34:42

Who they're not going to listen to me. You know them better. They know you. You

34:50

have more regular conversations with them. Not Not me. And so if not you, then then who? God has given you close

34:58

relationships with folks so that you can represent him. And we'll be talking

35:03

about that s more in the in the coming weeks. But um all of this uh when I

35:10

think about Moses stepping down from the mountain um and stepping into this this

35:16

messy messy situation, I think of how Jesus stepped into our mess. And that's

35:22

we're going to transition uh into communion here in just a moment. But I just want to remind you of some

35:27

scriptures because all of the things that we talked about Moses doing, it's what Jesus did. See, Jesus stepped into

35:34

our mess to to to reconcile us back to God. 1 Timothy 2:5. For there is one God

35:40

and there is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. Jesus

35:46

identified with us. Um he identified with us. He didn't uh Philippians 2 6

35:52

and 7 it says though he was in the form of God he did not count equality with

35:57

God a thing to be grasped but he emptied himself by taking the form of a servant being

36:04

born in the likeness of men to identify with us to go okay I understand what

36:10

it's like to live on this earth I got I got it and then he intercedes for us

36:16

Jesus intercedes for us John 17 20 and 21. I I I won't read it. Uh I'm going to

36:23

get through these quicker, but John 17, you need to know this. You need to know this. You need to know this. Jesus

36:30

prayed for you in the upper room before he went to the cross. He prayed

36:35

for you. He said, he tells the father, I'm not I'm not just praying for these disciples

36:42

that are with me and around me now. I'm praying for all of those who will believe in me, all of those to come. He

36:49

interceded for you. And when we think about that word implored, sick, grieved, remember that that term that we just

36:55

talked about from from Moses. Think about Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane when he's so grieved he's sweating blood

37:03

and he's going to the cross for you, which is ultimately what he did. Jesus intervened for us and he gave his life

37:11

for us. Mark 10:45. Even the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his

37:18

life as a ransom for many. He intervenes, saying, "This will go badly

37:23

for you unless somebody pays the penalty for your sin," which is what we're going

37:29

to celebrate uh now is what our savior did for us. But we'll celebrate that at all of our venues together as a church

37:35

family. But let me pray for us uh before we do so. God, uh, thank you for, uh,

37:40

intervening in our lives in in a way that we certainly didn't deserve,

37:46

but certainly needed. Thank you for taking the initiative even

37:51

when we didn't know what we needed to step into my mess, our mess,

37:58

to save us from going down a dead-end road that leads to destruction.

38:06

Lord, as we gather around the table as a family,

38:13

would it be worshipful for us to remember how you came and rescued us?

38:19

But Lord God, would we always have in our our heart and our mind that there's always room for one more?

38:26

And bring to mind those folks that are close to us whom we love desperately.

Title: How Well Do You Know God? | Walking By Faith

Video: 6\_HgIPUXpVM

0:00

No, I am not Cody McQueen. I'm the better-l looking one. I am uh really

0:05

excited to be here. I want to welcome everybody who's worshiping online and those of you in the 5:00 service. Um I'm

0:12

excited because I've been given a um a unique passage. Uh Cody texted me uh at

0:18

on Tuesday evening and he said, "Hey, I'm sick. Could you fill in?" And I said, "Sure. What's the passage?" And he

0:24

says, "Well, it's Exodus chapter 32." And I just taught Exodus and and I knew

0:29

what that passage was. And I paused for a minute and I said, "Okay, um, Exodus

0:35

32. What happened to 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 31?" Cuz Ben finished with 23.

0:44

What What happened to those eight chapters? And he goes, "Oh, we're going to cover those later." And I panicked

0:51

um because there's a lot of meat in those chapters that set up chapter 32:es

0:57

1-6, which is where we're going to be. So, if you have your Bibles, open them up. And if you're a type A personality,

1:05

and I know you know who you are, right? You're going nuts right now, too, is you

1:10

can't skip eight chapters. Your pulse rates increase. You're starting to sweat. It's It's going to be okay. Uh,

1:18

take a deep breath. I'm going to do a 36,000 ft fly over those eight chapters

1:23

so that we can understand what's going to happen in chapter 32:es 1 through

1:29

1-6. It's page 72 in the pew Bible if you need a pew Bible. But you're going to need a copy of God's word because

1:35

we're going to look at a lot of passages this morning. But I want to begin by

1:40

reading these six verses. Now, here's my request. You're very familiar with a

1:46

story and you're going to approach this story as if you already know the lessons

1:52

to be learned. And I want you to just put all that aside and listen to it with

1:57

fresh ears because I taught it several months ago and when I read it again, God

2:03

showed me something I hadn't really seen before. So, we're going to read it together and then we're going to unpack

2:09

it together. So, look at chapter 32 of Exodus verse one.

2:14

It says, 'When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered themselves together

2:19

to Aaron and said to him up, make us gods who shall go before us. As for

2:25

this, Moses, the man who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what is become of him. So Aaron said to

2:32

them, "Take off the rings of gold that are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them

2:37

to me." So all the people took off the rings of gold that were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. and he

2:43

received the gold from their hand and fashioned it with a graving tool and

2:48

made a golden calf. And they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who

2:53

brought you up out of the land of Egypt." When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it, and Aaron made a

2:59

proclamation and said, "Tomorrow shall be a feast to the Lord Yahweh."

3:04

And they rose up early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down

3:10

to eat and drink and rose up to play. Now, you don't have to be a theologian,

3:17

a Bible scholar, a seminary professor, a seminary graduate, a pastor. You don't

3:22

even have to be a Christian to read these verses and know something's really wrong.

3:27

It it just jumps out of the page. It's just obvious that these people have missed something. And and so we read it

3:34

and we think, "Okay, this is bad." But it's going to be worse because what

3:41

I want to do is I want to look at the context that's going on here. These are the chosen people of God.

3:48

We've studied them for months now. They've been redeemed out of slavery in Egypt. They've been taken from Egypt.

3:54

They went across the Red Sea on dry ground. They've been fed mana. They've been fed quail. They have made it across

4:00

the the Sinai Peninsula. And they are now at the base of Mount Si.

4:05

And if you recall three weeks ago, Cody unpacked the ten commandments. And the

4:11

very first commandment God gave them was what? You shall have no other gods before me.

4:16

So let let's go back and revisit that. This is Exodus 20:es 3-4.

4:22

You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything that

4:29

is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down

4:35

to them or serve them. For I, the Lord Yahweh, am your God Elohim, and

4:43

I am a jealous God." Now, that's just part of the context, but you you read that and you think,

4:50

"What in the world has happened that would possess these people to do what they've just done?" What we read in

4:56

verses 1-6. See, when you study the Bible, when you read the Bible, when you preach the

5:01

Bible, teach the Bible, context is everything. In real estate, they say, you know, it's

5:07

location, location, location. Well, in reading the Bible, studying the Bible, it's context. What's the context here?

5:15

And and what I want to do is go back and and just look at some of the passage we passages we've looked at in previous

5:21

sermons and those eight chapters that we've skipped over because there's a ton

5:26

of context and it's going to help us to understand the gravity of what we've read about in verses 1-6. What these

5:33

people have done and why God is going to be so upset with them. You know, you read these verses in and of themselves

5:39

and they paint the Israelites in a pretty bad light. It looks bad.

5:44

You you you think, okay, why why would they do this? What possessed them to do this? What were they thinking when they

5:50

did this? But again, when we look at the context, it's worse than we could ever imagine

5:56

because God has done some incredible things for them. See, Israel has been at

6:01

the base of Mount Si for some time now. And and God has done incredible things.

6:06

He's given the law to Moses. Law has disseminated that law to them. and and

6:11

now we read what's happened. But when did God do this? When did God give them the law? And then how did God give them

6:19

the law? What was the the image that he used to convey himself but also his law to them?

6:26

Well, we go back to chapter 19 16-18. Listen to what it says. On the morning

6:32

of the third day, there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast

6:38

so that all the people in the camp trembled. you would have trembled, too. What they're about to see is amazing.

6:44

It's it's it's caught their attention. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, Elohim, and they took

6:51

their stand at the foot of the mountain. Now, Mount Si was wrapped in smoke because the Lord Yahweh had descended on

7:00

it in fire. The Lord came down on Mount Si to the top of the mountain, and the

7:05

Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. This is one of many trips that Moses is going to

7:11

make to the mountaintop to visit with Yahweh. But what you've got to picture is the imagery here.

7:18

Smoke, fire, thunder, lightning, dark cloud. I I'm going to show you a picture

7:23

that I took when I was there. Um because some of you think I probably am that

7:30

old, but this is actually an AI generated image that all I did was put

7:36

the text into G chat GTP and this is what it produced.

7:42

I don't know what it looked like, but I'm telling you when the the people of Israel looked up on the mountain, they

7:48

were in awe. It was like the greatest pyrochnic show that anybody had ever seen. Greater than

7:54

any Fourth of July celebration you have ever witnessed. They looked up in that mountain and they saw what? Fire, smoke,

8:01

thunder, lightning. And every time God spoke, it sounded like thunder. And it says they trembled. It scared the beeers

8:08

out of them. And rightfully so, because this is this is amazing. This is not the pillar of cloud, the pillar of fire.

8:15

This is not the burning bush. This is something spectacular. And it's God Almighty revealing himself.

8:23

He's a fearsome God. He is a mighty God. He is a holy God. He's a majestic God. And he's a little bit intimidating.

8:30

And it didn't help that God told Moses, "Hey, tell the people not to come near the base of the mountain because if they

8:36

touch it, they'll die." That's a real warm invitation from God

8:41

Almighty, right? Don't even get near. But he's setting

8:47

himself apart. He's displaying himself in a mighty way, in a powerful way, and he's to be feared and revered. See, this

8:54

is the context. Now, here's what you have to understand. That that imagery doesn't go away. It's not temporary.

9:02

It's permanent. God stays up in that mountaintop. He's residing on that mountaintop, so to

9:08

speak, and it's going to stay up there in that way the whole time this stuff's

9:14

going on down in the valley. And you have to keep that in your mind because these people can look up at any

9:20

moment from the valley and see God Almighty in all his glory. They can see the smoke, the fire, hear the thunder.

9:27

And yet they do what they did. And out of that fire, out of that smoke, God

9:33

gave them his law. And Moses brought that law down and he told it to the

9:38

people. Ben covered that last week. He covered chapter 20 to 23.

9:44

And there were a lot of laws. the ten commandments and then all those laws that spin off of that. They've heard the

9:52

law. They heard it come out of that cloud, out of the thunder, the fire, the smoke.

9:59

But he's not done. That's not all the context because you go to chapter 24 and

10:04

something pretty pretty incredible happens. God is going to call up Moses and Aaron his brother and Naab and

10:11

Abaiu, the sons of Aaron, and 70 of the elders of Israel up the mountain. Now

10:17

remember, he said, "Nobody can come up the mountain except Moses." But now he extends an invitation for those 74 men

10:24

to come up to the mountain. Here's what it says. Chapter 24:es 9-11.

10:31

Then Moses and Aaron, Naab and Abaiu, the sons of Aaron, and 70 of the elders of Israel went up. Went up where they

10:37

went up the mountain. Can you imagine what these 70 elders elders are thinking? I don't want to go up there.

10:45

Do you know who's up there? It It's the God of the fire, the smoke, the lightning, and the thunder. I I

10:50

don't want to go up. It's the God of the law. But they go, and they saw the God

10:56

of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone like the very heaven for clearness. And

11:02

he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel. That's significant. They beheld God and ate and

11:09

drank. These guys get to have a a meal with God Almighty. And when it says he did not

11:15

lift his hand on the chief men of Israel, it's a reminder that no one can see God

11:22

and live to talk about it. And yet here they are. They beheld God.

11:29

Moses later on is going to ask for the permission of God to get to see God. And God says, "Well, I tell you what, you

11:35

can't see me, but I'm going to put you in the cliff of the rock and I'll walk by. My glory will go by, and you can

11:40

only see my back, cuz if you see my face, it'll kill you." See? So, what's going on here? Why did

11:46

God not kill these men? Why did God allow them to come up and have this feast, this festival with him, share a

11:53

meal with God? Well, they got a glimpse of his glory. This happens multiple times in the Old

12:00

Testament, but also in the New Testament when Ezekiel and Daniel and then the Apostle John in the book of Revelation

12:06

get an opportunity to walk into the presence of God and see God in all his majestic glory. Here's how Ezekiel

12:13

describes it. Seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness with a human appearance. and upward from what had the

12:21

appearance of his waist. I saw as a word gleaming metal like the appearance of fire enclosed all around. Now the words

12:27

likeness and appearance are going to be repeated over and over again in these verses. And that's significant. Downward

12:33

from what had the appearance of his waist I saw were the appearance of fire and there was brightness around him.

12:39

Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. They're not really getting to see God because God is

12:46

invisible. They're seeing his glory, his his majestic splendor in a way that

12:53

they could comprehend and that they could try to communicate to others. See

12:58

these men who go up the mountain, the 70 elders, Naab, Abai, who Aaron, and Moses, they get to see the glory of God,

13:05

the splendor of God, and then they get to come back down and tell all the people what they saw. Can you imagine what that was like?

13:12

I think they're sprinting down the mountain because they they want to tell everybody what they got to see. They

13:18

want to tell everybody that we had a meal with God Almighty. They're excited. They're pumped. They

13:24

they can't wait to tell. And it says when they came back down, they told the people everything that God had said. And

13:31

this is this is so important for us to hear. They tell the people everything that God said when they had this meal

13:37

with him. And the people said, "All the words that the Lord has spoken, we will

13:42

do it." They're they they buy in. 100% buy

13:47

in. We're committed. We're going to do it. Whatever he says, we will do.

13:52

So now, not only Moses has come down and talked about the glory of God. 73 other men come down and say, "Man, it's

13:59

amazing. He's a glorious God. He is a great God. We had a meal with God and

14:04

and here's what he said." said and they said, "Man, we'll do it." And then Moses reads them, the entire book of the

14:11

covenant. Somewhere along the way, Moses wrote all those laws down and then he

14:16

reads it to him. Can you imagine that that scene? If Ben last week had read every single

14:23

one of the laws, you would have left. But that's what Moses does. He reads

14:28

every one of the 600 plus laws. And after after he's done, they say, "All

14:34

that the Lord has spoken, we will do. We will be obedient."

14:41

That's pretty significant context, right? When you consider what we just read in chapter 32:es 1-6.

14:49

Well, again, it's not done. After this incredible event, after the people make

14:54

two different commitments to be obedient to God and do whatever he says, Moses is called back up onto the mountain. And

15:01

he's going to be there for 40 days and 40 nights. He takes Joshua with him. And

15:06

Joshua gets to go part of the way up, but he doesn't get to go into the cloud. Only Moses goes into the cloud. And for

15:12

40 days and 40 nights, he fellowships with God. And during that time, here's

15:17

what he receives from God. He gets the plans for the tabernacle.

15:23

God gives him a vision of the heavenly tabernacle and he says,"I want you to go down and build a faximile of this in the

15:30

valley, a portable tent that I will then dwell in and travel with you wherever

15:37

you go." He gives them the plans, the blueprints. He tells them exactly how to build it.

15:43

And along with that, he gives them the institution of the priesthood, the

15:48

sacrificial system, and then he tells them about the Sabbath day of rest that they will enjoy throughout their

15:54

generations. So that's what's going on up in the mountain. And every time God speaks, what do the people down in the valley

16:00

hear? Thunder, the voice of God. So you got to keep that in your mind

16:06

because down in the valley, something else is going on completely different. same 40 days, same 40 nights, but up on

16:12

the mountain, Moses is fellowshipping with God Almighty, and he's receiving from God Almighty all of these wonderful

16:19

things. And then it's time to go back down. And I think he's pumped. He's ready to go. Man, I can't wait to tell

16:25

everybody about the tabernacle, about the sacrificial system, about atonement for sin. I can't wait to tell them all

16:30

these wonderful things. And God goes, "Oh, wait. I've got a souvenir." And he's going to give him the tablets

16:36

of stone. Here's what it says. When the Lord finished speaking to Moses on Mount Si,

16:42

he gave him the two tablets of the covenant law. The tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God. Moses

16:49

gets these tablets that God has inscribed with the ten commandments. Those four commandments that regulate

16:54

behavior with God and man and those ten commandments that regulate behavior between men and other men.

17:02

And Moses is holding those in his arms. And now he's really ready to go. Man, I'm I I can't wait to show everybody

17:08

what what I I have seen, what I have heard, but God's not done.

17:15

See, Moses doesn't know what's going on in the valley. All he knows is that I've been 40 days

17:21

and 40 nights with God Almighty. And then God says, "But you need to understand that things are not well back

17:28

in the valley." Here's what he tells him. Verses 7-10 of chapter 32.

17:34

And the Lord said to Moses, "Go down, for your people whom you brought up out

17:40

of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves." I love how God basically passes the buck. Your people,

17:47

the people you brought up, he's like, "Done. I'm done with these people. You

17:52

take care of them. They've corrupted themselves. They have turned aside quickly." How quickly? It took 40 days

17:59

out of the way that I commanded them. They have made for themselves a golden calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it and said, "These are

18:05

your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt." And the Lord said to Moses, "I have seen this people,

18:11

and behold, it is a stiff necked people. Now therefore, let me alone that my wrath may burn hot against them, and I

18:16

may consume them in order that I may make a great nation of you. I'm going to do a royal reboot. I'm going to do with

18:23

you what I did with Noah and his three sons." I'm going to start over and we're

18:28

going to cover that next week. the anger of God and what God has planned and the anger of Moses when he sees what

18:33

happens. But at this point, Moses is in shock. He can't believe that I've only

18:39

been gone 40 days and this is what they do and my brother helped them.

18:45

He can't believe it. And all the joy, all the glory of what he's seen and what he's heard is suddenly gone out the

18:52

window. He's got those tablets and he he's got the plans for the tabernacle.

18:58

But down in the valley, something else has happened. And I know in your heart and in your mind, what you what you

19:04

think has happened is idolatry, right? They made a golden calf. And you're

19:09

right, they did. But it's worse than that.

19:14

They haven't made another god. They've made a version of the one true God.

19:22

They they have made a new God to replace

19:27

the one true God. They've reinvented God. And and that's amazing to think about

19:33

when you think of all that they've seen. But they in 40 days time they've grown impatient.

19:39

That's all it took. And it started day one. We read this passage and we think everything happened on day 40. No, it's

19:46

a progressive move from day 1 to day 2 to day 10 to

19:52

day 15 to day 20 to day 40. They moved away from God. What's going on at the

19:58

top of the mountain all 40 days? Fire, thunder, lightning, smoke, dark

20:04

cloud, the voice of God speaking like thunder. And God is up there. He's visible. You can see his glory. You can

20:11

see his majesty. And they are moving away from him. They're no longer consumed by the consuming fire. Here's

20:18

what they they all they can think about is Moses isn't coming back. They think he's been consumed.

20:25

And so what do they do? They come up with a plan. Do you ever come up with a plan?

20:31

I don't know many of you in this room, but I know human nature. And I know me. Anytime things don't turn out the way I

20:36

think they should turn out, I I like to help God out. I love to come up with plans. Here's the deal. None of my plans

20:43

ever work. They always blow up my face. And guess what's going to happen with their plan? It's going to blow up in their face. And

20:49

here's their plan. Has two parts. We need a new leader cuz Moses isn't coming

20:54

back. And and then we need a new version of Yahweh.

21:01

I read that and I think, you're morons. And then I read it and I go, I do the

21:06

same thing. I I I can do the same thing because they they they basically have decided that

21:14

Moses isn't coming coming back. We need a new leader. And they choose Aaron, which makes all the sense in the world

21:19

because he's the older brother of Moses. He helped with all the plagues.

21:25

So, he makes sense. But the second part is the worst part is they decide they want a new God.

21:34

But it's really not a new God. It's a revision of the one true God. See, what they say is, "Come, make us gods. Make

21:41

us Elohim." Elohim is a generic term for God. It's what they used of every god. The

21:47

Philistine god, the Moabitete god, the Ammonite God, the termite God. It It's the It's the word they used of all gods.

21:53

But what happened back in Exodus chapter 3? God said to Moses, "From this point

21:58

forward, I'm going to be known as Yahweh, Jehovah, the great I am."

22:06

See, they want a new version of that God because they don't like the God of the mountain. They don't like the God of

22:12

fire and smoke and thunder and lightning. So, what they say is, "Asa

22:17

Elohim, make us God." See, when you read it that way and you

22:24

read it in the Hebrew, it it takes a a much greater weight and it's packed with

22:30

significance. It's pregnant with meaning because they basically it's a Freudian slip. They don't mean to say what

22:36

they're saying, but it reveals their true heart. Make us God.

22:41

Yeah, you can make it in the form of a calf, but really it's we're in control.

22:46

We're in charge. Make us God. It reminds me of Genesis chapter 3 when God placed Adam and Eve

22:54

in the garden and it was a wonderful place for them to live and there was sin had not entered into the garden yet and he said there's only one command. Do not

23:02

eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. You can eat of every other tree. So one day Adam and Eve are in the garden. They're together and they run

23:08

across this serpent that just happens to speak and we know it's Satan in disguise. And Satan says, "Hey, have

23:14

some fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil." And Eve goes, "Well, we can't." Well, why? Because God said, "If

23:20

we eat of it, you'll you'll we'll die." And he says, "No, that's not true.

23:26

Satan contradicts God." And what does he tell them? You will not surely die. For

23:31

God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be open and you will be like Elohim,

23:37

knowing good from evil. What is he offering them? Autonomy, self-ruule,

23:44

self-determination. God is holding out on you because you can be like God

23:51

and be in charge of your own fate. You can be the master of your soul. You can determine what's good and bad, what's

23:58

edible and non-edible, what what's right, what's wrong. You get to be God. And that's exactly what the people of

24:04

Israel are saying when they tell Aaron, "Make us God."

24:10

We don't want that God. He's got way too many rules. and his rules are really

24:16

restrictive. See, Satan tempted Adam and Eve to

24:22

remake God. Remake God how? To look a whole lot more like them. As a matter of

24:28

fact, they were going to be God. And they ate of that tree, didn't they? They

24:34

ate the fruit because he offered them godlikeness, the ability to decide

24:39

what's right for me, what I want. See, every one of us fights that every single

24:46

day. If we're in Christ, if we have a relationship with God Almighty, we're always tempted to want to be in charge,

24:52

to do things our way. It's autonomy, basically in the guise of

24:57

a more userfriendly God. We still believe in God. We still worship God, but we've kind of softened the edges of

25:04

God and we turn God into that grandfather in the sky who winks at our

25:09

sin and who basically says, "Boys will be boys. Girls will be go girls." It It's okay.

25:15

It's a new version of the one true God. And it's the wrong version. See, they wanted a God they could

25:22

tolerate and a God they could manipulate. Basically, a god of their own making. That's what's going on in

25:28

verses 1-6 of chapter 32. They're not satisfied with Yahweh,

25:34

the great I am, the God of the mountain, the God of the smoke, the fire, the lightning, the thunder. He's too

25:40

demanding. He's too restrictive. He He He holds us back. He cramps our style.

25:46

So, we're going to remake him. You know, there's an old saying that says, "In the beginning, God made man in his image,

25:51

and man has been trying to repay the favor ever since, making God in our

25:56

image. A God we can tolerate, a God we can put up with, a God who will give us whatever

26:02

we want. And Paul in Romans chapter 1 talks about that very thing that ever

26:08

since the fall, mankind is without excuse because God has revealed himself through his creation,

26:14

that he does exist and that he's all powerful, that he is that great being who made everything that we can see. And

26:20

yet Paul says they knew God, but they wouldn't worship him as God or even give thanks to him. They began to think up

26:27

foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. And claiming to be wise, they

26:33

instead became utter fools. And instead of worshiping the glorious everliving God, they worshiped idols made to look

26:40

like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles. They wanted a God they control, they

26:46

could control. And again, that's what's happening in chapter 32:es 1-6. They

26:51

wanted a God who would give into their desires, not police them. Sure, it's

26:57

okay. Whatever you want to do, have fun. Approve their behavior, not control it.

27:06

Wink at it. Turn a blind eye to it. A God who would overlook their sin and not

27:11

punish them for them. And again, we can read that and we can think, "Okay, well, I don't do that." Oh, yeah. And so do I.

27:20

When we take God and we take the God of the Bible and we take we take him down and we remake him and we refashion him

27:27

and we make him less judgmental and we make him allloving and we make him someone who tolerates whatever we do.

27:35

We've remade God. And this has been going on for centuries all the way into

27:42

the 15th century, the 18th century, the 19th century in the 21st century. As a

27:47

matter of fact, in the 19th century, an Anglican bishop in England wrote this.

27:52

JC Riyle, it's on the top of your sermon notes. Listen to this. Listen really carefully. Beware of manufacturing a God

27:59

of your own. A God who is all mercy but not just. A God who is all love but not holy. A God who has a heaven for

28:05

everybody but hell for none. A God who can allow good and bad to be side by side in time, but will make no

28:11

distinction between good and bad in eternity. In other words, a God who would never send anybody to hell. A God

28:18

who would never judge anybody. Such a God is an idol of your own. As true an idol as ever molded out of brass or

28:24

clay. The hands of your own fancy and sentimentality have made him. He is not the God of the Bible. And besides the

28:31

God of the Bible, there is no God at all. Do you know there are no other gods?

28:37

There's just really bad versions of the one true God.

28:42

And this is still going on today. So what did the people of Israel do? We see in verse 7 of chapter 32, it says they

28:48

sat down to eat and drink and they rose up to play. They celebrated. Celebrated what? Their freedom from God.

28:55

We don't have to listen to him anymore. We we don't have to obey those laws that we agreed to obey the 600 plus laws. We

29:02

don't have to ex set aside our will for his will because

29:07

we can do our will. They rejoice in their independence. Independence from what?

29:13

Their freedom from slavery in Egypt? No, their independence from

29:18

God. We don't have to keep his law. We can do as we please. And guess what they did?

29:24

They did as they pleased. That's what it means when it says they rose up and played. The New Living Translation says

29:30

they engaged in pagan revalry. And I can't sugarcoat this, guys. In the

29:36

Hebrew, they they engaged in an out andout orgy,

29:41

sexual promiscuity beyond belief. And in doing so, they violated every one of the

29:48

laws that God said to obey. And they agreed to obey.

29:54

This was not a potluck supper. They're not just enjoying a meal together. They are engaging in

30:00

activities that corrupt them, pollute them, defile them, giving into their

30:08

basis desires. See, it says they made sacrifices and I believe they ate the meat of those sacrifices. And in doing

30:14

so, they ate the blood that they were not supposed to consume. As they ate those sacrifices,

30:20

they engaged in adultery and lust and coveting and all the things that God said not to do. They did revery rather

30:26

than reverence. indulging

30:32

rather than abstaining. We're going to do whatever we want to do because we got a new God, a better God.

30:39

We have Yahweh 2.0 and he's okay with it. Excess in place of exultation.

30:48

Here's what I I really need you to get out of this this morning. Ignorance of God is not bliss.

30:56

And this passage is all about ignorance of God. They don't understand God.

31:03

They don't understand and know the God who delivered them out of slavery, who led them, fed them, guided them, got

31:09

them to the base of the mountain, who gave them his law. They don't understand. And one of God's greatest

31:14

desires is for you and I to know him. Long before they ever left Egypt, long

31:22

before the plagues, long before the crossing of the Red Sea, Moses told them

31:27

what God said. And here's what God said. Exodus 6:es 6-7. Say therefore to the

31:33

people of Israel, I am the Lord Yahweh, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will deliver

31:39

you from slavery to them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. I will take you

31:44

to be my people. I will be your God. And now don't miss this next line. And you

31:50

will know that I am the Lord Yahweh your Elohim. You'll know.

31:58

And what had he done? He's done all those things. He has redeemed. He has brought them out. He has delivered them.

32:04

But by the time we get to the base of Mount Si in verses 1-6 of chapter 32, they still

32:12

have not grown in their knowledge of God. And that blows me away.

32:18

After all God has done for them, they still don't know him. They see him as distant, aloof, restrictive, oppressive,

32:23

demanding. They don't understand how good they have

32:29

it. He cramps my style. He He He makes life too difficult. And

32:36

And here's the takeaway from this. There's four things I want to leave you with. And And they're they're they're

32:41

not encouraging. And I wish I could make this far more encouraging, but they're instructive.

32:49

See, when you are ignorant of God, when you don't really know the God you say you love and worship, when you don't

32:54

understand him, ignorance produces four things. First is impatience. You grow impatient.

33:00

You don't want to wait on God. And I know you, you don't like to wait on God anymore than I like to wait on God. We

33:07

want God to work on our timeline according to our plan. And sometimes, well, no, most of the time he doesn't

33:13

work that way. They grew impatient. And yet, getting to know God requires waiting. I hate to wait. I know you hate

33:20

to wait. God's slow. God doesn't do things the way I want to. He never works

33:26

in my timeline. But here's the thing you got to get into your head. What was going on the 40 days and 40 nights that

33:32

they were doing their little thing down in the valley? God was giving Moses the plans for the

33:38

tabernacle, the plans for the sacrificial system, the plan for the priesthood, and the plans for the

33:45

Sabbath rest. Had they only waited, they would have heard all about God's

33:51

wonderful plans for them. But see, they didn't believe God had good things planned for them. So, they came up with

33:57

their own plan. And when you refuse to wait on God, you're you're going to become

34:03

insubordinate. You're going to refuse to obey him. You're going to do what you want to do.

34:09

But see, if you want to get to know God, you've got to submit to his will, his way, his timing, his care, and believe

34:16

that he has a better plan. Did God have a better plan? Yes. Somebody was headed

34:22

down with it, but they jumped the gun and came up with their own plan. And

34:27

their doubt in God's good goodness produced disobedience. It always does in their lives and in my life. And when you

34:35

refuse to obey God, it's going to lead to idolatry. Here's what idolatry is.

34:41

Anytime you redefine God, anytime you redefine God, you make him

34:46

more loving. He's all loving. He never punishes. No one be is ever going to be sent to hell. You're redefining God in his idolatry.

34:53

But getting to know God requires faithfulness. A reliance upon who he is.

35:01

That idea of faithfulness is huge because if you want to be fruitful in your life, you got to be faithful to his

35:08

character as he determines it, not how you want to determine it. You can't make

35:13

a god of your own choosing. You can't make God do what you want. God is God.

35:18

And I I can try to change him, but I I never do change him. I just diminishes diminish his power in my life.

35:26

Attempting to reimagine God never improves him. It just robs me of the joy

35:31

of watching him move in my life. Finally, if you redefine God, you're going to commit immorality.

35:38

And this one's probably going to probably shock you and go, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, wait, wait, wait. I'm not going to do what they did. I'm not going to get

35:44

involved in a a an orgy like they did." No. But immorality biblically is not

35:49

just sexual sin. It's anytime you break covenant with God. It's anytime you refuse to do things

35:56

God's way. See, getting to know God requires purity, purity of faith, purity

36:03

of hope, purity of submitting to his will, knowing that he has your best in

36:08

store. Righteousness is non-negotiable for you and I as believers.

36:14

But what happened? They did all those things and it's because they had never

36:20

grown in their understanding of God. And guess what? Over the centuries, they would still not grow in their understanding of God. Let's fast forward

36:27

centuries later. Book of book of Jeremiah. Here's what God says about his people. Centuries later, for my people

36:35

are fools. They have not known me. They're foolish children without understanding. They are skilled in doing

36:41

evil. For they do not know how to do good. Why? Because they don't know me.

36:46

They've been worshiping him for centuries. They have been going to the tabernacle, making sacrifices, but they

36:52

don't know their God. Isaiah puts it this way. Even an ox knows its owner, and a donkey recognizes its master, but

36:58

Israel doesn't know its master. My people don't recognize my care for them.

37:04

Now, I know this is not a feel-good sermon to walk into the holiday

37:11

with, but here's the takeaway for you and I, and I hope you take it away.

37:16

Here's four ways you can grow in your knowledge of God. And God wants you to grow in your knowledge of him. They're

37:22

very simple, but they're not easy. You already know them, but they're not easy.

37:27

Here's the first one. Read and study God's word regularly. Get into God's word. Study his word.

37:36

I'm going to make a shameless plug. Next week, band of brothers starts. Men, if

37:42

you were not in a Bible study, a regular Bible study, I'm I'm going to plead with you, beg with you to go out those doors

37:49

and register for Band of Brothers. Ladies, if you're not at a in a Bible

37:54

study regularly, you need to go out those doors and you need to sign up for Women in the Word, and they start this week.

38:00

and surround yourself with the word of God and people who love the word of God.

38:06

Secondly, pray regularly. You need to pray regularly. Not 24 hours

38:11

a day, but you need to pray regularly. You need to get to know God as you talk to God because that's what prayer is.

38:17

It's communication with God. Listen to him speak. Obey willingly.

38:24

When you hear him speak, do what he says. Learn to walk in his ways through

38:29

faith. Don't repeat what the Israelites did. And then finally, seek Christian fellowship. You need to surround

38:36

yourself with godly people. Join a small group. Join a men's table, a women's

38:41

table. You need these things in your life. Simple, but not easy. But when we

38:48

do them, we will be blessed by them because we get to know our God. And when we get to know our God, we won't walk

38:54

down that path the Israelites walked down. Would you pray with me? Father, thank you so much for your word. Thank

39:00

you for the message you've given us through this passage that is there for our edification. That father, we would

39:08

not follow the example of the Israelites. That we would not walk down the path that they walked. Lord, you

39:14

want to know us so deeply and we need to know you. and you reveal yourself through your word, through the

39:20

fellowship with other believers, through prayer, the Holy Spirit. Lord, would you

39:25

make us people who long to know you better and better with each passing day? And I pray this in the name of Jesus

39:31

Christ. Amen.

Title: The Law and the Life | Walking By Faith

Video: iHypAArzphY

0:00

Good morning, Christ Chapel. How are you? Good. Good. Also, good afternoon to

0:05

those at the five o'clock service. We love you guys. We love that you're worshiping with us at the five. Uh my

0:10

name is Ben. I'm one of the pastors around here. Excited to get to preach. I feel like it's been a little bit. Uh I'm a bit rusty, so uh give me some grace,

0:17

but I'm super excited about where we're going to go today. Exodus chap 20. Get

0:22

your Bibles and let's open up to Exodus 20. We have got a ton to cover and so

0:28

I'm not going to give a cute story or a funny little disarming hook. We're going to jump into God's word. Uh the section

0:35

of scripture that's assigned for today. If you read the pastor's desk and you

0:41

studied ahead and read ahead, the section of scripture is chapter 20 of Exodus verses 22 through Exodus 23

0:51

19. That's right, folks. Cancel your lunch plans. That's right. 91 verses, 44 different

0:59

unique laws and case studies and and precepts of of uh the Mosaic law show up

1:06

in these three chapters. Right. This is the most thorough collection of specific rules found in the book of Exodus. Uh

1:14

we've got a fun challenge and honestly honestly it was it has been an incredible blessing to get to study it.

1:20

To get to study this for the last few weeks has been uh fun. Uh so here's where we're going. I want to preview uh

1:27

where we're going and how we're going to get there a little bit because we're going to be jumping all over the place. Um we won't read all 91 verses today. Uh

1:35

we won't unpack all 44 laws and explain them and and what's going on in them. U

1:40

we're going to do a fly over. Uh partly because I respect your time. We respect your time. Also because the kids

1:46

ministry volunteers would kill us if we go two hours over. Uh today what we're going to do is we're going to look at a

1:52

handful of these uh these mosaic laws that we're going to see in these three chapters. Um they're they're those

1:59

verses that um aren't necessarily coffee cup verses, right? There there's not a bunch of t-shirts with these verses on

2:06

them sold in Christian bookstores, but we're going to look at them and we're going to see some big pictures and we're going to see some themes so that we can

2:12

wrap our hands and our heads and our minds around what God is doing. uh why he does this, why he puts it here, what

2:18

the purpose of it is for, and then also I I think honestly getting to see the strategic organization. So, we're going to do a kind of a flyby to really

2:25

understand the themes. Then we're going to with this section of scripture specifically, we're going to use as a

2:30

jump off point to really lay uh it's a perfect section to lay some tools for

2:36

how we study and dig deeper because our hope and our heart is that we're not only being fed, we're not only digging

2:42

into God's word on Sunday morning in this 35m minute block of time, but we are actually digging into God's word all

2:48

throughout the week. That the these are three chapters that would bless you that you would wrestle with them and and chew through them this week. And so because

2:55

of that, we're gonna I'm going to walk through some principles. Uh some principles that kind of caution us of some traps to fall into maybe that

3:01

create some misinterpretation when we get to some Old Testament passages like this. Uh some ways to be

3:07

able to apply it to figure out context. And so we'll lay down some principles, but then also we're going to just pivot

3:12

on each one and just hit our hearts and some conviction that certainly hit me uh

3:18

this week of how we can apply some of this and some of these principles personally. And then we're going to land our time asking the question, so what?

3:24

So what? What's the point? Do we really need the law now that we have Jesus? Is this really that relevant? Can we just

3:29

kind of fast forward through this part? Uh hopefully by the end of it, getting to see um just marvel at the grace of

3:37

God uh even through his law and get to really uh sit in awe of the importance

3:43

of the law that God gives even in these three obscure chapters that are so easy to flip through. Uh that's where we're

3:50

headed. Uh hopefully we walk out of here changed. Not because the sermon's going to be great, but because that's what

3:56

God's word does. That's what the Holy Spirit does whenever we sit and chew deeply on God's word. I'm excited. Let's

4:03

go. Let's go. Uh remember is a deep dive into some nuances of the Mosaic law. And

4:08

so I'm going to cherrypick several of them so that we get a theme and we can kind of get the flavor of what Moses is

4:14

doing here. It's a cross-section of our passage is really all it is. In verse uh one of chapter 21, Moses says this. He

4:21

says, "Now these are the rules that you shall set before them." And so in verse

4:26

one of chapter 21, and we'll put all of these up on the screen. You can flip along if you'd like, but also uh we'll

4:32

put them up on the screen because we'll jump around some. But this idea rules even is this Hebrew word mishpot, which

4:38

can also be translated justice. And so we see right off the bat, Moses is saying, "Hey, here is we we've just

4:44

heard the Ten Commandments. We've been given the Ten Commandments and now we're going to go into even a more detailed, nuanced version of what justice and what

4:52

these rules should look like in this nation that God's building. Verse 18 and

4:57

19 of chapter 21 is one of those examples. It says this. It says, "When

5:02

men quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist and the

5:08

man does not die but takes to his bed, then if the man rises again and walks outdoors with his staff, he who struck

5:16

him shall be clear. Only he shall pay for the loss of his time and shall have him thoroughly healed."

5:24

Paraphrase. You guys get in a fight and there's a whooping that happens, there's going to be consequences, right? He's he's

5:31

setting the framework of if there's a fight that happens and one of you takes it too far and somebody gets really hurt, there's going to be severe

5:37

consequences. Look at the next one about fighting. Verse 22 and 23. When men strive together, so men are fighting

5:43

together and hit a pregnant woman so that her children come out but there is

5:48

no harm. The one who hit her shall surely be fined as the woman's husband shall impose on him and he shall pay as

5:55

the judge determines. But if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for

6:03

hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. Again, you're clowning around. You get

6:08

in a fight and you hurt a pregnant woman during this fight. Again, these are really nuanced and detailed. You hurt a

6:14

pregnant woman, she gives birth prematurely. If that baby comes out and the baby's okay, you're going to pay a

6:20

fine, but it's not going to be as big. If there's real damage, it's going to be eye for eye, tooth for tooth. Look at verse uh 26 and 27 of chapter 21. I'm

6:29

going to give you five or six of these just to make sure you feel as overwhelmed as I did.

6:34

When a man strikes the eye of his slave, already we got some issues with this.

6:40

When a man strikes the eye of a slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free because of

6:46

his eye. If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free because of his tooth.

6:53

We're going to touch that one here in a little bit. Um, chapter 22 verse one. If a man steals an ox or a sheep and kills

6:59

it or sells it, he shall repay five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep.

7:05

You can't take stuff is the paraphrase. You can't take stuff. There's going to be consequences. Chapter 23:4 and 5. If

7:11

you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall bring it back to

7:16

him. If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying down under its burden,

7:22

you shall refrain from leaving him with it, you shall rescue it with him.

7:29

Paraphrase. That guy you hate, he loses his donkey. You see it and have an

7:34

opportunity to return it. You are now, because of the Mosaic law, obligated to

7:40

return that donkey to the guy you hate or help him rescue it. Just do one more.

7:47

And this is this I know this is some of y'all's favorite verses. It's up there with John 3:16. And then there's a lot

7:52

of times this one. It's Exodus 23:19. We all know it. The best of the first fruits of your ground you shall bring

7:57

into the house of the Lord your God. And then the the next part is the popular part. You shall not boil a young goat in

8:04

its mother's milk. I know I've seen a lot of coffee mugs, a lot of football games with people holding up that one.

8:11

Anyone struggle? Anyone struggle with that one? I could sense people at West Campus raised their hand. There was like at

8:17

least four people at West Campus that just raised their hand. Those guys, you got to watch them. You West Campus guys.

8:24

Um, this is wild, right? This is wild. This

8:31

uh what are we supposed to do with this? Right? This is three chapters. I think I gave you six, right? Even if we just

8:37

spent 15 minutes explaining the six that I gave you and unpacking the nuances and

8:42

the historical relevance, that's an hour and a half of our time. What do we do with this? What is God doing here in

8:48

Exodus with this? Why is it here? And let's appreciate what we just read. It

8:54

it Yeah, it's not your typical verses. It's these really interesting, nuanced, seemingly seemingly, if we're not

9:01

careful, irrelevant passages. Yet, church, it's God's word. It's God's word, and we

9:09

know that it leads to life. Even these three chapters, when we dig deep, these

9:16

three chapters, they lead to life. Psalm, the psalmist references this all

9:22

throughout the Psalms. Uh most famously in chapter 19:7,

9:27

the law of the Lord, the law of the Lord, right? What we just saw was just six examples of these Mosaic laws. The

9:36

law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure,

9:42

making wise the simple. I won't put them all up on the screen, but Psalm 119 goes on and on all

9:50

throughout Psalm Psalm 119, the longest psalm there talking about how the law of

9:56

the Lord, right, these commands and obligations and rules is actually this

10:01

really lifegiving, beautiful thing. In verses 47 and 48 of Psalm 119, the

10:06

psalmist says, "For I delight in your commands, which I love. I'll lift up my hands towards your commands." In verse

10:12

72, he says, 'The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and

10:17

silver pieces. And then Psalm 119:92 and 93, listen to what he says. The psalmist

10:23

says, "If your law had not been my delight delight, I would have perished in my afflictions.

10:29

I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have given me life."

10:37

So, we have to hold this beautiful tension that's easy for us in in our modern context to skim through this,

10:45

blow past it. And yet, here in Exodus 20 through 23,

10:50

God's word, his law, we are told all throughout scripture points us to life.

10:57

44 detailed, seemingly irrelevant rules that lead us to worship if we're paying

11:03

attention. to lead us to depth and understanding who our God is and his character if we

11:09

dig deeply. Uh, however, at first blush, right, if I'm honest and if and if you're honest, at first blush, it

11:16

doesn't always seem worshipful, right? We don't read this section. There's not a lot of worship songs being inspired

11:22

about boiling goats in their mother's milk. That's not a song I've I've sung before in a worship service. So, at

11:28

first blush, it doesn't seem that way. In fact, um I I know uh at least a couple of friends, I'm happy to call

11:35

them friends, who um they would actually reject and stiff arm Christianity, certainly biblical Christianity and and

11:42

the authority of scripture largely based on passages and section of scripture like this that they see and they think

11:48

this is all old antiquated, you know, old stories and and oppressive rules

11:54

that that aren't relevant anymore. Some might even call themselves Christians, but just erase all of these

12:00

verses and passages that that just don't seem like um they hit as hard. And I

12:06

honestly, if that's you, if if these have been stumbling block in your understanding and appreciation of God's

12:11

word, I get why you see it. I I really do. I understand where you're coming from. I urge you not to check out, though. I urge you to dig deep. Our

12:19

first stake in the ground is this principle. It's a principle that God's law, God's law leads us to life when we

12:27

learn it and understand it practically. It will lead us to life. This life that

12:33

the psalmist talks about, right, that that Jesus ultimately talks about of being the fulfillment of bringing the

12:39

abundant life, right? This life is available. This this law pushes us to

12:45

life when we really learn it. when we really understand, when we really dig in, when we don't just skip over

12:51

something and say, "Yeah, this seems this seems outdated." And move on quickly, um, his laws are a delight. In

12:58

the New Testament, Paul uh to Timothy in 2 Timothy, he says in chapter 3 16 and

13:05

17, he says, "All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching,

13:11

for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness that the man of God may be complete, equipped for

13:17

every good work." Man, if you're a part of this church, you

13:23

know, uh we are unapologetic about his word. We're never going to stand up here

13:29

and apologize for any of God's holy, good, lifebearing work. We can trust

13:36

that it does lead to flourishing if we do the work to understand it. It's profitable. Second Timothy says it's

13:44

impactful and how it can shape righteousness. It said just then in verse 16, shapes righteousness in our

13:49

life. It's why we it's why we preach books of the Bible, right? Every church

13:55

growth book out there is going to suggest, hey, here's how you really grow your church. You you do a whole lot of

14:01

little mini topical series, right? People are going to get bored with it. So, you do two or three week series that

14:07

are really topical and really interesting. And and that's really what you what you preach if you want to grow a church. And then we've got this lead

14:13

pastor that just keeps picking whole books for us to study for an entire year like Matthew and Acts and Exodus.

14:20

and we just see God's people keep growing because God's word, that's what it does. And we just get to sit in it

14:26

and go deeper and deeper. Um, let's make this big chunk a little less

14:33

intimidating. Let's make it a little bit more practical in some ways. Um, let's start by making sense of this question.

14:38

Why is it here? And so for me, I'm a I'm a puzzle guy. I love puzzles. I love strategy games. My go-to uh checkout

14:45

phone game on my iPhone is Risk. So, if you ever want to play me in risk, um, you're toast, man. I practice all the

14:51

time. Um, but I it's got to fit. It's got to make sense. And so, helping us

14:56

understand if that's really going to help lead us to life. Let's help get some understanding. Why is this even

15:02

here? Remember how we got here in Exodus 20? The Hebrew people were set free by

15:07

God, right? Brought Moses, led them out of captivity into the wilderness through

15:12

the Red Sea. Miracle after miracle, faithless act after faithless act. Grace after grace leads them to Mount Si. Ten

15:21

Commandments studied them the last two weeks. The the Ten Commandments walk

15:26

through at Mount Si. Moses comes down and says, "Here it is." And now we see these 44 more detailed Mosaic laws. And

15:34

as you study them, you see that they are organized in a way they are a spiderweb from the rules and the laws of the Ten

15:40

Commandments. That helps us understand why is this here? This isn't just this arbitrary insertion of, okay, let's just

15:47

start writing down, hey, what happens if you're in a fight? And what happens if I accidentally elbow a pregnant woman? What happens if, hey, what happens if my

15:52

ox accidentally kills a guy? Right? This is very purposeful. Think about what just happened. They were just given the

15:58

ten commandments. And now spiderweb from that, each of these Mosaic laws ties

16:04

back to a broader category than Ten Commandments. So, thou shalt not murder.

16:09

Okay. Well, well, but what if I get in a fight and I accidentally murder someone?

16:15

Okay, so this is explained here. What if I what if I get in a fight and I almost kill a guy, but then I I don't. He comes

16:21

out and he walks out of his house and he's on a crutch, but he's okay. There's consequences, but they're different. And

16:27

so, what's happening is you see the Ten Commandments, you see God's law, and then you see it start to spiderweb, right? What happens if I don't kill a

16:33

guy? What happens if my ox kills a guy? Right? All of those things that seem like, what are these here for? They're

16:39

here to help God's people understand that his laws are good and he wants to give us boundaries because they are

16:45

good. But he also wants us to understand his character and how we are to

16:50

interpret them, right? This happens all the time in our country, right? There's there's taxes, right? Don't there's tax

16:57

laws and then I'm sure if you're a tax law attorney, you just have mounds and mounds of nuances of those laws. Same

17:04

with traffic laws. All kinds of laws do that. Here's the other thing that God is doing. Um,

17:10

it it's helping our hearts. Our hearts are going to look for loopholes

17:17

to get out of God's ways. Right? God says, "This is the way I want you to live." And and my sinful heart is going

17:25

to be like, "Yeah, but can I just take this loophole?" Um, I have two

17:30

incredible boys. Uh, incredible boys. They're awesome kids. Miles, my youngest, great. My oldest is a rule

17:37

follower, right? He just he will I mean, if you tell him the rule, he's going to follow it probably to a fault in some

17:42

ways. Miles, uh, we were building a dog bed yesterday, and it's a little dog bed that like kind of is up off the ground

17:48

by like, you know, 6 in or so, and he kept laying on it, and I'm like, I don't, it's not designed for

17:54

9-year-olds, right? Like, so I don't want it to rip or anything. So, we're like, hey, Miles, don't lay on the dog bed. And the next thing you know it's

18:01

well can I can I lay my head on the dog bed? Can I lay my arm on the dog bed? Like he immediately it's just well what

18:08

about my right left hand? Can I put my can I can I lay literally can I lay under the dog bed and it's like I got to

18:14

figure out all the nuances. That is the perfect representation of my heart, my nine-year-old son. I want to look for

18:21

loopholes. And here God is saying I care about you enough. I want to show you this detailed way of how some of these

18:27

big broad rules that are good for you and for your thriving actually splinter

18:32

out in thoughtful ways. A and furthermore, this is fascinating. Remember when Matt Lance preached on the

18:39

the delegation from his father-in-law and Moses got together, we got to start delegating the judicial system in in

18:46

this new country we've got. And so all of a sudden, it wasn't just Moses deciding. It was hundreds really thousands of other judges who are going

18:53

to be hearing the cases of the millions of Israelites. And so this becomes these

18:59

these case studies to coach these new judges. It's brilliant. It is brilliant

19:05

God's design in scripture. What he's doing here in in showing, look, I said

19:10

don't murder, but look at all these little loopholes and what it does. It is not exhaustive. He doesn't cover every

19:17

loophole that has to do with murder, but he unpacks enough of them to where you

19:22

can see God's character. You see God's character in the rules that he is

19:28

setting about, right? He protecting and advocating for the vulnerable, right? He talks about slaves and how to treat

19:34

them. And in this society, that was crazy culturally and historically at this time because they didn't have any

19:41

rights. There was nothing to protect them. And then God says, "No, I'm going to care about those that culturally no

19:47

one else cares about." Right? Uh women in in this day and age were were not

19:53

treated well at all. Right? They were just property. And so God steps into that, right? He steps into that and he

19:59

shows through these rules and laws how you value and how you raise up and how you protect the poor and the vulnerable.

20:06

That deeper understanding is going to lead you to deeper and truer picture of God. It just is that the more we study,

20:12

the more we dig in, we see God's intentional. He's deliberate. When we do the work of digging in

20:18

deeper, that's what happens. It's the depth to our spiritual growth. Practically for us, practically for us,

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I I want to challenge us. God's word can be over overwhelming at times. It can um

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but for us, we have to take ownership of our spiritual growth, right? It's there

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in God's word. It's there to be had. that so often these are good things but so often we have to take we don't take

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ownership of our own spiritual growth the depth that we are called to till from scripture and from God's word uh

20:49

and here's what I mean studying God's word is valuable it leads us to know God better but it doesn't mean that we can

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just sit back and be consumers for somebody else to teach us like I talked about at the beginning our hope is that

21:00

you would take God's word and outside of these rooms outside of this sermon time

21:06

that you would dig deep in God's word and not sit back and wait for someone else to do it. We live in a culture that

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is increasingly customized. Right? If you're on social media, you have an

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algorithm that will just find the best communicators that connect with you and and the theology that most matches what

21:24

you approve of. And it will all be customfed to you and bite-sizes. And so

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often then we shift into other settings and we think, "Well, it wasn't very deep. ah it didn't really hit me as hard

21:36

as as that other guy when when he preached and yeah you go to a small group yeah my small group leader didn't

21:42

really feel like there was a lot of depth in how he facilitated I want to encourage you and challenge

21:47

you if we're making this huge point that there is depth to be had and understanding God's word then we've got

21:53

to rest the ownership of digging through that depth for spiritual growth on us we don't sit back and say yeah this didn't

22:00

really get me no if you are in biblical community that's preaching the Bible and you take it and you go deep. Um, we will

22:08

bounce around from place to place, from speaker to speaker, from community to community. Um, constantly trying to

22:14

scratch an itch as opposed to saying it is my responsibility to be in a place that's going to teach truth, but then

22:20

also to be in a place where I'm known and taking responsibility for that spiritual life and that spiritual growth. Second principle is this. Second

22:28

principle is is this. Um, because it's not enough to just know and understand. We've got to live it out, right? We've

22:34

got to live it out. Which leads to this principle. God's law leads to life when

22:39

we apply it contextually. God's law is going to lead us to life when we apply it contextually. And and

22:46

here's what I mean. We can all understand the danger of of learning God's law and studying his word and then

22:52

not putting it into practice. We all understand that that value of application, right? if if uh there was a

22:57

world-renowned fitness uh just a genius in the fitness world. He knew everything there was about fitness. He knew

23:03

everything there was about nutrition, but all he did was eat hot pockets all

23:09

day and never exercise. And I don't even know if they make hot pockets anymore. I don't think they do. So, he would have

23:15

had to stockpile eight-year-old hot pockets. And he's eating eight-year-old hot pockets and then just not

23:21

exercising. and that but he knows all about fitness and nutrition that we would look at that and be like what a

23:26

waste, right? He's got all these blog posts about the but he's not living it out. We can all intuitively see that and

23:32

be like, well, yeah, yeah, that that's a crazy waste. But wait, um it's not just enough to

23:39

decide, okay, I'm going to live it out. There's something really important here. I've also got to apply it correctly. 2

23:46

Timothy 2:15, Paul challenges Timothy. He says this. He says, "Do your best to present

23:52

yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed." And then right here, listen, rightly

23:58

handling the word of God, implying that it is really easy, right?

24:06

Paul is cautioning Timothy, his his key pupil. You've got to handle God's word.

24:11

You've got to handle this scripture. You've got to handle this law, right, that you've that you've known from it. You've got to handle it rightly. There's

24:17

two ways that context gets us off track. Two ways that context can really um

24:23

derail us here. One of them is we butcher context and we misinterpret scripture. And the other way is we customize context personally and then we

24:30

misapply scripture. Um here's what I mean when I talk about scripture that um

24:36

we don't understand the context and how that shapes our understanding. Um we look at slavery, right? In these

24:44

passages, we see slavery all throughout. There's whole sections of how to deal with slaves, what happens with with your

24:50

slaves, if uh abuse happens to your slave, the consequences of that, all kinds of things. Well, understanding the

24:57

context of what was happening in the Old Testament and what that word slavery and what slavery looked like in this time

25:04

massively changes how we might interpret it in our modern day society. Because the word slavery when they were talking

25:09

about it wasn't the same thing as what we would think of as slavery in the American historical context. The sad sad

25:17

historical context of how we engaged as a country in slavery. Right? It's very

25:23

different things. Slavery in that day was was almost more like a a military contract. Right there

25:29

that's probably the best example I've read from any scholar that could say of saying, "Hey, I'm going to commit right

25:35

in the military." Maybe you say, "Hey, I'm going to commit four years of my life to the military. They're going to pay. They're going to cover college. They're going to do all these things.

25:40

They're going to bless me in this way. There's going to be a level of servitude, right? I'm going to serve them. I'm going to be under their rule

25:47

for a period of time, but in doing something I believe in. It's maybe not always fun, but but man, it's helping me

25:53

get out of poverty and doing this or it's helping pay for college or it's helping me be a part of something I I

25:58

really believe in." And so, so often that can be those contracts can can happen in that way. Well, that's what's

26:04

happening here. It's this indentured servant idea. Well, well, we uh in our context, right? What happened in the

26:11

American slave trade was this horribly unbiblical thing. And yet there were

26:16

people who stood in churches who used passages from the Old Testament

26:22

to say, "See, look, God's okay with slavery, a totally different type of

26:27

slavery." So, understanding the context that this is taught in is huge. So as

26:34

you study it, you wrestle with context, you surround yourself with other people in wrestle, you get good resources. We have a ton of them on our app or just

26:41

come and chat with us some of our best commentaries. I I I honestly spent about 3 weeks spending a ton of time on so

26:48

much of this context. Uh that's all on the cutting room floor now. So if you want to nerd out on some of these random

26:55

laws, I would love to. Um but but understanding the context shapes it

27:00

shapes if we actually understand the character of God. And if we walk into

27:06

misinterpreting passages, then um we're going to start to misinterpret who his character is. So many people who stiff

27:12

armed this God of the Old Testament because he just seems mean and cruel

27:17

are missing some context in ways. I I understand how we can get there, but as we dig deeper, we see, wait, this is a

27:24

just, righteous, holy God. But he's also good. Now, here's the

27:29

second trap. And the second trap is a sharp pivot to just personal conviction for us. It's another way that we can

27:35

accidentally abuse context. And and my challenge is this. My challenge is that

27:41

we want to contextualize what we hear God's word saying and we get to cherrypick. I'm going to apply

27:47

this in my life, but this really isn't in my context. We want to set our own context for what we obey, what God wants

27:55

us to do, and what nah, that's for somebody else. That doesn't apply to me. So, let God's word challenge this. Let

28:01

God's word set your context for growth rather than yourself. And this is huge

28:08

because if God's law leads us to life and there's there we can delight in it,

28:15

then what I have to do is I have to open up God's word. I have to open up God's law and I have to say, God, would you set the concept? If this is your word,

28:21

help me understand it properly, but help me also apply it fully. I don't get to

28:26

cherrypick, well, this doesn't apply and this does, and well, I don't really want to feel this conviction, so I'm going to

28:32

write this off. And we begin to shape God and his way into the way that

28:38

honestly most affirms the way I want to live. his his way

28:44

starts to look a lot like Ben's way as I cherrypick contextually the things I want to apply and the things I don't.

28:51

Um, so here's the place I want to land on.

28:58

We we see that there's a design, right? I I hope you see there's a incredible design to God's word. I hope we see that

29:04

there's an appreciation for um just depth that can be found as we even see a

29:10

character of God shaped through laws that show he cares about the vulnerable.

29:15

He cares about the poor. He cares about order. He cares about justice. And we see this character of God shaped. We see

29:23

this challenge to dig deep, to take ownership of that process, not sit back and say, "Well, somebody else has to feed me to apply it fully to our life."

29:30

But here's the question I want to land on. What's the real purpose of the law?

29:36

What's the purpose? The final question leads us, I think, to the most important principle, which is this. God's law

29:42

leads to life when it pushes us to Jesus.

29:47

There's so much fruit found in God's word, in God's law, even this morning.

29:53

Just this start to see glimpses of God's character and just scratching the surface. But at the end of the day, this

30:01

Old Testament law, what's really the purpose, our hope, Paul's hope, Jesus's hope, the

30:09

New Testament and Old Testament's hope is that the law leads to life when it pushes us to the one who fulfilled the

30:16

law. That's Jesus. Spoiler alert, these 44 additional commands, these ten commandments,

30:24

they blew it, right? Spoiler alert, the Israelites blew it. Um, spoiler alert, we blow it. We don't measure up. We

30:32

don't keep the law, this law of life, this law that are boundaries to keep us

30:37

in the place that's good. So, what what's the point now that we've got Jesus? Is the Old Testament law still

30:43

relevant? Galatians 3 gives us this beautiful snapshot of understanding to the purpose of the law. Galatians 3 23-

30:51

26. Paul says this. He says, "Now before faith came, we were held captive under

30:58

the law, imprisoned until the coming of faith would be revealed. So then the law

31:03

was our guardian until Christ came in order that we might be justified by

31:08

faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. For in

31:14

Christ Jesus, you are all sons of God through faith."

31:20

Let me unpack that a little bit. Um, what do we need? What do we need is uh

31:26

for this life abundant. What do we really need? Well, we need righteousness,

31:32

right? We we need righteousness to be able to be connected to the holy God. That we were designed to be in relationship, but sin has separated us

31:40

and we need righteousness. And what this is saying is the law is revealing until Christ that we are not righteous, right?

31:46

It is showing us that we are guardian under the law until the time of faith, until Jesus shows up. We need

31:53

righteousness, but we don't have it and we can't self-produce it. Old Testament

32:00

law reveals our need, shows us just how sinful we are, how short we come up.

32:05

It's the standard that shows us what righteousness looks like to follow his way. And yet, it's this mirror

32:11

reflecting to the Israelites, reflecting to us, we're not going to get there on our own. We're not even going to get close on our own. So, it becomes this

32:19

mirror. I'm I'm not worthy enough in and on my own strength and my own obedience

32:25

to earn his love, to earn a relationship with the one that I am designed to be connected to. Paul in Romans 5 uses the

32:33

verbiage of the law as increase our trespasses. Right? Meaning, it's

32:38

revealing how increasingly unworthy we are. He says in 520 and 21, he says, "Now the law came in to increase the

32:45

trespasses. But where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that as

32:51

sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness, leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our

32:58

Lord." If you're in Christ,

33:03

if you are in Christ, you are still a sinner, but you have Christ's righteousness

33:09

covering you, right? More sin in your life, right? Your awareness and and your

33:15

sin increases as he talks about here, grace abounds all the much more. Whatever you look at, right? Whatever

33:21

you do, wherever you go, whatever sin you can draw, the sin increases all the more in your life, you are still a

33:27

sinner. even if you are in Christ on this side of eternity. But as as that happens, as that awareness grows, grace

33:34

always abounds over them. So, so does that mean the Old Testament law is

33:40

useless? Right? If you're tracking with me, if you're tracking with Paul, then the question would be, well, then

33:45

honestly, I got a blank check. Why don't I just live however I want to live? Thank goodness we're not in the Old Testament. We got Jesus. I can do

33:51

whatever I want to do. I'm under grace. Good. Can I just cash the blank check,

33:59

not have to obey anything? Good question. Paul Romans 6 verse 15-18.

34:07

What then? Are we to sin because we're not under the law, but under grace?

34:13

By no means. Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient

34:19

slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey? Either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to

34:26

righteousness. But thanks be to God, that you, who were once slaves of sin,

34:32

have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you

34:37

were committed, and having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. So, do we get to keep on

34:44

sinning? Right. Grace has got me. I get it. I hear this message, the gospel. Do I just get to keep on living how I want

34:50

to live because I'm under Jesus? By no means. There's good news and there's bad news here. The bad news first. You have

34:56

two options. Both of them, you're a slave. That's the bad news. The good news is that in Christ, you are a slave

35:03

to righteousness, which is actually where we experience freedom. Because you weren't designed to be your own king.

35:10

You weren't designed to be your own master. because to not be under Christ is just to be under your own flesh. And

35:17

so there's this beautiful surrender of faith that happens when we surrender our life to the Lord. When we put our faith

35:23

in Jesus, it's this surrender that says I need you. I can't do it on my own and I and

35:30

not just I need your blank check so that I can keep living how I want. That's a total misunderstanding of the gospel.

35:35

It's a total misunderstanding of the offer of salvation. But instead, instead, the law shows us so beautifully

35:42

how short I come. Then here comes Jesus. I want to be a slave to you. I am yours. I no longer belong to myself. I'm

35:49

crucified with Christ. The life I now live is in you. Beautifully, powerfully,

35:56

precious truth. Here's our challenge. Make dependence on Jesus your fuel for

36:02

spiritual growth. make that dependence on Jesus. That the law pushes us to know our need

36:11

is not in and of ourselves. It's not in our church attendance. It's not in how well we do with the list of dos and stay

36:17

away from the list of don'ts. Our dependence is on Jesus. I need you. More

36:22

of you and less of me. I need to be a slave for you. Surrendered to you. God, give me the faith once and for all

36:29

saved, but then daily following after you, growing in obedience

36:34

because I belong to you. And if I belong to you and I walk with you, I'm going to

36:39

start looking more and more and more like my father. And that is a good thing for your glory, for my health.

36:46

Beautiful thing. If you are stuck in sin,

36:54

let's say you find yourself today and you are just stuck in that pattern of sin. That thing you can't quite shake.

37:01

That thing that honestly if we knew be pretty embarrassing. The thing you hide,

37:07

don't disclose. Maybe it's a maybe it's just a shallow apathy. Maybe it's habitual traps that you keep running to.

37:17

So often what we do is we hold up this standard of righteousness and if we're in Christ, we feel that conviction, God,

37:22

I'm not I'm not living the way you called me to live and I I know it and

37:27

I'm stuck in it. And so often we do this thing and we see, okay, well that's what righteousness looks like and we see the

37:32

law and we see his commands and we see his way and we think, okay, Jesus is on the other side of that. I just got to I

37:39

just got to get cleaned up. I just got to get through some of this. I just got to start working on my track record of

37:45

obedience so that I can get over to get more of Jesus. And that's not the way

37:50

scripture articulates it. He's not on the other side of that. If we're in Christ, he is sitting with you in your

37:57

shame, in your lowest of low. In the moments where you think, God

38:02

could not love this. God would not be okay with this. this is

38:09

too far, too many times. I got to get myself cleaned up. But

38:16

instead, the law shows us just how impossible that is. And there is a dependence that's produced in us to say,

38:23

I just need Jesus. Jesus, will you show me? Will I surrender to you? Will I walk in faith

38:30

with you? Will I surround myself with community that keeps me focused on you and your grace? Romans

38:38

chapter 2 verse4 or do you presume on the patience not

38:44

knowing that listen not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to

38:49

repentance. You feel far from the Lord. You feel stuck. You see God's law and you you

38:57

definitely are getting that whole not measuring up thing. The enemy wants to take you and just

39:03

keep you there. And yet you have a father who is holy and righteous, who sent his

39:10

son, who's sitting next to you in your muck and in your mer and in your sin

39:15

saying, "Hey, this I paid for this. I paid for this. Let's get up and let's

39:20

walk to the father that we're called to be in relationship with." That's our savior. That's Jesus. And so what fuels

39:27

our spiritual growth, what fuels our obedience, looking more like him, is actually not how disciplined we are at

39:34

the rules, but how dependent we are on Jesus as the fuel to say, "Okay, I'm going to get up and I'm going to follow.

39:39

I am going to be obedient." Obedience isn't thrown away now that I live under Jesus. I'm going to be obedient. And

39:45

listen, if you're not in Christ, I love you. We love you. We're glad you're here.

39:51

That doesn't apply to you until you say

Title: God Commands Our Best Toward Others | Walking By Faith

Video: vM\_XX9P66RU

0:00

Well, good morning, Christ Chapel. Great to worship with you. Uh, good

0:05

afternoon to those of you at our five o'clock service and hello to all of you joining us online. We're going to

0:10

continue our series, Walking by Faith, as we look at the book of Exodus. So, if you will open your Bibles there to

0:16

Exodus 20, we're going to be in verses 12- 21 today. If you're opening up a

0:22

blue Bible, that's page 61. There should be a blue Bible in all the venues that you're in. uh if you got away from

0:29

wherever you live uh without a copy of the scriptures, want you to be able to see some of these uh things yourself.

0:34

So, page 61, Exodus chapter 20. I want to do some quick housekeeping very quickly, but I'm going to tie this

**Quick housekeeping**

0:41

because I think it does tie to the spirit of what we talked about last week. Last week, remember we covered the

0:46

first four commandments of the Ten Commandments, and those were all vertical in nature, people's relationship uh with God. And the last

0:54

one was about the Sabbath and about how God talked about setting aside the Sabbath which was uh the last day of the

1:01

week for his people to rest. It was a day for them. Remember Sabbath means cease. And so this was a time for them

1:07

to cease from their work but also to reflect on who God is and their relationship with him and to celebrate

1:15

him. Now in the New Testament church, we stopped that that moved from the last day of week to the first day of the week

1:21

because of Jesus's resurrection. And so it was now we celebrate uh the new life that we have in him that begins our new

1:28

life rather than the end of the week. So many correlations that we can't go into right now. But all that to say uh we let

**New worship times**

1:36

me tell you the goal of our worship services here. Uh certainly we want to teach you the scriptures. We want to

1:41

equip and inspire you to reach the 800,000 in our own backyard who don't yet know or walk with Jesus. But we want

1:48

this to be a place where you can connect with God. Please hear me say that. We want this to

1:55

be a place where you can cease, where you can take a deep breath and exhale

2:01

and connect with God. In order for you to do that, you've got to have some space in order to do that. and we've got

2:10

uh not a whole lot of space uh at at our campuses, which is a wonderful thing. You guys are doing a fantastic job of

2:17

reaching out to your friends and neighbors, which is wonderful, but some of that can create some some chaos and

2:25

and so we want to create some space for you to be able to uh worship the Lord. So we are going to make a minor change,

2:33

very minor change to our worship service times specifically at the west campus

2:39

and the south campus. At the west campus and south campus and across all of our campuses, we are going to move to

2:45

consistent worship times. That means all of the worship services, no matter what

2:50

campus you attend, will be at 9:00 am, 11:00 a.m., and 5:00 pm. Now, Fort Worth

2:57

campus, I know that's what you've normally done. That's the rhythm that that you're in, but that's going to be a

3:03

change uh to those particular campuses, west and south. And here's the the heart uh behind it. We again want to give you

3:10

space to connect with God. That means that we want to give you some more space in the service. that will create more

3:17

space for some of the service elements that that we have. Now, I'm not going to preach longer. Well, I can't always

3:24

promise you that, but I I'm going to try to keep it to to my time as best as I can, but we want to create more space

3:31

for you to connect with God through those different service elements. We want to create more time between

3:36

services so that you can fellowship with one another and so that you can be

3:42

equipped for the other ministries that are going on uh on those particular Sundays. And then frankly, can I just be

3:48

very practical? We want to provide some more time and space for you to find a parking place and a place to sit like

3:55

that. That's that's super practical. I know. Uh but that's very real that

4:00

people feel rushed to to to get out or get in etc etc and that is not our

4:06

heart. Monday through Saturday you are rush rush rush rush rush. This needs to

4:12

be a place where you sit down and rest cease. Exhale say Lord you are my God.

4:20

There is no one before you and I want to connect with you and we want to give you time and space for that to happen. So

4:26

those changes will take effect September 7th. September 7th. So I hope you hear

4:32

the heart and hope you take advantage of it. South campus, I know you're going to wake up 15 minutes earlier. Uh West

4:38

Campus, I know you're going to start 15 minutes later at that second service. But please take advantage of those and say, "Lord, these are your 15 minutes.

4:44

Uh let me use these for your sake." So that's uh that's the big announcement on

**God commands our best toward others**

4:50

service times Fort Worth campus. I know you're like, "What? There was nothing new here. There's nothing new for for

4:55

you in in that particular vein. Uh but hopefully you learned something new today cuz we're picking up again. We're

5:01

going to finish the the second half of those uh ten commandments. Just want to remind you of where we are. We're at

5:07

Mount Si. The reason why we keep showing you these maps is because we want to show you that this is a real thing. This

5:15

really happened at a real place. God is real and he interacts in our everyday

5:20

lives. he has throughout the course of human history and he continues to do that today and always will. So that's

5:27

why we continue to show you these maps. So they're at Mount Si. They're going to be there for 11 months in 6 days and God

5:34

is going to give them the law 613 commands of how uh their uh interactions

5:40

with God and with one another uh should be regulated etc. And so remember, we

5:46

covered those those first four, how God commands the best from us toward him.

5:51

But now today, we're going to talk about how God commands our best toward others. Jesus summarizes all of those commands

5:58

in Matthew 22 37 uh through 40. He said to them, "You shall love the Lord God

6:03

with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment, and a second is like it. You shall love your

6:10

neighbor as yourself. on these two commands depend all the law and the

6:16

prophets. And and you go, "Praise God, cuz I can't learn 613." But these two,

6:22

okay, I I can I can understand those. I can they're simplified. I got you. But I

6:27

want to remind you of what we talked about last week because it's going to be very important. Um these are in the

**The context of freedom**

6:33

context of freedom. Remember, God had redeemed his people

6:38

out of slavery. And he said, "If you will continue to live this way, you will

6:44

remain free. Do don't bow to another. Don't bow to an idol. Don't bow to

6:50

anybody else because that will end up enslaving you. This is meant for your freedom." And the way that we interact

6:56

with one another, that is for our freedom and for our good uh also. So I

7:02

want to remind you it's the context of freedom because essentially what God is asking and God is commanding his people

7:09

to enter into is a social contract. And when I say social social contract what

7:15

what I mean by that I'm going to give it a very basic definition but it it's this implicit or explicit uh agreement that

7:24

individuals make so that they can uh flourish together. That's the that's

7:30

barebones bottom line that we make an agreement that I'll live this way and if you live that way and therefore then we

7:37

can all get along and in that social contract so that we can flourish

7:43

together specifically in freedom there are freedoms that individuals must limit

7:49

or sacrifice. Meaning that in this community, just

7:54

because you're free doesn't mean that you get to do whatever you want to do. Because if your freedom just means that

8:01

you get to do whatever you want to do, that's going going to infringe on other people's freedoms. There are these these

8:08

sacrifices that we have to make so that we can all cooperate, so that we can all get along. That's the way that it is

8:16

with any kind of organization, any kind of entity, any kind of team. It it

8:22

doesn't matter all any kind of anytime a couple of individuals get together if

8:28

they want to succeed or fulfill a mission or to get further etc. They all

8:34

say, "Okay, I'll limit my freedom, you limit your freedom, and we'll get further together." That that's that's

8:41

anything in in life. And that's what essentially God is is talking about

8:46

here. For them to be the people of God that they want that he wants them to be to experience freedom, they're going to

8:52

have to sacrifice and limit some of their own. This is incredibly important

8:57

when you to in order to answer the question that you probably asked many times. Why can't we get along?

**Why cant we get along**

9:06

Why can't we get along? Well, you can ask that question in in a marriage. You

9:11

can ask that question with family. You can ask that question at work. You

9:17

anywhere ask ask you can ask that question about our country. You can ask that question anytime. And and the

9:24

reason why you can answer that question with this is because often times more

9:29

often than not what's going on is one of two things when people aren't getting along. First, they don't agree on the

9:36

same authority. They don't agree on the same authority.

9:41

So I we're not getting along because I'm abiding by one authority and you're abiding by a different one. That that's

9:48

why we're not getting along. We have different sources of authority. The second thing is even if we share the

9:56

same authority, selfishness gets in the way. We we say I'm not willing to

10:01

sacrifice my freedoms for you or I'm not willing to limit my freedoms for your

10:07

sake. And so there's a selfishness that that creeps in. And that's that's really

10:12

the the spirit behind what is going on here in the second part of the command

10:18

the ten commandments that we're going to cover uh today. There God is saying I am your authority. He sets that in place.

10:25

And if I am your authority, then you're going to have to limit your freedom. But it will be for your good, but that will

10:32

demand your best. Your best towards God and your best toward others. And so that's what I want to cover today. So

10:39

we're going to look at those uh different elements. There's there's going to be two different uh elements to

10:45

each point that we're going to look at here. But we're going to cover these social interactions in concentric

10:51

circles. And what I mean by that is if God is first in our life and in our

10:57

hearts, then that should emanate out from our lives. And so we're going to cover this in different concentric

11:03

circles. I'll cover the areas. I'll give you a principle and I'll make some applications from those principles as we

11:09

go along. So the first one is this. God commands our best toward those inside

11:16

our home. God commands our best toward those

11:22

inside our home. Now if you look back at God orained

11:32

institutions, God ordained the institution of marriage

11:38

and family that that he ordained those institutions

11:44

from the very beginning. Go back to the beginning of of Genesis. He said, "This

11:50

is how I'm going to establish humankind and how humankind will flourish is

11:58

really through marriage and the home." And so, we're going to start with that concentric circle of those inside your

12:06

home. And he talks about two particular commandments when we're talking about inside the walls of our home in Exodus

12:13

20 12 and 14. He says, 'Honor your father and your mother that your days

12:20

may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you and you shall not

12:26

commit adultery. So, one of the phrases I want to clear

12:31

off the deck so we can f focus specifically on the relationships is this phrase, so that you will live long

12:38

in the land. Um, sometimes people equate honoring your father and mother to uh

**So that you will live long**

12:44

living longer in life. Now, I'm certain that uh your parents have told you

12:49

things that have made your life a lot longer. You know, don't jump off that cliff. You know, don't do those awful,

12:56

terrible, dangerous things and that's extended your life. But that's not what is going on here. What he's talking

13:03

about is if children will honor their their parents, essentially what he's

13:09

saying is if the fabric of the family stays together, then Israel as a nation,

13:16

you will live a long time in the promised land.

13:22

I if if the fabric of the family stays together, then you'll enjoy the promised

13:28

land. Remember, that's where they're going. you'll enjoy and live a long life in that land. Does that make sense?

13:36

Okay, good. So, so we're I need to clear that off the deck because this is this is for specifically for Israel. So, now

13:43

let's let's talk about some of the the specific relationships inside the home.

13:48

And we're going to uh start with with marriage. Okay, that's where we're going to start because first comes love, then

13:56

comes marriage, then comes the baby in the baby carriage, right? Then the baby gets a

14:03

driver's license, and they're gone, and you don't see them anymore. But that's

14:09

why we're going to start because marriage is where the family starts. And

14:15

listen to this. And I uh parents, marriage is is what is left when that

14:23

baby grows up and gets that driver's license. And if you skip this in

14:28

between, you're going to be staring at a stranger in 18 years, 16 really, cuz

14:34

once they start driving, you don't see them. I know you're going to stare at a stranger and you're going to be going,

**Dont neglect the marriage**

14:40

"What? Who are you? I don't I don't even know you any anymore." that has to be

14:46

sustained. That is that is the foundation there. That's the foundation for your kids flourishing as well. And

14:54

so don't neglect the marriage for the sake of the kids in between. That's not

14:59

going to benefit them and it's definitely not going to benefit uh either you or your husband or wife

15:04

spouse uh as you continue in your relationship once those kids move out of

15:09

the home. So we're going to first uh talk about marriage and again because

15:15

marriage is the the starting point even when you look at at creation marriage is

15:21

the starting point there before he says uh you know be fruitful and multiply and flourish and they start having kids uh

15:28

etc. And one of the reasons why I want to another reason why I want to start

15:33

there is because of what Jesus says about marriage in Matthew chapter 19:6.

15:38

He says, "What God has joined together, let no man separate." What God has

15:45

joined together, let no man separate. Meaning, you have to understand that a a

15:51

marriage is not a contract, but a covenant. It it's a promise that is made

15:56

between you and another person, but it's a promise that's made not just to them. It's specifically made to God that I

16:04

will love unconditionally your son or daughter. That that that's what it is.

16:11

That that that covenant and that that covenant I say covenant because that's a promise. It's not a contract that you

16:18

say, "Well, you didn't fulfill your end of the bargain and so therefore I don't don't have to either." So if we start

**Dont commit adultery**

16:24

with it's a covenant relationship ordained by God where the two become one

16:31

flesh mysteriously. He talks about this in Ephesians 5. Then Jesus says what

16:37

what God joined together mysteriously. Let no person separate. Therefore then

16:43

we get this commandment. Do not commit adultery. Don't commit adultery.

16:50

Now, I don't think I I hope that I don't have to go into specific definitions of

16:56

what adultery is. Do I? Okay, that's it. It's not

17:02

uncomfortable to just not, you know, to shake your head. No, like I got you. We

17:07

don't need to go into what adultery is specifically. The the term is is

17:14

certainly intercourse outside of marriage. You understand that? I don't we don't have to to go that way. But but

17:21

let me let me start here because to to fulfill or obey this command in a sense

17:30

um it starts way before you think I have to obey that command. See people don't

17:37

fall into adultery. They often time inch toward it. You inch toward that. you

17:44

don't fall uh into it because there are a lot of things when you back this up. There are a lot of uh actions, habits,

17:53

thoughts, uh looks, uh touches, all of those things that begin way back here

18:01

before you're going, man, I probably shouldn't commit adultery.

18:06

That starts starts way way way way back here. So, I believe the the commandment

18:11

to not commit adultery absolutely obviously uh stands. I think that's the heart of God. And I think I've shown you

18:18

why that's the heart of God. But God is not just against adultery. I think he's

18:23

against all the things that lead to adultery.

18:29

Let Hey folks, be careful what you look at. Be careful what you see. That does

18:36

affect your marriage. It does. You can try to deceive yourself

18:43

and say that it doesn't, but it does. You have to guard your eyes. That will

18:50

help guard your heart. You have to guard your thoughts. That will help guard your

18:57

heart. And so, we start there by protecting that that marriage

19:02

relationship. Okay? and and and also another reason why we we protect that

19:09

we're going to start transitioning into our relationship with with kids inside the home. But one of one of the reasons

19:17

why is because man adultery leads to 40% of divorces.

19:24

And that be that that leads to a fractured home. And so you you have you

19:30

begin these again as we talked about last week these cascading consequences. Do you remember us talking about that

19:36

these cascading consequences that if I do this then these are the the

19:41

consequences or repercussions or ripple effect of sin. And so he he's talking

19:48

about don't go here because of what will happen here. And he goes eventually to

19:55

uh honor your father and your mother. Now when we talk about honor, honor

20:00

means to uh give weight to. So give

20:06

weight to. Now when you're a a young young child, um your what your parents

20:12

say holds a lot of weight or or I hope it does. Uh it should that that when

20:18

they say it's time for bed, that that's very weighty. That that's not up for negotiation,

20:24

you know. It's it's like okay, it's it's time it's very weighty. I I take what they say as law essentially that that's

20:33

what honor means is to give weight. Now certainly that relationship uh changes

20:39

the way that you honor your father and mother as you grow that that definitely

20:44

changes. So when we talk about honoring that constantly uh requires reflection

20:50

etc. But let me tr again I told you we're we're transitioning here into the the kid part. But uh parents

20:58

live lives worthy of honor.

21:03

Make it easy on your kids to honor you.

21:09

You can't control if they do or or not, but let let's live honorable lives.

**Live honorable lives**

21:18

So, so that our kids don't have to think about how do you know, do I honor them?

21:25

No, they just they just do. Uh because that's how you've you've raised them.

21:30

You've raised them to to honor and respect and all all of those those things. And so uh when when it comes to

21:37

honoring father and and mother and giving giving weight to you, it's in

21:42

this context of family and one of the reasons why it's important for kids to

21:47

honor their parents is because again they're learning how they're learning an

21:53

authority structure. That that's that's one of the keys because really when we step back from

22:01

it, all of us live under the authority of God. or should there there is an authority

22:08

above us that we all live under and kids begin to learn that authority structure

22:15

that someone in authority is telling you some things so that it goes well with

22:20

you so that you don't hurt yourself so that you don't touch the stove so that you

22:27

don't do these things God leads us in similar ways telling us this is the best

22:32

way to live and it's best to to learn from instruction rather than experience.

22:39

Don't touch the stove and go, I learned that was hot. That's what they told you.

22:45

So, this is the place where they begin to learn some authority and hopefully healthy authority where again, not not

22:54

overbearing or all of those things, but healthy authority that people are learning. And they also learn this the

23:01

second thing that they learn inside the family is that life isn't all about them.

23:08

When when a baby is born, a baby knows nothing different than life is all about

23:13

them. Not not their fault. But as they grow up, they begin to learn, oh wow, it's

23:21

not all about me. There are other people in this family. There are other people that have other things to do. Other

23:28

people have needs. Other people have wants, preferences, desires. It's the my family doesn't revolve around me. So

23:36

there are some key key things that kids are learning in their home. Now again,

23:43

those things change when we talk about honoring uh our parents. And I'll uh I

23:49

want to talk about just very quickly some practical things uh to do because when you're younger certainly the

23:55

application here to honor or give weight to your parents is to obey your parents when you live under uh their roof. You

24:03

abide by their rules. Now certainly if they're telling you something sinful to do, you don't do we always run to the

24:10

exceptions. Okay? Certainly if they're telling you to do something ungodly, don't do that.

24:17

But you o obey your your parents. As you grow older, one of the key things that

24:24

you can do to honor your parents is just to practically care for your parents.

24:29

Help them uh sincerely love them. Honor them. Now you can begin to meet them

24:36

more where they have met you. They've cared for you and and been helpful to

24:43

you raising you. Now you can uh begin to return that favor and do the same for

24:48

them. Now, one of the questions always comes up when we talk about family and parents and things. Uh what if your

24:53

parents were just not walking with God? How do you honor them? You go, I Cody, I

24:59

don't know that there was much I don't know that there's much to honor. One of the greatest things that you can give

25:06

them that they might never know that you've given them is forgiveness.

25:12

That's one of the greatest things that you can give them. They might not want to receive it. They might not want it.

25:19

They they might tell you, "I never asked for that." But if you can do that, you begin your

25:25

heart begins to change because you begin to have the heart of Christ. And you begin to have compassion,

25:33

a sincere, deep, abiding love the way that God loves them. That's how your

25:39

heart begins to turn toward them and honor them in a very specific way. So,

25:45

honor your father and mother. Do not commit adultery. Let me give you a quick principle and some applications uh to

25:52

this. The principle is this. Healthy boundaries nourish a healthy home.

**Healthy boundaries nourish healthy homes**

25:59

Healthy boundaries nourish a healthy home. Like I said, these always require

26:07

how do I honor my parents, etc. How do I keep these boundaries? Always requires

26:13

appropriate reflection and consideration. But let's just start uh I

26:18

want to start with with kids. And I kind of already went through that uh with the obedience under their roof, etc. But so

26:24

let me talk to parents and and kids. Yes, live an honorable life. But parents, let me give you some some guard

26:30

rails and guidelines here when we talk about the boundaries. Um the first one is is this. Uh don't be harsh

26:39

and don't be their best friend. Those are your guardrails. And I I know

26:46

you go those those are obvious and it changes every day. Meaning like what does that look like? It causes constant

26:52

reflection. But I say don't be harsh because in Ephesians chapter 6 uh Paul is reiterating this command specifically

27:00

when he's talking about the god orained institution of marriage in Ephesians

27:05

chapter 5 and he transitions to children in chapter 6 and he says fathers don't

27:11

provoke your children to anger but bring them up in the discipline and

27:18

instruction of the Lord as you put those guard rails in place of I'm not going to

27:23

be harsh and I'm not going to be your best friend. Let me tell you what you're pointing them to toward. That is the

27:29

instruction of the Lord. Not to you obey everything I say.

27:38

You're setting them in the direction of doing doing life God's way

27:45

that they would become all that God created them to be. but you're guiding them in the instruction of the Lord.

27:53

That that's that's your call as a parent. So, that's the guidelines and

27:58

guardrails for um parents uh with kids. Now, let's talk about marriage and the

28:04

healthy boundaries that nourish a healthy home. Uh this illustration I heard uh Ted Kitchens out at the Hive uh

28:10

our founding senior pastor. Thank you for all your ministry to Christ Chapel. Love you, respect you. I heard this

28:16

illustration from him and it's genius. Um it it's and it's this. When it comes to marriage, keep the fire in the

28:23

fireplace. Keep the fire in the fireplace.

28:32

There is a context. There is a boundary for the fire that warms the home. And

28:38

when it's in the context of the fireplace, everyone in the home is happy.

28:44

You you feel the warmth, the glow. It sets the mood. You're like, "All right."

28:50

That fire gets outside of the fireplace and it sets the house ablaze. It burns

28:55

the house down. And it might not just burn your house down, but your neighbor's house down.

29:01

It has a ripple effect. When the fire gets outside the context of the fireplace, it's very, very dangerous.

29:09

When it's inside the context, it's very, very helpful. It's very, very lifegiving. It's very, very nurturing.

29:16

And so let me let me give you two quick applications on that. Obviously, first

29:22

keep it there. Just very simply, keep it there. Second,

29:29

keep the fire stoked. Keep it stoked. And you go, I don't know if I'm stoking it. Great. Do an emotional audit.

29:38

Here, here's your emotional audit. Go sit down by yourself.

29:43

husband, wife, you sit down by yourself and you begin

29:48

to make an audit. Who are you texting most?

29:54

Who are you talking to most? Who are you thinking about most?

30:04

You do an emotional audit on yourself first

30:10

and then I encourage you to to

30:15

come clean. Have an accountability partner of the

30:20

same gender that you can share that with but and pray for you. But also you need

30:25

to share that with your spouse. And and if any of those things are off, guess where those things need to be uh pointed

30:32

toward? This is an easy one, guys. Your spouse.

30:38

I I if you're thinking about somebody else or talking to somebody else way more than you're talking to your spouse

30:43

or thinking about somebody way more than you're thinking about, then turn those things toward them and you go, "But Cody, I don't feel the fire over there.

30:50

Maybe you need to stoke it. Put some fuel in the fireplace.

30:56

You're waiting for it to be be warm enough for you to come near. Maybe it's not warm enough because you're not

31:01

adding any fuel. You can add fuel to that fire. You can

31:07

stoke it. And so healthy boundaries nourish a healthy home. Second, as God

31:15

commands our best toward those inside of our home, God commands our best toward those outside of our home.

**God commands our best**

31:23

And I'm going to have to boogie here because I told you more time to connect with God, not connect with Cody. So I

31:28

want you to have time to connect with with him. But God commands these uh things to

31:35

those outside of our home because it breeds trust. It builds relationships

31:41

with those outside of our home. And this isn't just people inside the fellowship

31:46

of God, but they're outside as well. Now, these things certainly apply to those in inside of our home. These

31:52

things certainly apply to us as a church, but they also apply to those uh outside the family of faith as well.

31:58

Exodus 2013 15-17. Uh this is where he starts to just list. It's like a machine

32:04

gun. You shall not murder. You shall not steal. You shall not uh bear false

32:10

witness against your neighbor. And then he kind of summarizes things. He says, "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your

32:16

neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that is your

32:23

neighbors." Let me clarify some definitions quickly. Uh when he talks about not not

32:30

murdering, um it's a specific there's seven different Hebrew words for uh

32:35

killing or murdering. This one specifically is about premeditated. This is why Jesus goes back toward the if

32:43

you've anger in your heart that's like murder. Remember, go to the sermon on

32:48

the mount to see how this fleshes out. So you don't just check the box. This is about motives of the heart. And so it

32:54

goes back towards premeditated uh murder. This is not about uh war or

32:59

capital punishment. This is this is completely different. It's a different word for murder here. Lie obviously is

33:07

any kind of untruth. Uh those can be lies of malice, fear, uh uh lies for

33:14

profit, lies of exaggeration, halftruth, or even silence. Um all of

33:20

those all of those things are incorporated in this. Don't Don't bear false witness or lie. Um stealing that's

33:27

taking somebody something that's not yours. Fun fact real fast. Um I did I told you we did a series on this back in

33:34

2015 where we broke everyone down in a 10- week series. I had the week that was do

33:40

not steal. And so I was going through the different definitions of stealing and things. One of the synonyms for

33:46

stealing is pilfering. Do you guys know what that word is? Pilfering. taking taking just a little bit uh all the

33:52

time. And uh I don't have any idea why. I don't think I gave this as an analogy,

33:57

but the next week after I talked about don't pilfer, we had a hundred pins from

34:04

Christ Chapel show back up that people brought back uh from their houses, which

34:10

was so funny. Um, so I love how sensitive you guys are to

34:16

the spirit of of God and you want to have a clean conscience before him just so that you feel completely free. Keep

34:24

the pen. Okay? Keep the pen. It's yours. Give it away. Use it. God bless you. Uh,

34:31

love you guys. Um, and then he talks about uh, don't covet. And obviously that's a a desire to be jealous for

34:37

something or someone else's stuff or situation. Now, uh uh where I want to go

34:43

is why these particular do nots? Why? Why does he pick these off from all

34:52

the other ones? I mean, he could have said a bunch of do not other things. Okay, why does he pick these? I think he

35:00

picks these because these are the particular tactics of Satan.

35:06

These are the explicit tactics of the enemy.

35:12

If you think about this, go back to John chapter 10. Jesus said that I came to give you life and life abundant, but the

35:18

enemy came to steal, kill, and destroy.

35:26

John chapter 8, Jesus says that he is that Satan, our enemy, is the father of

35:31

all lies. And you talk about coveting. Coveting.

35:37

Isn't coveting what got us into this predicament where we are in a sinful and broken world in the first place? Go back

35:44

to Genesis chapter 3. Hey, don't you think that you could have it better than

35:49

you have it now? Eve, these are all the particular tactics of

35:55

Satan, which is why he's saying don't go there. Don't listen to the enemy. Don't

36:01

don't and and often times I think one of the reasons why he puts covet at the end is because often times all of those

36:07

other things uh begin as a consequence of coveting meaning when we covet when

36:13

we want somebody else's stuff we are willing to steal for it or to lie for it

36:19

or to murder or you know basically assassinate somebody's character or um

36:26

you know reputation or whatever we're willing to walk over them to climb over them to step over them to get what we

36:32

want. And often times it comes from from coveting. So, let me give you a quick uh

36:38

principle and application here. It's this. If healthy boundaries nourish a healthy home, then good fences make good

36:45

neighbors. Good fences make good neighbors. That phrase comes from a Robert Frost poem

**Fences make good neighbors**

36:51

back in 1914 called Mending Wall. Just so you think I didn't make it up. I'm not trying to steal it or anything like

36:57

that. Um, but It it's this idea that um

37:04

personal property when we respect somebody's personal

37:10

property that provides a mutual respect and builds a trust and relationship with other people. Like that's yours and

37:16

that's not mine. That's what God gave you. That's not what God gave me. And so, uh let me talk about some some

37:24

fences that that are helpful. Uh, first, don't take other people's stuff.

37:31

And that can include credit. Second, don't talk about other people's

37:36

stuff. Don't don't talk about other people's stuff. It's not yours. It's not your

37:41

stuff to talk about. Often times when you talk about other people's stuff, it leads to gossip. So, just don't talk about other people's

37:48

stuff. And then don't think about other people's stuff. The Joneses never have

37:53

it as good as you think. But we imagine it. They've got it great.

37:59

They've never got it as good as you think. Now, I know that you say these sound so so simple, Cody. It reminds me

38:06

of a with especially with the start of school with a a book that was written a long time ago said, "Everything that I

38:12

needed to know, I learned in kindergarten." Do you remember that book? Old book, but

38:18

everything I needed to know, I learned in kindergarten. You know, share.

38:24

Don't take other people's stuff. I mean, all these things you go, this this is this sounds very simple. Well, I think

38:31

this is how Jesus summarized all of these things in Matthew 7:12. So,

38:36

whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them. That's the law

38:41

and the prophets. How do we summarize these things? Treat others the way you

38:47

want to be treated. Well, Cody, I learned that in kindergarten. Well, we still need to apply it today.

38:53

It's not applied today. We don't treat others the way that we want to be treated. That that the that social

39:02

contract that I mentioned at the beginning is always violated. We don't have the same authority. And often times selfishness steps in to undercut or

39:10

undermine those relationships. So, we don't all flourish. We don't all

39:15

benefit. And so, here's your quick application. It's the same as last week. Keep it simple, Saint.

**Your own heart is complicated**

39:25

Keep it simple, saint. Don't over complicate this. It's It's

39:30

not that complicated. What's complicated is your own heart. That's what's

39:36

complicated. It's wicked and deceitful and it's got to continually be yielded

39:42

to the Holy Spirit because all those problems, all those problems that we

39:48

want to talk about and we want to point the finger at all start here.

39:54

Every one of them. You go back to James chapter 4 where he James chapter 4 verse one I think it is. He says, "What is it

40:00

that causes all the quarrels amongst you? Isn't it your own selfish desires?

40:07

Doesn't it start right here? We got to bow our own hearts to him. And so that's why at all of our venues right now,

40:13

we're going to go into in just a moment, we're going to go into a moment of pastoral prayer for you to be led through some things that you can pray

40:19

for so that you can connect with God and yield your heart to him. But let me pray for us before we do. God, thank you for

40:25

your word. It's always convicting, Lord God. But

40:30

but Lord, you con you convict us to point out those areas, not to condemn

40:36

us, but Lord God, to lead us to further freedom. And so Lord, as you convict us

40:43

of those things, may we be honest about them, confess them to you, know that you

40:48

will forgive us of those things and lead us in life everlasting.

40:55

Lord, thank you for your word. Thank you for Jesus who fulfilled the law

41:00

perfectly and that when we place our faith in him, you see us clothed in his

41:05

righteousness alone. And it's in his name we pray. Amen.

Title: God Commands Our Best | Walking By Faith

Video: OO6l1lkK3yM

0:01

Good morning, Christ Chapel. Great to be with you. Good afternoon to those of you at our five o'clock uh

0:07

service as well. Uh I I miss you guys. Uh my family and I had a week of

0:13

vacation. So, thank you very much for that. And even just a week away, I go, man, I I really enjoy being around you

0:20

guys. And it reminded me yesterday actually I was getting some groceries with the boys and I have no idea what

0:26

prompted my older son to say this uh as we were carrying the groceries out, but he said, "Uh, Dad, you're you're lucky

0:32

to have a job that you love." And I said, "You're right, son." I'm going to try to not cry as I say this. I I am. I

0:39

am absolutely so blessed to be able to do what I get to do. I love you guys.

0:45

I'm glad that's obvious to my son and I hope that that's obvious to you. I don't take it lightly. I am honored and

0:52

privileged to be a pastor here at this church. And it's my honor and privilege to say, please open your Bibles. Open

1:00

your Bibles to Exodus 20. Exodus 20. We're going to be in verses 1- 11. If

1:06

you're opening one of the blue Bibles, it's page 61. While you turn there, let me do just a

1:12

little bit of housekeeping very quickly. Um this is uh our ministry year starts September 1 which means this is the the

1:20

season where we uh nominate our elders and deacons for the next year of

1:25

service. And so uh those are men who meet the qualifications in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Those are also meet our

1:33

obviously constitutional requirements uh as well. And so you can find that list

1:39

of those men through the QR code that's on the back of your sermon notes if you need a paper copy. Those are at the

1:45

welcome desk right outside of your venue. But if you'll look those over, please, if you're a constitutional

1:52

member, then you will receive a ballot via email uh the week of August 25th.

1:58

And uh obviously these men have been unanimously uh approved and and uh for

2:04

your uh approval and they will be affirmed at the annual meeting which is August 31st at 1:00 at the South Campus.

2:13

And so that's where those that will be affirmed. But uh all of that housekeeping stuff is on the back of

2:19

your sermon notes. Uh but I need to announce that here. Also uh just so you know, we have two elder candidates uh

2:26

that are being nominated right now. One is Danny Rogers and the other is where Shipman. So very excited about those uh

2:34

men coming on. Um so please look at all of that. So, I needed to announce that

2:40

to you because uh that's what I need to do constitutionally because uh we have a constitution that

2:48

tells us how we are organized, how we should uh function, and how we are

2:54

governed. And I say that because uh that's essentially what we're going to be looking at today in Exodus chapter uh

3:00

20. In Exodus chapter 20, we have a similar thing where God gives his people

3:06

a a constitution of how they are to be governed, how they are to uh operate and

3:12

uh function. So, let me just remind you of where we are because last week Dr. Bailey did a fantastic job of covering

3:19

Exodus chapter 19, but we are at Mount Syani or Mount Horeb is another name for

3:26

it. Both both of those are synonymous. And remember, we are covering the most traditional route just for teaching uh

3:33

purposes. But this is the place that God told Moses that he was going to bring him back to. And he said, "This is going

3:40

to be a sign to you, a sign that you are my servant, a sign of my faithfulness to

3:45

you, a sign of my favor uh uh upon you, that I'll bring you back to this place

3:51

and meet you here again." Which just a quick aside. I mean, uh, there's so much

3:56

that we could go into, uh, on that, but that's what I pray happens for each of you Sunday to Sunday. That when God

4:04

brings you back to this place, you go, "Man, God, you've been faithful to me. You've been so kind. You have walked

4:10

with me. I have your favor. I have your faithfulness. Here is where I worship you, and I'll meet you here again."

4:16

Again, obviously Jesus walks with you throughout uh the week, but may this be a set aart place uh for you to remember

4:24

God's goodness uh uh to you. So, he brings Moses back around uh to m Mount

4:30

Si and this is where he establishes Israel as a nation. Now, when you think

4:36

about that, Dr. Bailey talked about that last week, but when you think about the elements that make up a nation, a nation

4:43

has a few things. First, they have a land. Do they have a land?

4:48

Yes. It's they're just not there yet. And so it's a promised land, but they they they do have a land. Do they have a

4:54

leader? Yes. It's God. It's it's it's not it God. This is set up as a theocracy.

5:02

Although Moses is leading his people uh right now. And then the third thing that

5:07

they need is a law. H how are we supposed to be organized? How are we uh

5:13

supposed to be uh governed? And so, uh, God is going to sit them here at Mount

5:19

Si for 11 months and 6 days. They're going to be sitting at this mountain

5:26

where God is going to give Moses the law for his people, which there are 613

5:33

laws. Now, you don't have to memorize all of those. Uh but the ones we're

5:38

going to cover today, many have memorized because we're going to cover uh some of the most familiar ones in the

5:44

the law, which are the ten commandments. And we're only going to cover a few of those. And those are the most widely uh

5:52

known. I mean, the ten commandments are are pretty they can be a hot button for

5:57

people and they have certainly made the news a as of late where people have been talking about them being put in school

6:04

classrooms and all of that kind of stuff. And I I'm not against that in any way, but I just want us to temper our

6:10

expectations because just because we post something doesn't mean that

6:16

everybody obeys what is posted. You will learn that as you drive home

**Message**

6:21

and the posted speed limit is X and you will exceed said speed limit. Uh the the

6:29

law does not transform our hearts. Uh, in fact, we we bow up against the law.

6:37

Anytime somebody tells us what we should do, we go, I'll show you. I don't I

6:43

don't have to do it the way you say that I have to do it. We all have those little areas of our life. And that's

6:51

part of what the law that is being revealed to Israel right now is going to

6:56

do. As Dr. Bailey mentioned last week, the law is doing two primary things.

7:02

It's revelatory. It's revealing who God is, but it's also regulatory. It's it's

7:07

regulating how are we supposed to relate to God and relate to one another. But we

7:14

find out in the New Testament that there's actually a third purpose to the law and that is to reflect back to us

7:22

who we actually are. If you remember in James 1:es 22-2, this will not come up

7:29

on the screen, but in James chapter 1, he talks about when we look at the word of God, it's like a mirror. It reflects

7:37

back to us who we actually are. It it shows us not only an accurate picture of

7:44

who we are and how God sees us, but often times, I love you. I mean this in

7:49

love, but our deficiencies. We're not perfect. When I look in the mirror, I every morning I am not

7:56

perfect. I I see that and that's what's reflected back to us, which is reflecting back to us our need for a

8:04

savior. That that's what is being pointed out when it gets here. You see, when God is commanding these things,

8:11

these ten commandments, uh we we think like I don't have to to do that. But

8:17

it's actually he's commanding this stuff for our best. I if if we adhere to these

8:24

things then it will go well with us. And so what I would like to do today is I

8:30

just want to cover the the first four commandments. And the reason why first

8:35

four out of the 10 the reason why I'm going to cover the first four is because the first four are are more vertical in

8:42

nature meaning how we relate to God and how God relates to us. Uh the next six

8:48

we'll cover next week and those are how we relate with one another. How God

8:53

wants his people to interact with each other. But today it's just the vertical

8:59

part of the relationship which Jesus summed up for us in Matthew chap uh 22.

9:06

in Matthew chapter 22:37 um he says he says and he said to him

9:12

this when Jesus got asked a question which is why it's in the middle of a conversation but he says he sums up the

9:18

the the law he says you shall love the Lord God with all your heart with all your soul and with all your mind this is

9:24

the first and greatest commandment when he summarizes it in two the second one we'll cover next week now that that is a

9:31

great summary of all the things that we're going to be talking about with these first four uh commandments. But

9:37

what I want to do is I want to kind of flesh out what does that mean? What does it mean to love the Lord with all your

9:42

heart, soul, mind, and strength? I mean, that was that's the verse that we use when we talk about our disciplehip

9:48

endeavor and being a disciple, which is why you never arrive completely at being

9:55

a disciple because we can all, myself included, grow in loving the Lord more with all of my heart, soul, mind, and

10:02

strength. And so I I have I always have areas of growth, which is what this

10:08

reflects back to me constantly. And so we're going to flesh out I'm going to

**Lesson**

10:13

flesh out what kind of those things mean as we look more specifically at these

10:18

four commandments. Now, I'm not going to go through them uh pedantically. If you want more

10:25

information, we actually did a series on this back in 2015 uh called God's Top 10 that you can find

10:31

uh on on the website. uh but uh I'm I'm going to go through these more in a way

10:37

uh where it categorizes what God is commanding from us because uh I I want

10:42

to do it in a way that's different than just one by one because I think if we go one one by one for these particular ones

10:49

I think we have a tendency to do one of two things. Uh first is we can check out

10:56

we go that's irrelevant. Don't make a carved image Cody. not sitting there whittling on my front porch a carved

11:03

image like what I this doesn't have anything to do with me. So I don't want you to check out nor do I want to go

11:10

through them in such a way where you check the box and you go yep don't do that don't do that oh yeah do that all

11:17

the time check done. So, I want to frame it in a little bit different uh way

11:22

because I think there's ways that we can all grow in understanding that God commands our best for our best. And so,

11:30

uh let's look at the the the kind of preamble that uh he puts here. And this

11:35

is where your sermon notes uh begin. But the first thing is this. God commands

11:40

our devotion because he is the one who set us free.

11:48

God commands our devotion because he is the one who set us free.

11:56

Again, Dr. Bailey mentioned the cesarian vassel treaty and he talked about how, you know, there's a superior in

12:03

authority and there are those who who serve and that's kind of the format that this is in and you could see this

12:09

related in ancient Neareastern literature if you went back and looked at it. My point in mentioning that again

12:16

is that the way this is set up and the way that this uh preamble in a sense

12:22

begins in verse two is God is saying I am God

12:28

and you are not and that's okay that's a good praise God praise God but that's

12:36

how this sets up and because I am God this is this is how you are going to

12:42

live if you look at verse Verse two, he says, "I am the Lord your God." It's

12:49

just a statement. He doesn't ask, "Do you think I'm the Lord your God?" Nope.

12:54

I I am. I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt,

13:00

out of the house of slavery. Now, at at first blush, this can this

13:07

can look like a power play uh by God, like where he's powering up. It reminds

13:12

me of the old saying though, uh, it ain't bragging if it's true.

**Purpose**

13:17

I mean, that th this is true. Th this is who God is, but it's in that he's

13:23

stating who he is in the context of what he's done.

13:30

And this is why he commands their best and commands our best is because not

13:36

only of his power but also because of his purpose. Remember if you look back

13:43

at that his purpose uh of of his power was to deliver his people from slavery.

13:50

And that's what he's saying here is I I have delivered you to set you free so

13:56

that you wouldn't be enslaved in the land of slavery which was Egypt so I can take you to a new land that I've set

14:04

aside and promised you where where you will be free will you where you will

14:10

enjoy uh my blessings. That's why I'm doing this. And that's essentially what

14:16

verse two is. It's a preamble to the commands that are going to come. I mean,

14:21

you know, we have a preamble to the constitution. We the people. And it goes

14:26

into the the purposes of all of those things that are going to come that we would be a people who are unified. That

14:33

this would be a place that is just so that we could live at peace. Very similar here. Just just meaning that

14:40

this is a preamble. I am God. You are not. But my purpose was to set

14:46

you free. That's how I have have chosen

14:52

to relate to you and reveal my power uh to you. Which brings us to our first

14:59

point. I'm going to give you some applications a as we go throughout here. And the first one is this. Look at God

15:06

correctly to see yourself accurately.

15:11

look at God correctly to see yourself accurately. This is where that James 1, the mirror

15:18

very really helps because we live in a

15:25

society that stresses it encourages

15:33

independence and individuality which I man I God created you uniquely

**Identity**

15:40

and I want you to be the best you that God created you to be but not independent of God. You see, you you're

15:47

never going to find your true identity apart from the context of your creator.

15:56

We people are searching for that all the time. They they are trying to find their

16:02

identity or create their identity or recreate their their brand or recreate

16:07

their career or whatever that may be. But if you try to do that apart from the

16:14

context of your creator, you will end up in a dead end.

16:20

You you won't find purpose, identity, meaning, satisfaction, contentment, or

16:27

any of those things. God has set you in a context, and that context is to be

16:33

related to him. And in relationship to him, you find all

16:39

of those things that people in our world are looking for. They're looking for meaning, identity, purpose, all of those

16:46

things. But you can't find those things outside of that context. You see, often

16:52

times when we when people look at God in our world today, they look at him as someone who is just commanding and

17:00

demanding a and that he he's distant and he's only

17:05

asking us to obey him for his benefit. No, no, no.

17:11

He's asking us to obey for our benefit. Uh he he commands these things for our

17:17

best. He set us free for the sake of our freedom because he loves us. That's why

17:26

he does these things. You see, you have to understand who God is accurately

17:32

and see him for who he is to understand yourself accurately to understand who

17:38

God made you to be, what he's called you to be. If you see him incorrectly, then

17:43

you will see yourself incorrectly. both both of those uh go together. They're

17:48

they're in tandem because he is your creator and he created you in his image

17:56

and so you have to understand yourself in light of him. I think this is one of

18:02

the things that uh there's many layers to this but I think this is one of the things that that Jesus is mentioning in

18:08

John chapter 8 when he says you will know the truth and the truth will set you

18:14

free. Thank you. If you don't understand the truth of who

18:19

God is and his purpose for you and how he's pursued you and the great extreme

18:25

lengths that he has gone to set you free,

18:30

then you're you're never going to find true freedom. You're never going to find identity, meaning, purpose, any of those

18:37

things. You have to know the truth. And the truth be it begins with who God is.

18:45

and what he's done to pursue you, redeem you, set you free.

18:55

See, so so often, I mean, and and even even this, we talked about the word

19:00

redemption uh last week, but remember

19:06

for those of you who are in Christ, who have said yes to Jesus, so many promises

19:11

made available to you. But remember 1 Corinthians chapter 6 18 to20 when he says when Paul says you're not your own.

19:20

You were bought with a price. But but he he he bought you at the price

19:26

of the blood of his own son. And so so you're you're not your own.

19:31

You and you don't find meaning and purpose apart from him. And and so you

19:36

go, God, I get up today and I get to serve you because I'm not my own. But I also know that you redeemed me. Or that

19:44

word redeemed means bought back. You bought me out of slavery to sin so that

19:49

I could enjoy you so that I could walk in freedom for your

19:56

sake and my sake. He died so that you could live. You have to under you you

20:04

have to look at God correctly so that you understand yourself accurately.

20:10

That's what he's commanding then is your devotion. The second thing he commands is our fidelity. That God commands our

20:17

fidelity because there is no one like him. God commands our fidelity because

20:24

there is no one like him. And when I use that word fidelity, I know it's somewhat

20:31

of an outdated word. It's not a common vernacular. What I mean by fidelity is

20:36

faithfulness and loyalty. He commands your faithfulness. He commands your uh

20:42

loyalty. If you're a Marine, thank you for your service. You know what fidel fidelity means. Um simpelis, you know,

20:49

you you get it. But it means this loyalty that you are always faithful. If

20:56

you look at that in verses three through the first part of five, we begin with those uh commandments. And again, I know

21:02

I'm I'm going to group some of these together. He says, "You shall have no other gods before me."

21:11

I mean, there's so there's a part of this that it just stands alone. Like, I feel like I could read that and we could

21:18

just sit and let the spirit of God work on our hearts for a long time.

21:25

You shall have no other gods before me.

21:31

You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any likeness or anything that is in heaven above or that is in earth

21:38

below or that is in the water or under the earth. You shall not bow down to

21:43

them or serve them. For I the Lord your God am a jealous God.

21:50

What God is uh saying here and I think is probably very clear to you is that um

21:57

there should be no one in front of him. There should be no one alongside of him.

22:03

There should be no one in place of him. Uh our God is completely unique and

22:11

eternally captivating. There is no one like him that we could

22:19

spend eternity with and continue to get to know in ways that wow us and move us

22:27

to worship. There's no one like him. And that's why he says and demands and commands our

22:34

fidelity uh to him. Not not even to mention the fact that it's a reciprocal

22:41

fidelity that he is always faithful to us and therefore commanding our

22:47

faithfulness uh to him. And so he says that we should uh always be faithful to

22:53

him and loyal to him putting no other god alongside of him or before him or in

22:59

place of him because he says he is God. And he talks about this. don't make a a

23:05

carved image. And and there are many places in our world today where you

23:11

could go where you will see carved images and you can see those even in the United States. Uh even in Texas, you can

23:19

find those carved images or things that aren't necessarily in the likeness of God, but are in the likeness of other

23:26

gods that people bow down to and worship. And he says that there is

23:32

nothing to be worshiped except for him. Now when we get to this point, I know

23:37

that people some people have a question of well Cody, what about symbols and

23:43

statues and icons or or what can you know should I wear a cross necklace? Is

23:50

that is that is that bad or whatever? Let me assuage your fears. hopefully.

23:56

Um, those things

24:01

are I'm trying to I can't think of a better word. Bad.

**idolatry**

24:07

Those things are bad when you give them more meaning than they

24:14

actually have. What I mean by that is when you when you add a superstition or

24:21

a worship an a worship and you substitute those things in place of

24:27

faith in a God who is spirit and truth then those things become bad. It's not

24:35

bad to wear a cross necklace, but if if you have have to have it and I'm not

24:40

safe in if I'm not holding on to this cross, hold on. Now we're putting faith

24:47

in an object, not faith in God. No, that that can a

24:52

cross necklace can remind you of awesome. Praise God. Let that move you to worship him. But when when those

25:01

objects become substitutes for God, that's when they become dangerous or

25:06

wrong or bad or whatever, it's the meaning you ascribe to them, which is where he ultimately goes and it's the

25:12

word that we ultimately use. When we substitute anything in place of the one true God, that is called idolatry.

25:21

We we are putting something else in the place where only God belongs.

25:27

that and and I know again if you this doesn't just mean idolatry in the way of

25:34

symbols or statues or carvings or whatever that may be. Uh idolatry is anything you put in that place and and

25:41

we put a lot of things in place of God where we think our security comes

25:46

through status or money or health or

25:52

whatever that may be. Those become the things that we we worship that we bow down to that we serve that we say if we

26:00

have enough of this then we're okay. And that is taking the substitute of God

26:06

because God goes no as long as you have me you are okay.

26:12

And that's why he commands our fidelity because there's no one like him. No,

26:18

nothing that we can try to substitute God with will ever

26:23

ever match him. It it never will. And he

26:28

says, he goes on to say, and this is this has become a real sticking point for some people. He says that he is a

26:35

jealous God. Now, sometimes that throws people off and they're like, "Man, I don't want anything to do with a God who

26:42

is jealous." Let me say a couple things about that quickly. First, this word

26:49

that is used uh here, this this jealousy is not a human jealousy

26:56

for a couple reasons. Uh first, when that Hebrew word is used, I think it's

27:01

used six or seven times throughout the Old Testament, it is only used of God.

27:08

It's not used of of of humans in in any way. So it doesn't mean what we often

27:15

times think it means when somebody is jealous like they are uh over you know

27:20

overly possessive they're they're petty they're they're skeptical they're

27:25

they're envious all suspicious all of those things that that is ascribed to human jealousy. Uh

27:33

what this means is that God is passionate

27:39

about pursuing his people. And he's so passionate about your good and he cares

27:46

so much that he will go to extreme lengths for you to have his best.

27:54

that he cares enough for you to not waste your life on idols that will never

28:02

satisfy your soul. He cares. That's that's what it it

28:10

means. And aren't we so thankful that he cares

28:15

to pursue us, to not give up on us, to not let us settle for a substitute, but

28:23

to constantly remind his children there's something better. And and I care if you put something

28:30

between us because it's going to lead to something less than my best for you.

28:37

I mean, one of the things we we talk about um even in when we do marriage

28:42

counseling is uh because fidelity is obviously a word that we use in

28:48

marriage. Um but when one of the things that we talk about is um that the worst

28:56

emotion in a marriage is not anger but apathy.

29:03

It's it's when someone stops caring that that becomes very dangerous. You

29:09

see an anger even I and and certainly abuse is wrong. I'm not advocating anger

29:16

toward abuse. So please don't hear that. But my point of being if anger is aroused then there's emotion there. They

29:23

care that that frustration they care.

**God cares**

29:28

If they're apathetic, danger zone. God cares.

29:35

Cares enough to go to extreme lengths to pursue you, to send his one and only

29:43

son, to live the life that you couldn't live, to die the death that we all deserve. because we can't meet up to

29:49

these things constantly, perfectly so that we might be reconciled

29:57

to the God who calls us his our father. He He gives us that the title of his

30:03

children. He He's jealous for you because he wants what's best for you. That's why he's

30:11

jealous for you. And so here's a quick application. Don't serve anything else

30:17

that will end up enslaving you. Don't serve anything else that will end

30:23

up enslaving you. If you substitute anything in the place of God, it will

30:29

end up enslaving you. It doesn't matter what it is, you will

30:35

be enslaved to that. But remember, we're reminded in the New

30:41

Testament that Jesus set us free for freedom's sake, so that we would be

30:46

free. Are we enslaved to God? In a sense, yes.

30:52

But it's ultimately for our good. Because if you are enslaved to another

30:59

sin, another master or whatever that may be, then that has consequences that will

31:06

end up stealing your life, destroying your life. And it has a ripple effect,

31:12

not only for you, but for those around you and even sometimes for generations

31:17

to come. In fact, I've got to address this because it says it in verses 5 and six. Uh if you look at the second part

31:23

of verse 5 because this is a question many people have he when he talks about I am a jealous God visiting the iniquity

31:31

of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me but showing steadfast love

31:37

to the thousands of those who love me and keep my commands. One question that people always ask is uh is there

31:44

generational sin? Meaning just because my dad sinned in

31:51

this way, therefore I will sin that way too. And then and it goes on for generations to come. I think this is not

31:58

about generational sin. I think this is about cascading consequences of sin.

**We are all sinners**

32:06

We are all sinners. We all we're all going to find our unique way to sin.

32:12

Now, we might have a predisposition to sin the same way that we were raised,

32:17

and I think that's what it's talking about here, but we're all going to fall fall short. And that's all the more

32:24

reason why we need godly role models. It's one of the reasons why we've talked

32:30

about in our disciplehip endeavor that we want to make disciples first and foremost in the home. Parents, you are

32:36

the primary discipler of your children and you need to show them what it means

32:42

to follow God in a humble and authentic way on a daily basis so that they can

32:49

see that so that the cascading consequences of sin aren't reaped over and over again following in the pattern

32:55

that is set before you. You are not enslaved to your parents' sin.

33:02

Jesus is stronger than that. You don't have to follow that any longer. The spirit of God can set you

33:10

free from that. And we need people around. That's why women's ministry and men's ministry is so valuable here so

33:16

that we can have those role models where we say, you know what, I grew up in a home that they didn't talk about Jesus.

33:23

They didn't follow God. I don't know how to raise my kids. I wasn't raised that way. Great. Let's put some godly men and

33:29

women women around you that can that can walk alongside you and show you how to do that. We've got to help one another

33:36

so that the consequences of sin or ungodliness aren't lived over and over

33:41

again. Not because they have to be to a certain inth degree of a generation,

33:48

but because we're just allowing it to happen. Let's be intentional about not

33:54

letting that happen and continuing to to make disciples that it says here where

33:59

he shows his steadfast love to the thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

34:06

Third, God commands our respect. So, he commands our devotion. He commands our

34:12

fidelity. And he commands our respect. Why? Because we are marked by his name.

34:18

We're marked by his name. I've heard a phrase before, put some

34:24

respect on my name. You heard that before? Maybe I'm the only one.

34:31

Why Why do people want respect on their name? It's because their name is always tied to their character. And the same is

34:38

true the same is true here. That that God's character is carried in his name.

34:45

His name represents his character. He says here in verses seven and 8, you shall not take the name of the Lord your

34:51

God in vain. For the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in

34:56

vain. And then the the final commandment that we're going to look at today, remember the Sabbath day and keep it

35:03

holy. So two ways in which he uh talks about

35:09

his character and and how we represent or are marked by his name. Uh the first

35:16

one is the way that we talk about him. Now to use his name in vain means I I

35:21

don't I think it's pretty clear in our day. I have no idea why God's name has uh somehow been linked to cuss words. I

35:29

just don't understand it. But that's obviously using God's name in in vain.

35:34

But it's also using his name in a way that is uh shameful, in a way that is

35:40

evil, but also in a way that is purposeless. in a way that's used for selfish gain.

35:48

Any way that brings a disrespect or disrepute upon his character, if you're

35:54

using his name in that way, then that's taking his name in vain. And he says that we shouldn't do that because we are

36:01

marked by his name. And if we're using his name in vain, how does that reflect

36:06

if we're using the father's name in vain, how does that reflect on his children? H how does that reflect on us? you bear

36:14

his name. And so he says, "Set my name apart and only use it in good,

36:20

wholesome, and and holy ways." And he talks about the Sabbath. Similarly, set

36:26

that aside and use it in a way that is holy, right, and and good. The Sabbath

36:33

was the the last day of the week. I'll be very quick here. last day of the week

36:39

and it follows the creation order that God rested on the last day. And so, um,

36:44

it was a way that he set that day apart, not for slothful inactivity, but a day

36:51

to reflect upon his goodness and be refreshed. And it represented him not

36:57

only to his people, but it also represented him to the rest of the world. I mean, think about I mean, just

37:05

what a gift the Sabbath was to a bunch of slaves

**The Sabbath**

37:10

that never got a day off. And now he goes, "I'm going to give you a day off

37:15

every week." I mean, what? That's crazy. A day off

37:22

every week. A day that we get to rest. Yes. A day that you get to rest. And

37:27

when you rest in me, that shows the rest of the world that I have set you apart

37:35

because I can continue to provide for all of your needs even though you're resting.

37:41

That's crazy cool. That's amazing. And that's how he sets them apart. He I I march you by my name

37:49

so that the world will know my character by how I treat you. That's why that's

37:55

why he says, "Respect me. Respect my name." Because we're marked by his name.

38:02

Quick aside, when we talk about the Sabbath, it seems to be the only Old Testament command that everybody wants

38:08

to obey. Two things on that. First, remember you

38:15

you need to know this. The Sabbath is the only one of the ten commandments that is not repeated in the New

38:21

Testament. Why? It's because Jesus says, "I am the

38:28

Lord of the Sabbath." Which means not only does he have authority over the Sabbath, but it also means that he is

38:35

the fulfillment of the Sabbath. That we don't have to wait until the last day of

38:41

the week to rest. That we can always find rest as we walk with Jesus. This is why what he talks about in Matthew 11

38:48

28-30. Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you

38:53

rest. You don't have to wait. You can find rest in who he is, who he's called

38:58

you to be, in his provision, in his protection, in his power. Now, he is the

39:04

Lord of the Sabbath. And so that gives us our last application. Represent him

39:11

in your daily life to experience his blessing. represent him in your daily life to

39:17

experience his blessing. If you'll remember,

39:23

God began to establish his uh people obviously from from the beginning. But

39:29

if you even go back to Genesis 12, Genesis 12, uh God interacts with Abram

39:35

at the time. He changed his name to Abraham. But Abram at the time, he says basically, I am going to bless you to be

39:42

a blessing. So that the world will know who I am through how I treat you. And

39:48

the more that we walk in his ways, the more that we represent him, he goes,

39:54

"Man, I want people to to see how I treat my children uh through you." And

40:01

that's what he's talking about here that he he wants you to represent him and

40:07

it's walking in his ways. Now you understand though, as I hope has already

40:13

been clear throughout here, all of us have fallen short of this. We can't fulfill the law. I I cannot

40:21

keep that perfectly. I have not kept it perfectly. But praise God that Jesus

40:27

has. That's that's what he came to do. He came and fulfilled. He didn't do away

40:32

with the law. He fulfilled it perfectly so that we now by faith in Christ are

40:39

now clothed in his righteousness that he kept all of those rightly. So

40:47

what do you do? What do you do? I mean, with all of this, you get you can get

40:53

overwhelmed by even just these four commandments going, "Gosh, I man I do

40:59

have idols. Man, I oh gosh, I have taken the Lord's name in vain. I have I've done all that. What am I supposed to

41:04

do?" Reminds me of Matthew 6:33

41:11

where Jesus says, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,

41:17

and all of those things will be added to you.

41:23

just just seek first. See, the law is going to get really complicated.

41:29

And to this day, the law has been complicated. You go back and read the

41:35

Mishna, which is uh the fine to you know, going through the law with a fine tooth comb of all of these 613 laws, and

41:43

you're like, man, this is so complicated. What am I supposed to do?

**Final Application**

41:49

Seek first. Seek first the kingdom of God. Put him first. Put his devotion first. I You've

41:57

probably heard of the KISS principle before. I want to make it church appropriate for

42:04

our final application. The KISS principle is trying to get people to not make things too complex,

42:12

to not overthink something. So, here's your final application for today. Keep

42:17

it simple, saint.

42:22

You're God has set you apart. He's called you his own.

42:29

He's clothed you with his righteousness. Just keep it simple. We don't have to over complicate things. We wake up, we

42:35

go, Jesus, I need you. I'm going to put you first. I'm going to devote my life

42:42

to you. my heart, my mind. Give you every thought that I got. Lord, I yield myself to your spirit

42:50

there. I'm not putting anything before you, alongside of you, or in place of you. I think God honors that kind of

42:58

sincerity. I think God honors that kind of faith. So, keep it simple, saint. Let

43:03

me pray for us. But God, thank you for your word.

43:09

And gosh, thank you for Jesus

43:17

who lived the life that none of us could live, who kept these things 100% his entire life, completely

43:25

accurately fulfilling every aspect of this law.

43:34

Thank you that you clothe us in his righteousness. Lord God, may it be our delight as a

43:45

church to be devoted to you,

43:51

to give you respect, to give you our fidelity. May we say that and so much

43:56

more. It's in your name we pray. Amen.

Title: Preparing to Hear the Word of God | Walking By Faith

Video: JurVL5nt34U

0:00

Good morning, Christ Chapel. I want to welcome those of you who are joining us from a distance and a special

0:05

welcome to those of you uh who will be in our 5:00 service this afternoon. Uh

0:11

we continue in our series of walking by faith. Uh faith comes by hearing and

0:18

hearing by the word of God. If you have your Bibles, turn with me to Exodus

0:23

chapter 19. Exodus chapter 19. If you uh don't have a Bible with you,

0:29

there are pew Bibles in the pews beneath you. And uh we're on page 60 in the the

0:35

blue pew Bible. If you have your notes, uh take those

0:42

out. And uh we're going to be talking about a lot of scripture in this passage and some other passages. Not all of them

0:48

will be on the screen and not all of them will be in your notes, but I'll give you the references when we talk

0:53

about them and you may want to just jot them down beside some points as we go through. One of the ways to look at the

0:59

book of Exodus is to uh see it in these big broad movements. There was a period

1:05

of slavery in chapters 1-2. Uh Egypt uh has enslaved the Israelites. There arose

1:11

a pharaoh that didn't know Joseph and for 400 and some years they uh endured

1:17

slavery in Egypt as God had predicted back in the book of Genesis. And then uh with the Passover starting

**Passover**

1:24

in chapter 12 there is a series of redemptive actions on the part of God

1:29

where he gets them out of Egypt and uh crosses the Red Sea and uh gets them headed toward the promised land. Uh

1:36

that's a a section of redemption. uh they call out to God. God sees their

1:42

need and God answers and acts. And then uh as we come to chapter 19, we're

1:47

turning the corner into a new section where God's going to reveal his will through what we call the law or the

1:54

Mosaic covenant. And that's going to extend from chapter 19 through chapter 24. But in reality,

2:01

it's going to include all the way through the book of Exodus as well as Leviticus in terms of what God's going

2:07

to require. And then when we come to chapters 25 to 40, you have all of the

2:12

instructions and the construction of the tabernacle. When you look at those four, that in

2:19

reality is a chronology of uh the believer's

2:25

experience who comes to Christ. We are born enslaved to sin.

2:32

God redeems us and then he reveals his will to us through his word, Israel, the

2:38

law at that time for us, the whole Bible. And then uh he teaches us how to

2:44

worship. As we walk our way through this text, I I want you to see the setting and I want

**The Setting**

2:50

you to see uh some parallels that we'll talk about. Look at with me at verses 1

2:55

to3 as the setting takes place. It's on the third new moon or three months on a

3:01

Jewish calendar after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt. Uh those have been an eventful

3:08

three months as we have seen uh in the last number of chapters. And on that day they came into the

3:14

wilderness of Si. They set out from Refodm and came to the

3:19

wilderness of Si and they encamped in the wilderness. And there Israel encamped before the mountain while Moses

3:26

went up to God. And the Lord called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus

3:31

you shall say to the house of Jacob," it's another term for Israel, the 12 sons of of Jacob or become the nation of

3:38

Israel, and tell the people of Israel.

**The Promise**

3:43

Uh we uh have watched our way have watched us travel with Israel uh from

3:49

Egypt across uh the Red Sea and then now down into the Sinai Peninsula uh to a

3:57

site that is the traditional site for Mount Si. When God first called Moses out of the

4:04

burning bush to go to Pharaoh, one of the assuring promises that he made to him that confirmed Moses'

4:11

leadership was that one day Moses would lead the people out of Egypt and they would worship on this mountain.

4:19

Exodus 3:12 details that when he says, "The Lord says,"I will be with you and

4:25

this will be a sign for you." He's talking to Moses that I have sent you.

4:32

When I when you get to the mountain, you'll know that I have sent you. When

4:37

you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain. Now, we've already seen the

4:44

the grumbling Israelites questioning the leadership of Moses. But God's going to confirm the leadership of Moses at this

4:51

mountain. Mount Si is a 8,000 ft mountain in the

**Mount Si**

4:56

Sinai Peninsula. The traditional site known to the nomads as Jebbo Musa or the

5:03

mountain of Moses. Jeb Musa is the traditional site where St. Katherine's

5:08

monastery is also located. When I was there a few years ago, I saw at the

5:13

entrance a bush and I want you to see what's right below the bush.

5:21

You you got to love it. You got to love the humor of those monks because just in

5:27

case that bush goes into flames again, they have the means by which to put it

5:33

out. They want to protect their monastery. I love that picture.

**The Mosaic Covenant**

5:40

The setting of the time and place shows the beginning of a new stage in God's relationship with his people. This

5:47

encounter is going to be a prelude to the Mosaic covenant which officially begins in Exodus 20 with the Ten

5:54

Commandments and then extends, as I said, all the way through the book of Leviticus. And then it'll be restated in

5:59

the book of Deuteronomy. In the opening verses of this chapter, we see God challenging Israel as a as a

6:06

people for the first time, dealing with them as a group of people uh to in

6:11

challenging them to receive the Mosaic covenant or we also call it the law. And

6:18

that will be the means by which he will relate to his people and they will relate to him.

6:25

I I want to make a connection this morning as we see how God prepared

6:32

Israel for receiving the law of Moses and how

6:37

you and I prepare to hear the word of the Lord in our day.

6:43

When Pastor Cody reads the scripture here on the platform, I love the blessing he invokes and the application

6:50

he invites when he states and you could almost say it with me. May God bless the

6:56

reading of his word and may our hearts be open to hear from him. I I want to

**The Grace of God**

7:02

take his statement to heart and I want to make it more intentional by

7:07

suggesting four parallels from how God prepared Israel to receive the law that

7:13

can help you and me today be ready to hear the word of the Lord whenever we sit under the sound of it or read it for

7:20

ourselves. The first is foundational and that is the understanding of the grace of God.

7:28

to understand the grace of God. Verse four, you yourselves have seen,

7:34

God says, what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagle's wings and

7:40

brought you to myself. Two parts of this verse are noteworthy, the from and the to. The from is that

7:50

they were delivered by God from Egypt. When we step back and look at Israel's

7:56

deliverance, which is used as the term for as redemption,

**Salvation**

8:04

salvation, theirs and ours, is always seen against

8:09

the backdrop of destruction or death.

8:15

In God's economy, the wages of sin is death. And therefore salvation

8:24

for our salvation is in essence the answer to the problem of death.

8:31

Hence the words in the scriptures of rescued ransomed or redeemed that are applied to

8:38

God's deliverance physically delivering Egypt excuse me

8:44

God delivering Israel out of Egypt. But as you know it was to redeem them as a

8:51

people for himself. The from is deliverance from the two is

8:57

they were brought by God. Don't miss this. They were brought by God to God.

9:04

Salvation is always the invitation into an experience and a relationship with

9:11

God. It's a relationship by which fallen sinners by nature can receive the grace

9:19

of God and experience a reconciled relationship with God. There's the from

9:26

and there's the to. The imagery in this passage that we read is being born on

9:32

eagle's wings. It's repeated and expanded in Deuteronomy 32:9-11.

9:38

Now, I want you to listen and watch for the action words. The grace of God at work. The Lord's

9:45

portion is his people. Jacob, his allotted heritage.

9:50

He found him in a desert land and in the howling waste of the wilderness. He

9:56

encircled him and he cared for him and he kept him as the apple of his eye.

10:04

like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that flutters over its young, that spreads out its wings, catching them,

10:11

bearing them on his its pinions.

10:17

Back in Exodus 6 and verse 7, God said, "I will take you to be my people,

10:24

and I will be your God, and you will know that I am Yahweh your God. I am the

10:30

Lord your God who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

10:38

This statement, and we'll see it often, you will be my people and I will be your

10:43

God, is the most basic summary of God's covenant relationship with his people.

10:50

Ogden Nash, famous for his poetical couplets, crafted one that has been long

10:55

remembered and often repeated. How odd of God to choose the Jews.

11:04

How odd of God to choose the Jews. It's the wonder of God's grace that

11:11

explains why we should trust God and be loyal to him. Listen to Deuteronomy 7:es

11:20

6-8. For you are a people holy to the Lord

11:25

your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured

11:30

possession out of all of the peoples who are on the face of the earth. God chose Israel out of all the other nations to

11:37

be a special nation. And then he says this. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the

11:43

Lord set his love upon you and chose you. For you were the fewest of all the peoples, but it is because the Lord

11:50

loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers that the Lord

11:56

has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you. There's that word again. From the house of slavery,

12:04

from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Phil Reichen writes this. What made

12:11

God's people so precious was not their own intrinsic value. It was only the

12:18

value placed on them by God's love. They were not precious because of who they

12:23

were, but because of who God is.

**Romans**

12:28

This parallels the New Testament explanations by Paul in Romans where he's explaining our salvation. Because

12:35

in Romans 5 6 through uh uh uh uh 10, listen to some of the terms. He says,

12:40

"God loved us and saved us when we were weak, ungodly,

12:46

still sinners, and in fact enemies." God commended his love toward us that

12:52

while we were yet enemies, Christ died for us. Ephesians 2 4 and 5. God by his

13:00

grace made us alive in Christ when we were dead in our trespasses.

13:05

And you know Ephesians 2:8, for by grace are you saved through faith, not of

13:11

yourselves, not of works. It's a gift of God.

13:16

The first step in this first parallel that God wanted Israel to understand

13:22

before he gave them his word was to be reminded how great is his grace.

**Commitment**

13:31

The second step of preparation is a commitment or I might call it even a pre-commmitment

13:37

of obedience to the word of God. This is fascinating here.

13:44

the the the Lord had said that if if you will indeed obey obey my voice and keep my covenant.

13:50

And then a little later he says all the people answered together and said all that the Lord has spoken we will do. And

13:57

Moses reported the words of the people to the Lord. It is here that God is challenging

14:03

Israel as a nation to enter into this covenant with him. Their acceptance

14:08

would be a statement of faith in advance to show their loyalty and pledge their allegiance to obey his instructions.

14:15

Now, if you've read it all through the Old Testament, you know they didn't keep that promise very well. But I want you

14:21

to understand the importance of that commitment. Israel's acceptance of the covenant is

14:28

what constitutes them as a nation, and they will be the people of God.

14:34

This is a different kind of a covenant than God made with Abraham when he put him to sleep as recorded back in Genesis

14:39

when we studied Genesis 15. The Abrahamic covenant was a promise that

14:44

God would bring a seed through whom the world would be blessed. The land, the seed, and the blessing that God promised

14:51

to use Israel to bring the message of God's blessing to the world.

14:57

That that covenant is unilateral. It depended on God alone. It was unconditional. God was going to do it.

15:04

And in fact, putting Abraham to sleep and walking through the the pieces of the the animals as a sign of that

15:10

covenant. Abraham had nothing to do with it at that in as far as pledging anything at

15:17

that point. But the Mosaic covenant is a conditional covenant. It is a bilateral

15:23

covenant and it's a conditional covenant. If you do this, then I will do this. If you don't do this, then I won't

15:29

do this. Uh for years their uh skeptics of the

**Hittite Empire**

15:37

scriptures said there's uh no such thing is the Hittite Empire.

15:44

The Hittites are mentioned 40 times in the Bible. And we didn't know anything

15:49

about the Hittite Empire. It had gone out of existence and really off the the charts. It it it it was a uh an empire

15:57

that was just north of Israel in what's would be modern day Turkey. Sort of uh

16:02

north central, you know, Turkey today. Hatusa was its capital. But are you

16:08

ready for this? It was discovered in the 1800s. It was excavated in 1909.

16:16

And not only did we find the discovery of the capital, we found the uh library.

16:22

In the library of the Hittites was 10,000 koifor clay tablets.

**Hittite Covenants**

16:29

We found a dictionary so we could even translate it. One of our grads, Harry Hoffman, uh

16:37

passed away a few years ago. One of our grads from DTS was the second uh best

16:43

hitologist in the world for a while. He studied at the Chicago Oriental

16:49

Institute. Now, here's why that's important is that when the Hittite Empire was discovered

16:56

and when they looked at the manuscripts, they found that there were covenants called suzar and vassel treaty

17:03

covenants. On the back of your notes, I have a little statement that summarizes it and then an outline of the major

17:10

parts and how it corresponds. Because here's the genius part. God chose to

17:15

communicate the Mosaic covenant in a way that Israel would understand it. And he

17:22

took the basic outline of a susarin vassel. A suzarin is a big king. A vassel is a little people. And the way

17:29

that covenant works is the king would do benefits for that people. And in return, those people would pledge their loyalty

17:36

to that king. And if there was uh obedience, there were benefits. If there was disobedience, there were

17:42

consequences. It's called a susarin vassel treaty. In the hittite susan vassel treaty format

17:48

we find is uh the basic outline of that is the outline of the mosaic law.

**The Book of Deuteronomy**

17:56

I I love when God puts egg on the face of liberal critics who don't believe the Bible. There's just a part of me my

18:03

carnality and spirituality go real close together at that point.

18:10

You can uh Google it. You can study it if you're a history buff. It's a a

18:16

fascinating study of what was found, what they've learned. Ironically, when we study the book of Deuteronomy, the

18:23

whole book of Deuteronomy is basically the outline of a Susan Vassel treaty with the components that you see on the

18:29

back of your notes. It's important to understand that these

18:34

people, Israel, were already redeemed out of Egypt. They already had pledged

18:40

faith by applying the blood on the doorpost. They were a saved people

18:45

before the law was ever given to them. The law does not save anybody. The law

18:50

is given to a redeemed people to teach them how God wants them to live. In

18:57

summary, and we'll see it as we go through the book of Exodus, the law was given for two basic reasons.

19:05

One was revelatory and the other was regulatory. It was given to reveal the glory and the

19:12

holiness of God and it was given to expose the sinfulness of humanity.

**The Sacrifice**

19:19

regulatory. It was to teach the approach to God

19:25

in order to be accepted by God comes through a substitutionary sacrifice.

19:32

Animals in the Old Testament, obviously the person of Christ when we come to the

19:37

New Testament and it was to instruct in the way of fellowship

19:44

in a life of obedience and worship. It was to reveal God's character and

19:50

ours. It was to regulate how does someone approach God by faith. Believing

19:57

that God would accept them by faith and be gracious to them to

20:03

forgive them. That was evidenced by the sacrificial system in the Old Testament that prefigured the ultimate sacrifice,

20:10

the singular and only sufficient sacrifice, which was Jesus Christ.

20:18

Obedience to the law then meant loyalty to that covenant.

**Obedience to the Law**

20:23

Obedience is the evidence of love and faith in a God who knows

20:29

what he has told us is best for us. Anybody wishing to have fellowship with

20:35

God must be committing to doing it God's way. In the upper room discourse the

20:41

night before Jesus died, he said it this way in John 14:21. Whoever has my commandments and keeps

20:50

them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my father, and

20:55

I will love him, and I will manifest myself to him.

21:01

See, God wants us to have a predisposition to obedience.

21:08

Let me ask you a question this morning, and I ask it of myself, and God's worked

21:13

me over the past number of weeks in preparing this message.

**faithfulness to the calling of God**

21:18

Do I have the attitude before I ever open the book to say,

21:24

"God, whatever you say, I'll do it."

21:30

Do I have that predisposition to obedience?

21:36

You and I need to be overwhelmed by grace. We need to be committed to obedience.

21:43

And the third parallel in being prepared to hear the word of God is a

21:48

faithfulness to the calling of God. A faithfulness to the calling of God. In verses 5-6,

21:55

God had said, "If you would indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant," and then he says this, "You'll be my treasured

22:02

possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is mine,

22:08

and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. And these are

22:14

the words which you shall speak to the people of Israel," he tells Moses. You

22:20

see, God revealed who he was. He was the God of their salvation who had saved

22:25

them for himself. And now he was telling them who they were and how they are to

22:31

live. Israel was chosen as a special people for special purposes. I want to give you

22:39

three based on the text. Number one is a new identity. A new identity. This comes

22:45

from the the phrase treasured possession. Treasured possession. This

22:51

speaks of a relationship with God. The Hebrew word used here, sigula, indicates

22:56

the royal property of the king. It's the most prized possession in a king's

23:03

personal private treasury. It's one thing to rule over the country and to

23:08

supervise the treasury of the country. It's another thing to have your own box, your own special box that nobody else

23:16

has. And inside that box, there's your prized possession.

23:22

That That's the term that God used for his people. You You will be a treasured

23:29

possession. Second in this relationship is a higher

23:34

purpose. You'll be a kingdom of priests. a kingdom of priests. This speaks of a

23:41

responsibility before God. A priest has a role to uh represent God to the people

23:49

and the people to God. This plan was first revealed to Abraham back in Genesis when he said, "All the

23:55

peoples of the earth will be blessed through you." There there was a there there was a blessing to the world to

24:02

come through Abraham and his his his line. Isaiah 49:6 says,"I will make you

24:07

for a light to the Gentiles." Now watch this. This is why God chose Israel.

24:13

"That you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."

24:19

Israel was chosen out of the nations, but for a special purpose to function

24:26

for the nations. Jesus in his conversation with the woman

**salvation is of the Jews**

24:31

of Samaria when she uh sort of wanted to pull the trump card about uh Samaritan theology

24:38

said our our fathers worshiped on this mountain and Jesus said you worship what you

24:44

don't know we worship what we do know because salvation is of the Jews

24:50

that is so profound it has relevance for today I I believe the anti-semitism that is

24:57

sweeping keeping our world is satanic at its core because God chose the Jewish people and

25:05

he'll deal with them in blessing and cursing as he wants to as we see throughout the scriptures. But the

25:12

purpose was to bring a Jew

25:18

who would be the savior of the world. That's the import of John chapter 4.

25:24

God chose Israel to be a channel of the Messiah, a repository of the truth, a

25:31

witness to the nations. Jesus said,

25:36

"It's got to come this way. There's only one savior, and he happens

25:42

to be Jewish." My mentor, who's now with the Lord, wrote a book, Who Really Owns the Land

**the Messiah happens to be Jesus**

25:48

of Israel? Charlie Dyer has done a revision of that book. and uh recently come out and uh I

25:57

I love the conclusion that Stan Ellison made my mentor he he said until the Jews

26:02

recognize the Messiah happens to be Jesus they don't have permanent access to the

26:07

land and until the Arabs or the Gentiles

26:12

recognize that the Messiah happens to be Jewish they really don't have ultimate rights

26:18

to the land why because God says the earth is mine and he can give it and use

26:25

it in ways that are his. A third is a god-like character. A god-like

26:32

character. This comes from the phrase a holy nation. This is a reflection of God. There's a relationship with God.

26:38

There's a responsibility to God and there's a reflection of God. The word holy is used 175 times in the first five

26:47

books of the Old Testament. Be holy, for I am holy is found six

**you are a chosen race**

26:54

times throughout the book of Leviticus and is repeated twice in First Peter chapter 1.

27:01

But I want you to listen to an echo from last week when Lance

27:07

took us to First Peter 1 Peter chapter 2. Just listen to it because Peter under

27:15

the inspiration of the Holy Spirit takes this passage from Exodus 19:6

27:21

and says that Israel did this for me then, but now the church does that for

27:28

me now. The church doesn't replace Israel, but the church functions now

27:33

like Israel was to function to be. Listen to it. But you are a chosen race.

27:38

Verse 9, a holy priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession

27:46

purpose. Don't miss this. That you, that's us as the body of Christ, as

27:52

Christians, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

27:58

For once you were not a people, but now you are God's people. Once you had not received mercy, but now you have

28:04

received mercy. Beloved, I urge you as strangers or sojourners and exiles to to

28:09

abstain from fleshly passions of the flesh which wage war against the soul.

28:16

Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable. There's that holy life. So

28:21

that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify

28:28

God on the day of visitation. You see, what should distinguish the

28:33

people of God from the rest of the world is a personal godliness that becomes a living testimony to others about the

28:40

character of God and hence the validity of the Christian life,

**reverence in our worship**

28:46

understanding the wonder of God's grace, precommitted to the obedience of his word, faithful to fulfill our calling as

28:53

the people of God, but finally a reverence in our worship of God.

29:00

Now from verse 9 through 25, the rest of this chapter

29:05

is a phenomenal uh description, complicated,

29:11

repetitious of a uh sound and light show like you've

29:17

never heard or seen before. On the top of Mount Si,

**God is speaking through Moses**

29:23

God is speaking through Moses to the people. The people are to assemble at the base

29:29

of the mountain, but they're not to touch the mountain, nor are they to climb the mountain.

29:34

Only Moses could go into the presence of God, shielded in a cloud, as we'll talk

29:40

about. But I want you to hear the instructions that sets this up in just a couple

29:46

verses. Verses 10 and 11, the Lord said to Moses, "Go to the people and

29:51

consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments, and be ready for the third day. For on the

29:56

third day the Lord will come down on Mount Si in the sight of all the people. Now not they can't see God. You know God

30:05

is spirit. Okay until the incarnation of Jesus there there was nobody who saw

30:11

God. They could not see God and live as we see in the scriptures. But God was

30:17

shielded in a cloud. He he he was uh in darkness. But he spoke out of that

30:23

shielded appearance to the people. Now Mount Si was wrapped in smoke because

30:30

the Lord had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln and the whole mountain

30:37

trembled greatly as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder. Moses

30:42

spoke and God answered him in thunder. Now I thought I had a weird thought

**God answered Moses in Thunder**

30:47

about uh cranking up the speakers in here.

30:52

as loud as thunder and lightning, having the smoke machines,

30:58

but I thought uh those with hearing aids, uh those with heart monitors,

31:05

those with Apple watches that even tell you when it's too loud, it would probably not be healthy thing to do. But

31:12

we read this, but we don't imagine it like we ought to. And I want you to think about this that this this is

31:18

thunder. This is lightning. This is smoke. This is loud uh blast of the ram's horn, their trumpet.

31:26

God is a God of terrifying transcendence. He he he is a a a holy God and and and

31:34

there was things here with with the thunder and the lightning and the cloud and the trumpet and the smoke and the fire and the earthquake all manifest the

31:41

greatness and the glory of God. And what God demanded from them in in light of that was preparation and separation.

31:48

Their preparation was for three days. They had three days notice to get ready.

**God warned Moses 3 times**

31:54

They needed to wash their clothes because cleanliness was a symbol of spiritual consecration. They were to

32:00

abstain from intimacy as you'd read in the text, which is a sign of single-hearted devotion. In other words,

32:05

they they were uh they they were to focus on God. And then separation.

32:12

God warned Moses three times about the people and the priests violating his boundaries.

32:18

They could come just so far. There was distance between a holy God and sinful

32:23

people. There was the danger of presumption in approaching God on one's own terms. Death was the penalty for

32:29

violating God's commands. In fact, some scholars see this as a preview of what's going to happen in the

32:35

tabernacle when only the ho in the holy of holies where God was said to dwell

32:40

between the cherubim. Only the high priest could go there. the other priests would function in the

32:47

holy place and in the court. The people could only come so far. That was similar on this on this mountain.

32:55

God could not be approached casually.

33:01

I wonder in our preparation, do we have a sense of God's grace?

33:07

Do we have a pre-commitment to be obey whatever he says? Are we willing to be

33:13

the people of God that he wants us to be? And do we really understand

33:18

the sanctity of God's person?

**God is a God of imminency**

33:23

Now God is not only a transcendent, a holy other, a separate God,

33:30

but God is also a God of imminency.

33:36

That means nearness. This separation and preparation

33:41

is to cause fear. But God is a God of initiating imminence. In other words,

33:47

the fact that he came down to the mountain. The fact that he wanted to speak to Moses and through Moses to the

33:53

people. God comes down to meet and speak to his people. God is present though shielded. God reveals himself and his

34:00

will to his people. In the transcendence, we see God the greatness of God's glory. But in the imminency, we

34:07

see the goodness of his grace. In the prologue of John's gospel,

**tabernacled among us**

34:13

the bridge is built between God and humanity, who they had never seen,

34:21

but now in Christ they see. The Bible says, "And the word became flesh

34:28

and literally tabernacled." Esosen in Greek, they tabernacled among us. John

34:34

writes, "And we beheld his glory, glorious of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth."

34:43

And then it says this in John 1:16 to18, "For from his fullness

34:50

we have all received grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses, but

34:56

grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." No one has ever seen God, the only God who is at the father's side.

35:04

He has made him known, which is a reference to the son of God.

35:11

No one has ever seen God, but the only God who was at the father's side,

35:16

there's the second person of the trinity. He has made him known.

**three questions**

35:23

So, I want to ask you three questions as we close.

35:29

How how do you and I get prepared to hear the word of God?

35:36

Do I have a growing sense of the terrifying holiness of God? Whenever we see God show up in

35:43

scripture, it's loud with maybe one exception. It it's it's

35:48

it's it's intimidating and people are falling on their face and they're fearing for their lives because

35:56

God is a holy God.

36:02

I think as you and I grow older in our faith, we ought to have an increased

36:07

sense of the holiness of God like never before.

36:16

Number two, do I have an informed understanding of my own sinfulness?

36:24

Do I have a sense as I read the scriptures that this I this I don't

36:29

measure up? I Romans 3:23, for all have sinned and constantly present tense fall

36:36

short of the glory of God. Well, then then what's what's the point? As God

36:43

reveals the law to Israel, it's going to be very convicting. They're not going to be able to keep it. In fact, he gives

36:48

them that you you if you could do it, you could live. But the problem is they can't do it. Therefore, they can't live.

36:53

And it drives them, as the New Testament says, it should

36:59

drive them to Christ. The law was given until the seed should

37:04

come. It was to take you to Christ. Do I understand the holiness of God? Do

37:10

I understand my own sinfulness? And then do I have the comforting assurance that

37:16

God has bridged the gap between us by his grace?

37:24

William R. Newell was a rebel of a son

37:30

whose father tried to get him into Moody Bible Institute in the late 1800s.

**William R Newell**

37:36

And he was turned down on multiple occasions because Moody is designed to train people for ministry and this kid

37:42

was no no way qualified for ministry. But ultimately he got in

37:51

found Christ did well changed his life. God changed

37:56

his life. Ended up teaching at Moody Bible Institute years later.

38:01

and he was teaching on the cross in the grace of God.

38:06

And after class was over, he just scribbled some lines down. And then he talked to the music teacher who gave him

38:12

the music for it. The last verse of it says this. Oh the love that drew salvation's plan.

38:20

Oh the grace that brought it down to man. Oh the mighty gulf that God did

38:27

span at Calvary. And then I grew up singing

38:32

this song and I've always loved the chorus, the rich theology. Mercy there was great and grace was free. Pardon

38:42

there was multiplied to me. There my burden soul found liberty

38:50

at Calvary. At Calvary. God

38:56

is a holy God, but he's a gracious God who is not only

39:03

willing to save us, he's willing to teach us, he's willing to use us. And

39:09

that ought to result in an overwhelming sense of worship for how great he is

39:16

and how gracious he is. Let's pray.

**Prayer**

39:23

Father, for that one or more who has not yet trusted in your son to be their

39:28

savior, may they understand that you have chosen to bridge the gap.

39:35

You are the one who sent your son. You are the one who provided all that

39:41

was necessary for salvation through the death of your son on the cross

39:46

through the resurrection to guarantee eternal life.

39:52

Lord, uh it you tell us in your word. It's simply a response of faith to

39:57

believe that you did that for us

40:03

that will result in our redemption, our rescue,

40:08

our salvation. Lord, may not one person leave this room

40:18

or stop listening without the assurance that the gap

40:25

has been bridged, that they have an assurance of their own

40:31

salvation. Lord, may these attitudes

40:37

precede our hearing of your word on a regular basis.

40:43

so that we may know your purposes for our lives.

40:48

The big why of a relationship with you. We ask in

40:53

Jesus name. Amen.

Title: Humility Is Healthy | Walking By Faith

Video: n7DIs9sg\_NQ

0:00

So good to be gathered together this morning. I want to say a special hello to you if you're a guest today. Hope you

0:05

feel right at home worshiping with us. My name is Matt. I serve as the West Campus pastor. So I want to say a

0:12

special hello to all of my friends out at the West Campus. Miss being with you guys today. And also want to face a

0:18

special hello to the folks at South Campus if you're watching online. And also if you're joining us at our 5:00 pm

0:23

services. So good to be gathered around God's word together today. If you'll open your Bibles, please. We are going

0:30

to be in Exodus chapter 18 today. We're going to be looking at the entire chapter. So, if you'll please open your

0:36

Bibles there. It's page 59 in those blue Bibles. Exodus 18. And while you're turning there, I just want to remind you

0:42

of what we've been talking about the past several weeks as we've been looking at the nation of Israel coming out of

0:47

Egypt in the Exodus. They've encountered several different tests of faith that

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have required them essentially to rely on God as they have been tested. They

0:59

went without water a couple of times. They didn't have food. Last week we saw they got sneak attacked by the

1:04

Amalachites and each time they've had to walk by faith. And today we're going to see what

1:11

might be the biggest test of faith that Moses has ever had to face. And that's a

1:17

visit from his father-in-law. Right? God gave his father-in-laws to

1:22

teach us humility. Right? I mean, just when you think you got it all going wrong, going straight, you got you got

1:27

everything going like last week, all you had to do is hold up your hands and you beat the Amalachites. That's all you do.

1:32

You're doing great. Your father-in-law shows up unannounced, kind of hovers over your shoulder,

1:38

crosses his arms, and goes, "It's an interesting way to do that." Boom. Test of faith right there.

1:46

I've actually had the privilege of knowing my father-in-law longer than I've known my wife. And in knowing him,

1:52

it's been a privilege. I really do enjoy it. When my wife and I approached him when we got engaged, we said, "Hey,

1:58

we're thinking about a June wedding." To which he promptly replied, "It's interesting way to do that, seeing

2:05

as you're still in seminary and all. How about you wait till December, 6 months longer than we were planning?"

2:13

Just before I was about to tell him how insane he was, I remembered, you know,

2:18

he is a West Point grad, a helicopter pilot, the son of a general.

2:25

He also really loves Jesus and he's one of the wisest men I know. Maybe I should listen to this guy. Thankfully and

2:31

miraculously, I did. I took his advice. And in hindsight, it was really great. It was great to start our marriage that

2:37

way. But man, in that moment, that was a really hard choice to make. It did not

2:45

come naturally to me. Humility did not just flow out of me in that moment. I had to bite down on my tongue and I just

2:51

had to be humble. You ever wonder why humility isn't just more natural for us? Why doesn't it just

2:59

kind of flow out of us naturally? It's hard to do sometimes. It's hard to be humble. Why is that? I don't think it's

3:06

because we don't know what humility is. I mean, we all recognize a humble person when we see one. But just in case we

3:14

don't know, and just because we're going to be talking about humility quite a bit today, at the top of your sermon notes,

3:19

I've got a basic definition. I want to make sure that we have a good solid definition for humility as we go through our text today. So this is just a

3:26

definition that we use in our home. It's one that we use to teach our kids what humility is. And it just it goes like

3:32

this. Humility is knowing yourself well, thinking of yourself less so that you

3:38

can serve others more. Knowing yourself well, thinking of yourself less so you can serve others more. That just

3:44

basically means knowing yourself well means you think accurately about who you are. All right? You don't think too

3:50

highly of yourself, not too lowly of yourself. You know what you're good at. You're ready and willing to admit what

3:55

you're not good at. You know the truth of what God says about you and you believe those things rather than the

4:01

lies that the world tells you or some of the things that you feel from time to time. And when you know yourself well

4:07

and you believe those things about you, you're not trying to prove yourself anymore. You're not trying to compare yourself. So you're not obsessed with

4:14

thinking about, oh, what do they think about me? And you know, do they like the way that I look right now? Instead, you

4:19

just think about yourself less. you don't think less of yourself and that

4:25

gives you a ton of margin to see and notice other people, how they need help

4:30

and how you can serve them. Everybody loves somebody like that. We all love

4:35

and respect and admire people that are humble, but it just doesn't come as

4:41

naturally for us as we would like. And why is that? Well, it's not because we

4:47

don't know what it is. It's because we tend to be motivated more by what we

4:52

want than by what we know. Let me give you a quick example. I know that

4:59

Brussels sprouts are better for me than ice cream. But how many bowls of Brussels sprouts do you think I've had

5:04

this week compared to bowls of ice cream? Right? My wants are going to win

5:09

out every time. So humility is kind of the same way.

5:15

If I don't want to be humble in a particular situation, it's probably because I wanted something more than I

5:23

wanted to be humble. I wanted to be right.

5:28

I wanted to be liked. I wanted to be respected in that moment.

5:34

I didn't want to be seen as weak. I wanted to get married in June and not

5:39

in December. Like whatever it is, that's hard to do. And if we want to grow in

5:46

humility, it's not just going to be by knowing more stuff,

5:51

it's not just going to be by trying harder at being humble. It's going to require us to change what we want. In

5:58

just the same way, like it would be like wanting Brussels sprouts more than I want ice cream. And that's going to be

6:03

really hard to do. It's something that's going to require our faith. If we want

6:09

to grow in humility, we have to walk by faith. And that's what we're going to see in our story today. And that's been

6:15

my prayer for us as I've been preparing for this sermon is that as we look at these two gentlemen and the relationship

6:21

that they have with each other. It would increase our appetite for humility. Not just so that we know what it is, but

6:27

that we would want it more each and every day. Okay. So, if you've made it to Exodus 18, we're going to start here

6:33

in verse one. It says this. Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses's father-in-law,

6:41

heard all that God had done for Moses and for Israel, his people, how the Lord

6:46

had brought Israel out of Egypt. Now, you remember we met Jethro all the way

6:52

back in Exodus chapter 2 when Moses fled to Egypt after murdering the Egyptian.

6:59

Moses ends up marrying one of Jethro's daughters. He they have a couple of kids and Moses goes into business with Jethro

7:06

and ends up shephering his flock for 40 years. Jethro is a priest of Midian and as a

7:14

priest he uh a Midianite priest he was probably a uh a polytheistic priest. He

7:21

worshiped multiple gods but because the Midianites are descendants of Abraham he

7:26

probably also had a knowledge of Yahweh. Another reason I think he knew about

7:31

Yahweh at least is where he was shephering his flock. We have a map that

7:36

we've been showing you week after week talking about the traditional location of Mount Si at the base of the Sinai

7:42

Peninsula. The text tells us that Jethro was shephering his flock near Mount Horeb, the traditional Mount Si. So here

7:51

you have a Midianite priest who probably knows about Abraham or knows about Yahweh from Abraham and he's keeping his

7:59

flock there in a place that's not really anywhere close to the region of Midian.

8:05

So I think Jethro knows about Yahweh and probably worships Yahweh as one god

8:10

among many other gods that he worships. And so he's heard about what happened to his son-in-law, how he's brought them

8:16

all out from Egypt. And so he decides to pop in for a visit. Let's see how Moses

8:23

handles the pop-in here in verse 7. Moses went out to meet his father-in-law

8:29

and bowed down and kissed him. And they asked each other of their welfare and

8:35

went into the tent. Do you notice how Moses greets his father-in-law, right? Same way you do when your father-in-law

8:41

comes over. You bow down and kiss your father-in-law when they come over. Most people don't do this with their

8:46

best friends, let alone their in-laws. Right? So, what Moses is doing here is a very humble thing. And it shows us the

8:53

first reason why humility is so healthy for us. Humility is healthy for us

8:58

because humility strengthens our relationships. Humility strengthens our relationships. Moses has just returned

9:05

from conquering the Egyptian people. He ransomed the the the Hebrew people out

9:11

of Egypt by the Lord's hand. and in doing so conquered Egypt, destroyed

9:17

their army, beat Pharaoh. So who's now the most powerful nation on

9:22

the earth? Who's the most powerful leader of the most powerful nation on the earth? It's Moses.

9:29

I mean, Jethro should be bowing to him, but Moses decides, "No, I am going to

9:34

bow and show respect to him." These two men have such a remarkably healthy

9:41

relationship. They're going to show us three ways that humility strengthens our relationships. First, humility helps us

9:49

not think too highly of ourselves or too little of others. Humility helps us not think too highly of ourselves or too

9:56

little of others. See, prideful people generally don't bow down to anyone. They

10:02

don't want to admit that kind of weakness or inferiority. Pride prevents them from seeing worth in

10:09

others simply because they want to remain in power. They want to use people

10:15

to stay where they are. We just seen what happens to a prideful person who isn't willing to bow the knee in

10:21

Pharaoh. Don't forget when Moses walks into Pharaoh's court, they're brothers.

10:28

They grew up together for 40 years. But how does Pharaoh greet Moses? No bowing.

10:35

No kiss, not even like, "Hey, man. Nice to see you." Pharaoh doesn't bow to Moses or to the

10:42

Lord. And it ends up costing him, his nation, and even the life of his

10:47

firstborn son. Humble people, on the other hand, are happy to bow down.

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They're happy to serve. They're not focused on themselves so they can

10:58

clearly see how they can be a blessing to others. You know, when Jethro first met Moses, he didn't say, "Get away from

11:05

my daughter, you murderer." He didn't say that. He welcomed him in, gave him a job, made him part of the

11:12

family, gave him a fresh start. And when Moses sees Jethro coming towards him, he doesn't see Jethro as a threat to his

11:19

leadership. He doesn't see someone he needs to uh he needs to distance himself from. He's glad to give respect and

11:26

honor and love to this man who has meant so much to him. So, let me ask you this.

11:32

Have you ever been in a conflict with someone where both of you know that you're wrong, but you don't want to be

11:39

the one to say sorry first because you know that would be kind of like you lose and they win. You ever been in an

11:46

argument like that before? That's a Pharaoh mentality

11:52

where you'd rather hang on to power than to heal the relationship.

11:59

Okay. The humble way, what Moses shows us here, is willing to bow, not because it's weak, but because he's secure in

12:07

who he is. He's not threatened by being humble. He's set free by it. Anytime we

12:13

choose humility in our relationships, we stop valuing people based on what they can do for us. We stop ranking people

12:21

and ourselves in a madeup social hierarchy. We don't need to win.

12:28

We're glad to bow. So after Moses and Jethro catch up,

12:33

Moses tells Jethro about everything the Lord has done to bring the nation out of

12:40

Egypt. And I imagine that even though Jethro is a priest, he was amazed at

12:45

what he heard from Moses. No other god he's worshiped before has ever done

12:50

anything like what he's hearing from Moses. And remember, Jethro is not

12:56

young. I mean, Moses is 80 in this story. Jethro is probably 100 or 110.

13:02

He's been around the block a while as a priest. Look how Jethro responds after hearing Moses's testimony about how good

13:10

and great God is. Look in verse 10. Jethro said, "Blessed be the Lord who

13:16

has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh and has delivered the people from under

13:23

the hand of the Egyptians." Now I know that the Lord is greater than

13:31

all gods because in this affair they dealt arrogantly with the people. And Jethro,

13:37

Moses's father-in-law, brought up burnt offering and sacrifices to God. And Aaron came with all the elders of Israel

13:44

to eat bread with Moses's father-in-law before the Lord. Despite his age, despite his experience,

13:54

Jethro is still open to learning something new, even from his son-in-law.

14:01

Moses's testimony convinces Jethro that his theology has been off his whole

14:08

life. Yahweh isn't one God among many. He is sovereign over all.

14:16

And Jethro isn't offended by being wrong. He is overjoyed to be wrong. In

14:22

fact, he can't wait to worship God in the way that he deserves. And that's the second way that humility can be healthy

14:28

for our relationships. Humility encourages our spiritual growth.

14:33

Humility encourages our spiritual growth. Have you ever had your beliefs

14:39

challenged by someone that you didn't really expect could or would challenge

14:44

your beliefs? I mean, maybe it was one of your children or one of your co-workers or somebody you just weren't

14:50

ready for it. And in those moments, we tend to kind of deflect or diffuse a situation, try to blow it off, and

14:55

you're like, "Oh, yeah. I knew that." But in that moment, we're faced with a little bit of a dilemma. I mean, do I

15:01

want to save face in this moment and just try to pretend like I already knew something? Or do I want to grow in the

15:08

truth that I've just heard? When we're not thinking too highly of ourselves or

15:14

too little of others, we're free to receive the truth, no matter how God

15:19

decides to deliver it to us. So, I want to say this. If someone has been

15:25

approaching you about a spiritual truth that you need to hear and you've not been interested in

15:32

receiving it because maybe that person isn't qualified to say it to you,

15:38

take a lesson from Jethro here. Even if you don't yet know Jesus, if you haven't yet placed your faith in him and someone

15:45

continues to bring up Jesus with you, take a note from Jethro here. Be humble.

15:52

listen to what they're saying. If they're speaking truth, then be willing

15:57

to change your life accordingly. And in the same vein, just what Moses models

16:03

for us here, keep sharing your story. If you've got a story about God's goodness

16:08

and God's greatness, and share your story like Moses does. If it encounters a humble heart like Jethro,

16:15

he will respond and change as well. When we have an appetite for humility, it's

16:20

okay to change our minds about things just like Jethro did because we don't

16:26

want to develop a hard heart like Pharaoh. Okay. So, the next piece of uh

16:32

how we learn how humility strengthens our relationships happens here in verse 13. The next day, look at verse 13. The

16:41

next day, Moses sat to judge the people. And the people stood around Moses from

16:47

morning till evening. When Moses's father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this

16:54

that you're doing for the people? Why do you sit alone and all the people stand

16:59

around you from morning till evening?" And Moses said to his father-in-law,

17:04

"Because the people come to me to inquire of God. When they have a dispute, they come to me and I decide

17:11

between one person and another, and I make them know the statutes of God and his laws." Moses's father-in-law said to

17:18

him, "What you're doing is not good." You see, classic father-in-law behavior

17:26

has been around for thousands of years, right? Show up unannounced, extend your stay,

17:32

hover over your son-in-law's shoulder, cross your arms, and say, "Yeah, that's you're not doing that right." Okay. All

17:40

kidding aside, what Moses is doing is so alarming to Jethro that he feels

17:48

compelled to speak up and tell Moses what's going on. Jethro sees the issue

17:54

as plain as day. Moses is governing the people like a pharaoh.

18:00

He's a one-man show. Moses can't see it because it's all he's ever known. Jethro sees it as plain as

18:08

day and decides to tell him the truth. Look in verse 18. He says this, "You and

18:13

the people with you will certainly wear yourselves out, for the thing is too

18:18

heavy for you. You're not able to do it alone. Now obey my voice and I will give

18:24

you advice and God be with you. Man, how would you handle anybody saying just one

18:31

of those statements to you, right? What you're doing is not good. It's too heavy

18:38

for you. Okay? You can't do it by yourself. You should take my advice. It

18:45

would takes a really humble person to receive any one of those four statements. It also takes an equally

18:52

humble person to be willing to say them. And what their relationship shows us

18:57

here is that humility allows us to give and receive difficult truth. Humility

19:03

allows us to give and receive difficult truth. Moses and Jethro give us a crash course here and how to navigate

19:09

difficult conversations. And in your sermon notes, you notice I've got a box there that's going to show you how

19:15

Jethro is able to deliver difficult truth without being destructive. and how Moses receives it without choosing

19:22

offense. So, let's look at Jethro first. First, he reads the room. Did you notice

19:27

what Jethro did? For an entire day, he watched Moses and everything that he was doing. And then he asked Moses a series

19:35

of questions about why he was doing what he was doing. He made sure he had all the information and understood it before

19:43

offering his opinion. Then he read the relationship. Jethro

19:49

doesn't come in hot. He doesn't come in all high and mighty saying, "Hey, I know everything and you don't." He comes in

19:56

and he knows the strength of the relationship that they have. They've known each other for 40 years. They've been business partners. He's his

20:02

son-in-law. Jethro is probably the only father figure that Moses has ever had.

20:08

And so from the strength of that relationship, he is able to communicate to him this difficult truth. And that's

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what he does. He doesn't skirt the issue. He's not passive aggressive. He

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isn't disrespectful. He's not sarcastic. He simply tells the truth. And then in

20:27

telling the truth, he also offers a solution. It is not helpful. If you're willing to step in and help someone with

20:34

a problem, you have to be willing to help them step out of it. Offer them a solution. Don't just tell them the

20:39

problem. And that's what Jethro does. And it's not a solution that just benefits him. It doesn't just benefit

20:45

Moses. this solution benefits the entire nation. And then also let's make sure we

20:51

see how Moses responds and how he receives this difficult truth. He

20:56

doesn't say a word.

21:02

He listens. Humble people are eager to listen.

21:11

Why? because they have no need to be defensive.

21:17

They have no need to be defensive because they don't interpret advice as

21:23

an attack. And if someone is approaching them about their failures, they know about them

21:30

already probably or even if they don't, they know that their failures are not fatal.

21:37

So they are not intimidated. They don't have to get angry or frustrated at the person who's bringing

21:43

the difficult truth to them. Instead, they can say thank you. They can be grateful that someone had

21:50

the courage and the humility to come and help them grow instead of choosing to be offended.

21:56

Remember, being offended is a choice. It doesn't jump out of the bushes and get you. Okay? It's not a right that you

22:02

have when someone hurts your feelings. It's a choice that you make. And we can be humble and choose to be grateful when

22:08

someone gives us difficult truth instead of choosing to be offended. Okay. So, we

22:14

know that that humility is healthy for our relationships. We know this.

22:22

But what do we want, right? We need to change what we want, right? If we're wanting to be humble. So, I'm going to

22:27

give you two questions at the end of each section to help you kind of evaluate what this looks like. So, which

22:33

do you want? Do you want to live your life God's way? To walk by faith by

22:38

inviting people into your life so that they can help keep you can help

22:44

you keep an accurate picture of yourself or do you want to choose your way? Keep

22:49

people at a distance so that they can see the image that you want them to see.

22:56

Let's choose God's way. Invite people into our lives so that we can continue to grow. Okay. Next thing we need to see

23:04

here comes with Jethro's advice. What he actually communicates to Moses. Look in verse 19.

23:10

Now obey my voice and I will give you advice and God be with you. You shall represent the people before God. Bring

23:17

their cases to God and you shall warn them about the statutes and laws and make them know the way in which they

23:23

must walk and what they must do. So as Jethro was watching Moses that day, he was quickly doing the math. Okay, he's

23:30

thinking, what if just 5% of this nation of 2 million people have a problem that

23:36

they need to come and bring to Moses? That's a 100,000 people.

23:41

Well, let's say Moses is really good at adjudicating these cases and he's able to hear 24 cases a day. It will take him

23:49

11 and a half years to hear just 5% of those cases.

23:55

I mean, and that's not including vacations or breaks and also anybody else that has a problem over that

24:00

decade. Moses is going to wear himself out. The people aren't going to stand in

24:05

line for that 11 years. That's not going to work. Moses is simply inadequate for

24:11

the task. So over the next several verses here, Jethro is going to recommend that Moses raise up qualified

24:18

men that are going to help him hear these cases in concentrically smaller groups of people. Groups of thousands,

24:26

hundreds, 50s, and tens. That's his advice. And as he does that, we are

24:33

going to see here the next principle is that humility clarifies our stewardship.

24:38

Humility clarifies our stewardship. Whether we're a CEO, a mom, a volunteer,

24:47

or a student, none of us are doing it perfectly. We can all grow in the way

24:52

that we're stewarding what God has entrusted to us. Humility clarifies our stewardship in several different ways.

24:59

And here we're going to see that humility helps us admit our limits.

25:05

Humility helps us admit our limits. Do you know that person in your family or in your circle that's trying to do it

25:12

all? You know, they're volunteering at school. They're the coach of the sports team. You know, they're signing up to

25:18

organize meals for a neighbor. They're hosting the Bible study. Still trying to make everything work at home in the

25:24

meantime. None of it's bad. It's all really good work, really helpful work. But

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eventually, they hit a wall. They start getting short-tempered with their kids. They start to forget some of their

25:36

appointments. They start to be sleepy and tired all the time. And they start wondering, "Why do I feel this way?"

25:43

Well, it's not for lack of effort. It's for lack of humility. Humility

25:49

admits, "I can't do everything. I need help." And that's not weakness to admit

25:56

that. That's wisdom. And if we're not careful, our hard work can quietly start

26:01

to become a way that we prove ourselves, that we prove our worth or our significance or our importance.

26:08

And we miss the forest for the trees. Sometimes the most faithful thing that

26:14

we can do is ask for help because humility makes it possible for us to do

26:20

that. The goal of our stewardship isn't to make ourselves more impressive. And

26:26

once we get to that point, we are eager and willing to delegate responsibility to other people who can help us. Which

26:33

is the second thing that humility clarifies in our stewardship is that it allows us to delegate responsibility

26:40

so that everyone can flourish. It allows us to delegate responsibility so that everyone can flourish. Jethro doesn't

26:46

tell Moses to stop leading. He just tells Moses to replicate himself

26:52

and others so that they can do what he does. Moses, you need to teach the word

26:58

of God to other people so that they can grow in their leadership. They can teach

27:03

the word of God to way more people than you can. And when they know the word of God and the whole community is going to

27:10

start to learn to understand what God wants for us each and every day.

27:15

Everyone flourishes when we don't try to go it alone. There are lots of obvious applications

27:21

to this point in particular, especially in the business world, but this one hits me hardest as a parent. You guys ever do

27:29

stuff for your kids that you know that you shouldn't do for them, but it's just easier to do it because you know you're

27:34

going to do it better or it's going to go faster or it's going to be less of a frustration.

27:39

I have to remember that those are opportunities for me to disciple my kids, for them to learn how to do those

27:45

things on their own. Whether it's making their lunch or applying for college, I

27:50

need to make sure that those that my kids have those opportunities. And Jethro helped Moses see that very fact

27:58

that when we let other people share the load, it's not a stepping back. It's actually helping everyone else take a

28:06

step forward. So humility clarifies our stewardship. We get that. So two

28:12

questions for you at the end of this section. Which do you want? We know what

28:18

humility does, but which do you want more? Do we want to choose God's way to de do we want to develop others as we

28:25

faithfully steward what God has given us? Or do we want to keep everything on

28:31

our shoulders so that we get to stay in control? Humility helps us see that we

28:37

can delegate things to others. And then finally here, the last lesson at the end of the chapter in verse 24,

28:45

Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he said.

28:51

Moses chose able-bodied men out of all of Israel and made them heads over the people, chiefs of thousands, of

28:57

hundreds, of 50s, and of tens. And they judged the people at all times. Any hard

29:03

case they brought to Moses, any small matter they decided themselves, it worked.

29:09

The humility of both Jethro and Moses leads this nation to discover something they never would have found out in

29:15

Egypt. There's humility from the top all the way down to the bottom that allowed

29:20

this nation to flourish. And that's the last lesson that we're going to see why humility is so healthy for us is

29:27

humility blesses our fellowship. Humility blesses our fellowship. I want

29:33

you to appreciate the massiveness of the change that Moses undertook when he took

29:39

Jethro's advice. Prior to this, they were a nation of two million people being led by one man. But

29:47

for Moses to take Jethro's advice, to have leaders over thousands, hundreds,

29:52

50s, and tens would require him to raise up 262,000

29:58

leaders to hear those cases to help him so that the entire nation would flourish. So, it

30:05

wasn't just Moses that had to be humble here. It was the entire nation that needed to be humble. Because even if

30:11

Moses takes Jethro's advice, but the rest of the nation doesn't step up and lead, Jethro's advice doesn't work and

30:18

the people will struggle. But that's not what happens. They all do it. They they

30:24

take Jethro's advice. They all jump in and they find out that humility is not just healthy for individuals. It's

30:30

healthy for the community. It helps our church continue to care. Humility helps

30:37

our church continue to care. Now, make this very practical for you. I am sure

30:44

that Cody would love to sit down with each and every one of you that has a problem or needs some counsel or needs

30:50

some biblical guidance. But with so many of us, we would be sitting in a line for

30:55

11 years. If he's the only one that could hear and help us as a pastor,

31:01

we haven't set up our church that way. God designed the church to revolve around one person, and his name's not

31:07

Cody. His name is Jesus. That's why we're not a church of personality. We're

31:13

not a church of celebrity. We are built on the foundation of God's word. And we want to help people grow in Jesus. And

31:19

if that means we have to delegate that to lots of other pastors and leaders, that's what we're going to do. And

31:25

that's what we have done. That's why we're divided up into smaller campuses.

31:31

Each campus with its own campus pastor and associate pastors. And each of those

31:36

campuses have men's ministries, women's ministries, student ministries, kids ministries. So that at any point, you

31:43

could even get involved in a home group, which is an even smaller group. At any point, you could find yourself close to

31:49

a leader who knows you well, who can help you grow and can walk through a

31:54

difficult time in your life when you need that kind of help. But our church staff aren't the only ones who are

32:01

called to care for the needs of our church. Part of what it means to be part of a church family is that we all care

32:07

for the needs of each other. We want Christ Chapel to be a place where you feel cared for. But we also want it to

32:12

be a place where you see yourself as a minister of care as well. And that's the

32:18

last thing that we see here that humility teaches us is that humility allows every believer to live out their

32:24

priesthood. Humility allows every believer to live out their priesthood.

32:30

This chapter is a really significant turning point in the life of the nation of Israel because up until now they

32:37

haven't had an identity as a people. They've only ever been slaves.

32:42

And what Jethro is telling them to do, they've never been empowered to lead.

32:49

They've only ever been told what to do. Hey, go make bricks without straw. Okay.

32:54

But what Jethro is calling them forward to do helps them realize that God is

33:00

bringing them to Mount Si. People who have never seen or spoken with God. People who have never been up

33:07

on the mountain. And God is saying, "I have a purpose not just for Moses, but for the entire nation." God desires the

33:15

entire nation to be a minister to all other nations. He wants to set them apart. set their fellowship apart so

33:22

that they can be a blessing to the entire world. That is something that

33:27

we'll see next week in Exodus 19 where God wants them to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. That's a

33:34

verse that Peter picks up on in 1 Peter chapter 2 when he talks about the church

33:40

and he describes us this way. You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy

33:47

nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness

33:54

and into his wonderful light. That's not just a description of a pastor. That's a

33:59

description of all of us. Humility helps us realize that our faith and

34:04

relationship with the Lord isn't just something that benefits us. We have been blessed so that we can be a blessing.

34:14

Humility will help us get out of our selfish mindset even when it comes to

34:19

our participation in the church. It helps us remember that church is not a

34:25

product to be consumed. It's not a a parenting strategy. It's

34:31

not a social accessory. It's an identity that we live out not just on Sundays but

34:39

every day. As such with this identity as priests, as we understand ourselves as ministers,

34:47

each of us, it helps us decide, well, what do we prioritize?

34:52

Where do we serve? How do we sacrifice? Why do we love? I hope that in our

34:59

humility and in our courage, we would have the willingness to say, "You know what? As much as I love our sports team,

35:06

our family, our family's involvement in church comes first." Despite what people say about you or

35:12

think about you, I hope that we joyfully adjust our calendar saying, "You know what? We can't make it to that event.

35:20

Thursday nights are for our home group, and that's a non-negotiable for us.

35:26

I hope we'd willingly sacrifice our desire for a quiet evening at home

35:31

because we see a window of opportunity to share the gospel with our neighbor

35:36

who doesn't yet know or walk with Jesus. Friends, it's one thing to know that

35:43

humility is a blessing for our fellowship. It's another thing to want to be humble so that our fellowship will

35:50

be blessed. So, which one do you want more? Do you want to follow God's way? Live out your

35:58

priestly calling, actively investing your life in the church, or do you want

36:05

to do things your way? Keep things and keep church convenient,

36:11

comfortable, easy to set aside when your life gets busy.

36:17

We need to choose God's way, and that's going to be hard.

36:22

Humility is never easy, but it is a healthy choice for us.

36:29

Mostly because our wants and our desires are driven

36:34

from our selfish tendencies. That's what makes humility so hard. We

36:40

have sinful hearts and sinful lives. And that's that's a challenge for us. So,

36:45

it's not just going to be about knowing more about humility that's going to make us be more humble. It's going to be

36:51

about choosing God's way over and above our desires. Just like Moses, just like Jethro, and

36:59

more importantly, just like Jesus, he didn't think too highly of himself.

37:07

He loved us so much that he came and bowed down in front of us, gave us a

37:16

kiss, and he delivered to us some really

37:21

difficult truth. What we're doing is not good.

37:28

We can't do it on our own. We can't save ourselves. We need to take his word and follow him.

37:39

Friends, let's not be humble just because it's nice.

37:45

Let's not be humble just because it's the right thing to do. Let's be humble because it's what we have learned from

37:52

Jesus. Because it's what we've received from Jesus.

37:57

And as we do, it will transform our lives. It'll be a blessing to everyone

38:03

around us as we continue to walk by faith.

38:08

Let's pray. Father, thank you for the example of

38:14

these two men, the way that you worked in their lives to teach us humility.

38:20

But th you most of all for the person of Jesus who didn't regard equality with God a

38:27

thing to be grasped but emptied himself taking the form of a servant so that we

38:34

could be blessed so that we could live our lives the way you would

38:40

have us. So that we could be set free from our selfish desires that lead us astray.

38:48

So, Father, would you cultivate humility in us just like your son

38:55

so that we can be a blessing, so that it can transform us? And so that you would

39:00

be glorified in all that we do. We ask that in Jesus name. Amen.

Title: Fighting a Spiritual Battle | Walking By Faith

Video: rsr3l0zNp6Q

**Welcome**

0:00

Well, good morning, Christ Chapel. Great to be with you and good afternoon to those of you at our five o'clock

0:05

service. And certainly, hello to all of you joining us online wherever you are. I hope you have a Bible. Please open

0:11

those Bibles to Exodus chapter 17. Exodus chapter 17. If you're opening one

0:17

of the blue Bibles in one of our venues, it's going to be page 59. Uh we'll read

0:22

uh the text as a whole. And so, I hope that you can uh get there. uh didn't

0:28

hear from anybody this past week that you needed a copy of the scriptures. Again, if you don't have one of your of your own, Jen, I would love to buy you a

0:35

Bible. Uh so, uh hopefully you already have one uh there. So, you can open it to Exodus chapter 17. I told you last

0:42

week how excited I was about football season starting, football season's uh quickly approaching, and I'm thrilled. I

0:49

I love uh watching football games. I I I have to admit though, I am a much better

0:55

fan than I ever was a player. And uh when I say player, uh if you remember, I

1:00

grew up in smalltown Texas. And so I it was like where everybody did everything.

1:06

And so everybody played every sport, everybody was in the band, everyone did FFA, everyone did 4. I mean, like you

1:14

did everything. And so I was automatically on the football team in middle school, seventh and and eighth

1:19

grade. And uh seventh grade I was an offensive lineman. I would uh I I know.

1:25

I Why is that funny? I don't understand. Uh I don't know where to go with this

1:32

now. Uh I I was probably what the young people would call fluffy back in those

1:38

days. And um I I I didn't do a terribly great job at it. So I didn't play

1:45

offensive lineman my eighth grade year. uh they they just to just be the kicker cuz I I I did grow up playing soccer,

1:51

but in seventh grade I I thought I did okay. I mean, I played there the whole season on the offensive line because I I

1:58

feel like I don't think I really blocked anyone. I think I more just guided people like into like where they I'm I'm

2:04

like, "Oh, let's just guide you away from where we want to go." And and so I

2:10

I wasn't really like that. Uh they didn't put me on defense because I just I didn't I didn't hit people very very

2:17

well. I'm just I I I'm I'm if it's not obvious, I was built for comfort, not

2:22

collision. Um I I I just it's just not my not my speed. And and but I all due

2:29

respect for those that can do that who love, you know, like the collisions and hitting people and all that stuff. Very

2:36

entertaining and I'm thankful for you. Uh so look forward to this this next season. So, thank you for what you do. U

2:43

it's a blessing to me. But I I was really not into the the the contact

**Contact vs NonCont**

2:48

sports and and really if you break sports down there there's two kind of categories. There's contact sports and

2:54

non-cont sports. Non-cont sports physical contact is not necessarily

2:59

integral to the the competition. In fact, sometimes it's even prohibited in

3:05

those sports. You you can't have physical contact. Physical sports like contact sports. I mean it physical

3:11

contact is initiated. It it it's integral to following the rules of the

3:17

game or to to success. And so two very different kinds of things. And and

3:23

here's here's the reason why you need to understand that distinction because if you are playing a contact sport and you

3:30

think it's non-cont, you're going to get hurt. You you'll get hurt very badly and and

3:37

it's I'm you're not just going to get thrown off balance. You're not just going to get surprised, you'll probably get hurt. And here's why I I bring that

3:44

up is because oftenimes in our spiritual life, I think that we equate our

3:49

spiritual life to a non-cont sport where where we think our spiritual life is

3:56

certainly uh enriching to ourselves, but it's pretty private. and and we, you

4:02

know, we read the Bible and we sing and we pray, but all of these things are are

4:09

non-cont and they don't really affect our our physical or material world. But

4:17

if you seriously follow Jesus, then you will realize that the spiritual life is

4:23

a contact sport. you you follow Jesus and you will be

4:29

swimming upstream. You will be going against the grain. You

4:34

will be bumping into people's uh habits, into people's ideologies, into people's

4:42

values in ways that will collide and sometimes be hurtful.

4:49

If you don't believe me, just look at the life of Jesus. Jesus swam upstream and Jesus paid some

4:58

physical literally physical consequences uh for following the father's will. If

5:04

if you are truly following Jesus then you understand that the spiritual life

5:09

is a contact sport and you need to understand that not only so you don't

5:14

get thrown off balance but so that you can expect it and actually engage in it

5:19

in a way that Jesus wants you to. And that's what we're going to look at today because that's the context of everything

**Spiritual vs Physical**

5:25

that we're talking about here in in Exodus as we continue this series where we're talking about walking by faith

5:32

which by the way I mean if you think about it even I implied in the title you

5:38

have juxtaposed the spiritual life and the physical life

5:43

our our spiritual life is to affect our physical world our physical life the the

5:51

the way that we believe affects how we behave. And we've talked about this many

5:56

times from this pulpit. Our our orthodoxy affects our orthopraxy. What what we believe works itself out in our

6:03

everyday life in in how we relate to one another and how we spend our money and in where we go and what we think about

6:09

and what all of those things. Our faith uh should affect our physical world, our

6:16

our our lives in general. And that's what we've seen throughout this this series, this walking by faith, as God is

6:23

leading his people through the wilderness. We've seen God, the divine,

6:29

the the spiritual, intervene into the Israelites physical world. We saw that

6:35

in chapter 15 as the bitter water was made sweet. We saw it in Exodus 16 where he provided mana from from heaven. this

6:42

bread that falls down and is there every every morning and then even meat as well as they tired of bread. We saw him draw

6:49

water from the rock uh last week. And today we're going to look at an example,

6:55

an illustration, an account that's going to illustrate how uh our spiritual lives

7:03

are affected every day by the divine. It's kind of a jarring example and and

7:08

certainly an extreme one, but I think it's going to be very relatable as we

7:14

follow this account. So, let's pick up in Exodus chapter 17. Uh, I want to read

7:20

uh verses 8 through 16. And so, you can just follow along with me, but this is going to be the portion that we're going

7:27

to study today. Verse 8. Then Amalecch came and fought

**Joshua vs Amalecch**

7:32

with Israel at Refodm. So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us

7:38

men and go out and fight with Amalecch. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the

7:44

hill with the staff of God in my hand." So Joshua did as Moses told him and

7:49

fought with Amalecch. While Moses, Aaron, and her went up to the top of the hill. Verse 11. Whenever Moses held up

7:57

his hand, Israel prevailed. And whenever he lowered his hand, Amalecch prevailed.

8:04

But Moses's hands grew weary. So they took a stone and put it under him. And he sat on it while Aaron and her held up

8:10

his hands, one on one side and the other on the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

8:18

And Joshua overwhelmed Amalecch and his people with the sword. Verse 14. Then

8:23

the Lord said to Moses, "Write this as a memorial in a book, and recite it in the

8:29

ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalecch from under

8:34

heaven." And Moses built an altar, and he called the name of it, "The Lord is my banner," saying, "A hand upon the

8:40

throne of the Lord. The Lord will have war with Amalecch from generation to generation." We're going to stop right

**Where are we**

8:46

there. May God bless the reading of his word. May our hearts be open to hear from him. And so I want to remind you of

8:52

the context of where where we are just geographically. So if you'll remember um

8:59

we are down at the Cyani Peninsula. We're we're almost down further. As I

9:04

said last week, I know there are many alternate routes that people have theorized. We're taking the most

9:10

traditional uh route just for sake of teaching and clarity. And so if you'll remember there at Refodm, they're about

9:16

to get to uh Mount Mount Horeb. And so we'll get there get there soon. But there refodem and remember does anybody

9:24

remember from last week what does refphodime mean? Refodem means resting place. That's what

9:31

it means. So they have gone to they've gotten to a resting place and this is anything but restful. Remember last week

9:39

they didn't have any water. They get to the resting place and there's no water to drink. So God draws water from from

9:45

the stone, water from the rock. And now they've got somebody who is attacking them at Refodm at their resting place

9:53

which I think is just let me just make a quick spiritual aside here. Uh Christian

10:00

brother sister whenever you believe that you're at that resting place I think

10:06

there's always going to be subtle reminders that you're not home yet. Refodm is not where God wanted to lead

10:13

them. It's not where he wanted them to settle. He had a better place for them. And wherever on this earth until you see

10:21

Jesus face to face, there are going to be subtle reminders that this is not the

10:26

end. This is not where you are to settle. This is not the place to call

10:33

home. There is a resting place to come and that is in his presence uh face to

10:38

face. And so just a that's just a quick aside, but remember we are going uh to uh the promised land. But what we see

10:45

here is this this physical uh battle with Amalecch, but we also see the the

10:51

physical battle juxtaposed with the the spiritual battle. And these are battles

10:57

that I I think hopefully you're not fighting any wars right now, but uh

11:03

these are spiritual battles that I think we face every day. And you probably face those whether they're they're mental uh

11:10

maybe maybe even some some physical battles where you're you're fighting diagnosis or or illness whatever that

11:17

may be financial battles certainly emotional and relational battles. You

11:22

fight these battles every day of your life. But how does your faith affect those? H how do those come into contact

11:30

with one another? There is a collision of the physical and the spiritual. So what I'd like to do is go back through

11:36

this passage and I want to draw some principles uh from here. I'll give you some exposition of the text but then a

11:43

principle and then we're going to apply it in a a special I think very uh specific way uh today. So first the

**The First Opponent**

11:51

first thing that I want you to see is the Israelites faced their first opponent

11:57

on their way to the promised land. The Israelites faced their first

12:02

opponent on their way to the promised land.

12:08

Now, I I know I just showed you the map of where we are, but I want to remind you of where we came from because this

12:14

is going to be important. So, if you look back at the map again, I want to remind you of where Israel was whenever

12:21

they were delivered out of Egypt. Anybody remember? Go. Very good. They

12:26

were in Gan. And so they're in northern Egypt there. And where where are they going? They're going to the promised

12:32

land, which is also called Canaan. Very good. And so that it seems like the most

12:38

logical and direct route would be to go along the coastline. Do you remember

12:43

this? We've talked about this. It was it would be, hey, this is the shortest route. Let's go that way. But in Exodus

12:51

13:1 17, which will come up on the screen, I want to remind you. It says when Pharaoh let the people go, God did

12:59

not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near. Uh Philistines

13:07

is is means people by the coast. So he didn't lead them by the way of the coast

13:13

although that was near. For God said, "Lest the people change their minds when

13:19

they see war and return to Egypt." And so when he delivers his people out

13:25

of Egypt, out out of out of Egypt, but from the region of Gan, he says, "They're not ready for war yet." And so

13:33

I don't want to lead them that way. I need to lead them by the way of the

13:38

wilderness. One, I believe, Cody's opinion, so that they could see God intervene in their lives in a in a

13:45

different but new and powerful way. So he leads them down south through the the

13:50

Cyani uh peninsula. Not the way that is uh the most efficient or logical route.

13:58

But now war comes to them. In verses 8 and n then Amalcch came and fought with

14:04

Israel at their resting place. So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us men and

14:11

go out and fight with Amalecch." This is obviously, as I said, this is their

14:17

first opponent on their way to the the promised land. And it seems like a uh a

14:26

an enemy that they did not not necessarily invite. And I think this is

14:31

very relatable for us in our own spiritual lives. I don't think we necessarily invite those enemies or

14:38

invite th those fights. We're just trying to follow God. you're just trying you're just trying to

**The Fight Comes**

14:44

follow God and then all of a sudden a a a fight comes to you and this fight

14:49

comes to the Israelites and you go well why? Well, first they Israel probably

14:57

especially with 2 million people are infringing now on the the resources although they seem quite limited from

15:04

the text that we've read uh but infringing on the the territory of Amalcch. But also remember uh they are

15:11

ripe for the picking because they hasn't they haven't fought anybody. They they

15:16

they are Nephites when it comes to battle. They they they've not fought

15:22

anyone yet. They have all the resources from Egypt. Remember, they plundered

15:27

Egypt whenever they're leaving. And so, they have all of these resources, all of

15:32

this plunder, all of these precious things. They don't know how to fight. And any bully is going, "That's the one

15:38

I want to pick on." And so, they feel like they they can win that battle. And

15:44

so, Israel now on their way to the promised land where God wants to take

15:50

them has an opponent. And Israel is playing a hand down. They I mean, if you

15:56

think about it, they are illquipped. They they don't have they don't have

16:01

weapons. They don't have they don't have swords and all of those things. They

16:06

they they are illprepared. They don't have any experience. And they were probably unsuspecting. They didn't

16:13

expect that somebody was going to fight them here. I mean, what what had they done to anybody else? all very

16:22

relatable, I think, for us as believers. They didn't have sufficient strength.

16:27

And so Moses all of a sudden gets really good at delegation and he says, "Okay,

16:33

Joshua, you get some guys and you go out and and you go fight." Now, why does he

16:40

pick Joshua? No idea. I no idea. I mean,

16:45

maybe Joshua looks super swole or something like that. I have no clue. But he he chooses Joshua. This is the first

16:52

time that Joshua is is mentioned that that we get Joshua mentioned. Now remember Joshua is going to be hugely

16:58

important as he leads the Israelites into Canaan and fights a lot of battles

17:04

and the Lord prepares Joshua here. So this is the first fight that Joshua

17:09

faces, but it's their first opponent on the way to the promised land which I want to draw a a principle out here for

17:17

you Christian. is this. Your physical life involves a spiritual battle with an

**Your Physical Life**

17:24

enemy who opposes God's plan. Your physical life involves a spiritual

17:30

battle with an enemy who opposes God's plan.

17:38

When you said yes to Jesus, what you need to

17:43

understand is you didn't only accept his free gift of eternal and abundant life.

17:52

You switched teams. You you were not a neutral party

17:59

choosing between two two teams that you wanted to be a part of. You were on the

18:04

enemy's team. You were an enemy of God. And when you chose to accept the free

18:10

gift of salvation through what Jesus did for you through his death, burial, and resurrection, you took off the enemy's

18:17

jersey and you put on the the new team, Jesus jersey. You You decommitted from

18:24

the enemy's team and committed to a new team. And the team that you left hates

18:29

you. They they don't like you. I mean, just just imagine if if a TCU player

18:35

flipped to Baylor, like you would hate them, you know, like a much more extreme

18:40

example here, obviously, but they flipped for you flipped

18:46

commitments and they that that team that you left does not like you and they want

18:52

to oppose you in every way. Christian, you have an enemy who wakes up every day

18:59

and wants to deter you from walking in God's best for you every single day.

19:06

I I I the the the point of this point is

19:12

simply to wake you up to that reality. 1 Peter 5'8 says that you have an enemy

19:18

who prowls around you like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

19:24

that that is a spiritual enemy who wants to deter you from understanding God's

19:30

promises for you because when you said yes to Jesus, you are now a co-air with

19:35

Christ, receiving all the promises available to Jesus for yourself. He has appropriated all those things to you and

19:44

now the enemy wants to say you can't have them. You don't deserve them and you're not going to walk in them.

19:51

that that's the enemy that you face and you can't fight that those the spiritual

19:58

enemy with physical means. This is what Ephesians chapter 6 talks about. It

20:03

says, "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the

**Your Enemy**

20:09

cosmic powers, over the present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."

20:20

Again, this point is to wake you up so that you're not surprised.

20:27

If if you wake up thinking that your spiritual life is a non-cont sport, you

20:33

will be thrown off balance and hurt. You need to understand

20:40

how the spiritual life integrates to your physical life, your thought life,

20:46

your emotions, all of those things. Because you have an enemy every day who

20:51

wants to counter everything that God wants to do in your life. E everything.

20:57

It's just like this first opponent that they face. You have a first opponent every morning and it's the same one

21:03

every day. Every day. Now Jesus has already won.

21:08

Jesus is one. But your enemy wants to oppose you from walking into those promises. Just like

21:14

we know that the I hope you know the end of the story is the Israelites do get to the promised land. We know the end what

21:21

God has promised he will carry to fruition. But that doesn't mean that the opponent doesn't want to oppose them

21:29

from walking into what God has. You have an opponent and it's a spiritual one who

21:35

is an enemy. So second, the Israelites needed spiritual strength to fight this

**Spiritual Strength**

21:41

physical battle. So they face their first opponent, but what they realize is they need spiritual strength to fight a

21:47

physical battle as uh Joshua and this plebeian army go

21:56

out to fight uh Amalecch. Uh remember Moses, Aaron, and her say, "We're going

22:02

to go to the the top of the hill." And the picture here is of a hill that is

22:08

overlooking a a battlefield. And it seems as if the the text says

22:14

that every time that Moses raises his hand, they're winning. The the Israelites are winning. Whenever Moses's

22:21

hands go down, it seems like the Israelites are losing. Now, a good

22:27

intuitive question here is how did they find this out? I I don't know. I feel

22:33

bad for whoever they had to find that out on where, you know, Moses like, I'm going to take a rest. And it's like, oh,

22:38

whoa, they died. Okay, wait. Hands up. Um, so I I don't know how they they

22:45

figured this out. I don't know how long it took Moses to figure this out. I think God probably let him in on on that

22:50

game plan, but it seems as long as his hands are up, they're winning. Now, what is Moses doing while his hands are up? I

22:58

don't know. To be frank, I we we it doesn't tell us exactly what is going

23:04

on. I think symbolically this is about uh dependence upon God's

23:10

power. I think I think that's what it's about because if you think about it, I mean just in normal everyday life, if

23:16

someone is told to put their hands up, they're told to surrender. That's

23:21

essentially what they're they're told to do to to surrender to a different authority, a a different power, to

23:27

submit uh to a a a different command. And I think that's what's going on here

23:32

in this passage. Moses is surrendering the Israelites to God's power. God, it's

23:39

it's got to be your power. We've we've taken our hands off off the wheel. You

23:44

have to show up. And that spiritual power is being employed through Joshua

23:51

and the army for physical uh victory. That's that's what's going on. I think

23:56

that's the picture of dependence. And when we talk about dependence there

24:01

there is an easy correlation to how we today you and me how we express a

24:08

dependence upon God and that's through prayer. See your physical battle

24:14

requires spiritual weapons such as prayer.

24:19

such as prayer. Your physical battle requires spiritual weapons such as

24:25

prayer. See, so often the battles that that we face, I gave you some categories at the beginning, whether it's mental,

24:32

physical, spiritual, fin all of those things, we so we our our first inclination is to fight those things in

24:40

the flesh and to say, you know what, we need more effort. We need more hard

24:46

work. We need more strategic planning. We need more resources. We need all of

24:52

all of these other things. and and we tend to forget that this battle is

24:58

physical. Okay, yes, I'll give it to you and spiritual as well. It's a it's a two two-sided coin. And the battles we face

25:06

are not going to especially if we want God to get the glory, they're not going to be won through manipulation or

25:13

intimidation or deception. God is not going to uh honor those kinds of

25:20

tactics. Those are tactics of the enemy. And so he says,"I want you to depend

25:26

upon me for victory." And one of the ways that we express that is through prayer. I love what Paul says in 2

25:32

Corinthians chapter 10:es 3 and 4. Because here you see explicitly this

25:38

juxtaposition of how the physical and the spiritual collide. It says, "For though we walk in the flesh, that's

25:45

physical, we are not waging war according to the flesh by by fleshly

25:51

means. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but have divine power to destroy strongholds. That word

25:59

strongholds only time it's used in the New Testament means uh fortresses. That's what that's the the translation.

26:06

But it's things that you can't move in your own power. But divine power can make moves

26:15

that you can't make physically. And that's that's what he's talking about here. uh specifically I I want to draw

26:22

the correlation uh to prayer because I think that's the picture that that we get from Moses holding his hands up. Now

26:28

I want to say something about prayer very very quickly. Uh prayer especially

26:34

when when we talk about this 2 Corinthians verse uh I want to be clear. Prayer is not a name it and claim it

26:42

kind of incantation where you you can just say well God I prayed in Jesus name that I would win

26:48

the lottery. So let it be done. It it I hope hope you know this this doesn't

26:54

work that way and that's not that's not what I'm purporting. But prayer does put us in contact with God who who is in

27:03

divine authority over our lives and over our physical world. He he is the one who

27:10

is in control. And when we contact or collide with God in prayer, we do have

27:18

access to a power that is supernatural and he does align us to his will and he

27:26

implores us. He says, "Hey, you can pray it." uh James 15, one of one of my

27:31

favorite vers. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask and God will give generously without finding fault.

27:38

You lack wisdom. You You want some wisdom and insight? Ask God. He That's prayer. That's this conversation, this

27:45

relational uh conversation here. You You want power to walk in the spirit? Ask

27:51

God. He you you want power away from temptation, a way of escape, ask God. He

27:58

provides all of those things to us through prayer. And so, it's not just a

28:04

name it or claim it. There are there are reasons why God doesn't answer some of the prayers that we pray. Um some of

28:10

it's because they're purely selfish. Some of it's because it's a timing issue. Uh some of it is because there's

28:16

sin in our unconfessed sin in our life. There's ton of reasons why why he does.

28:21

But he gives us access to talk to him, access to divine power, access to a a

28:29

divine power that it says can do more than we can do in the flesh. And that's

28:35

what's going on here in this picture is God is showing us that we need this supernatural strength to fight our

28:42

physical battles. And ultimately we see that the Israelites prevailed physically

**Support**

28:48

by being supported spiritually. The Israelites prevailed physically by being

28:53

supported spiritually. It was obviously clear clear from uh

29:01

that picture with Moses being on the hill and Joshua fighting the battle and the battlefield that Joshua needed

29:08

Moses's support. But Moses also needed support as well. If you look back at

29:13

verses 12 and 13, but Moses's hands grew weary. So they took a stone and put it

29:20

under him and he sat on it. And while Aaron and her held up his hands on one side, one on one side and the other on

29:27

the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun and Joshua overwhelmed or Joshua won uh the

29:35

victory against Amalecch and his people with the sword. And so you've got this

29:41

picture where Joshua needs Moses's support, but Moses needs support as

29:47

well. Um, and and I just some of you are going to try this and maybe it's just a

29:52

fun exercise. Uh, go home today and just grab like a broomstick and try to hold

29:59

it over your head as long as you can. Oh, we have some super freak CrossFit

30:04

athletes that I know are going to love this challenge. Um, they're going to go, "Yes." See how long you can do it

30:11

because this this the the what it tells us here is this battle goes on for a day.

30:17

a day. A day to hold your hands up. That's a that's that's a long time. That

30:25

takes a lot of physical strength. But you know, it it also takes a lot of

30:30

mental focus like like just just to focus that long

30:36

to to keep your hands up like that. It it is a holistic

30:42

kind of thing again where the physical meets the spiritual. That that's what's

30:47

going on here. Moses needed support as well. That's why it says that Aaron and her come beside him and hold his arms

30:54

up. They're supporting him. And I love the the picture that is going on here as

31:01

the people of God depend upon the power of God. But everybody has a role

31:07

as you've probably seen on an inspirational poster at your workplace. Teamwork makes the dream work.

31:14

And it's no different here. We see that in in 1 Corinthians chapter 12. Everybody's got a role. We need Joshua's

31:21

fighting the battle. We need intercessors that are that are praying and praying for Joshua on on the

31:28

battlefield. And we need people that are supporting Moses as they intercede. And

31:33

you, my friend, might have all of those different roles in the same day. There

31:40

are battles that you're facing. There are people you are praying for and there are people that you are supporting in

31:47

their prayers as well. We all have a role to help support one another as we

31:53

all want to walk in the promises of God as he leads us as his people. And so,

31:59

the last thing that I want to draw out is this. Your physical battle requires spiritual support such as prayer

32:06

partners. Your physical battle requires spiritual support such as prayer partners.

32:18

If there's one thing that you apply, may it be this. Please, please, please.

32:26

Do you have at least one person? I would encourage two. Moses had two.

32:34

Do you have two people in your life that you are transparent and vulnerable with

32:41

about what's really going on in your life that you need prayer for?

32:46

If you don't, you need them because you're trying to fight this battle on your own. There is no lone ranger

32:53

Christian. In fact, the Christians that are devoured are the ones that walk alone.

32:59

Because 1 Peter 5'8, the devil is prowling around as a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. And he

33:06

picks off those individuals that think that they can do it by themselves.

33:12

We need to be in community with one another. If you don't have at least two people that you are honest, vulnerable,

33:19

transparent with and saying, "This is what's really going on in my life and I need prayer." Christian, you're in

33:25

danger. You You need those things. You need to be supported in prayer to fight those

33:31

battles. And you know what? That that should be reciprocal. You should be praying for those folks as well so that

33:39

everyone is winning as we all play those different roles. And so, uh, I've come

33:45

to the point in the sermon where usually what we would do is I would give you some, uh, you know, application points

33:52

about how to pray, but I think that when we're talking about prayer, that's a

33:58

very easy thing that we can apply right now. And so, we're going to take some

34:03

time right now at all of our venues uh, to have some time to pray for the

34:08

different battles going on in your life and the people you care for that are fighting those battles as well. But let me pray for us before we do that. God,

34:15

we thank you for your word. And we thank you for this very

34:20

illustrative picture that is honestly inspiring and encouraging to me that

34:25

when our hands are raised, we're surrendered to you and we're supported in community, God. We can walk in those

34:32

promises. We can walk toward the the promised land that you have called us to. Not that everything is in victory,

34:39

Lord God, and victory might take longer than a day, longer than a month, longer than a year, but thank you that you have

34:46

given us your word and supported us in your community, Lord God,

34:52

so that we can not only glorify you, but access your power that can transform

34:59

us and transform those things around us too. Would you do it please in Jesus name? Amen.

Title: Am I Testing God? | Walking By Faith

Video: 8MUivfHHM4w

0:00

Well, good morning, Christ Chapel. Great to be with you and good afternoon to those of you at the five o'clock

0:06

service. Uh whether you're joining us online or you're one of our venues, open your Bibles, please, to Exodus chapter

0:13

17. Exodus chapter 17. If you're opening one of the blue Bibles, it's pageuh 59.

0:19

And always want to remind you every once in a while, if you don't have a Bible, Jen and I would love to buy you your own

0:25

Bible. want you to have a copy of the scriptures to read yourself, not just on Sundays, but throughout the week. Uh,

0:30

man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God, and we want you to have his living

0:36

word available to you. Also want to say quickly, thank you to all of you that have jumped in on disaster relief,

0:41

Christ Chapel. You are an amazing family. Uh, the way that you've jumped in and responded to make uh yourself

0:47

available, your resources available, uh, all all of those wonderful things. Thank you. Thank you. Uh, thank you. Okay. Um,

0:54

you do need a copy of the sermon notes as well. There's going to be stuff that's going to come up on the that we're going to talk about that's not

1:00

going to come up on the screen. It's going to be on your sermon notes. And uh, we're going to I'm even going to mention some verses in the scriptures

1:06

that aren't going to come up on the screen. But we're obviously continuing our series called Walking by Faith. And

1:12

I just wanted to be clear that walking by faith is contrasted with walking by

1:17

sight. And uh the Israelites had seen God do some amazing things in Egypt as

1:24

we've uh looked at in Exodus. And God did wonderful things that they were able to to see like very vividly where uh you

1:31

know even those plagues or when they cross the Red Sea, they were able to see and walk by sight. When God opens the

1:36

sea, it's very clear this is the way he wants us to go. When there's a pillar of cloud, a pillar by fire, very clear this

1:42

is where you want us to go. But now they're in the the wilderness. And God is leading them uh certainly by a pillar

1:48

of cloud and fire, but also into the unknown, into places that it's not quite

1:54

obvious uh where they're going. And in fact, you'll even see today it looks like they're going in the opposite

2:00

direction from where they thought they should be going. And so they have to walk by faith. And God is testing their

2:08

faith as they go throughout this this journey to see where does he need to

2:14

fortify that faith. And we see those tests in Exodus 15. We saw them uh God

2:19

turned the bitter water and make it sweet. We saw that at at Mara. And then last week in in Exodus chapter 16, we

2:27

saw God rain down not only bread from heaven but meat from heaven to provide

2:33

for the people in the wilderness. And so, uh, God is showing them that if you walk by faith, uh, he will guide and he

2:40

will provide. But these tests continue to, uh, be, uh, placed on the

2:47

Israelites. But we're coming to a part in Exodus chapter 17 today where it feels like the Israelites want to

2:54

reverse that test where where they go, you know what? I'm kind of tired of you asking me questions, God. I've got some

3:02

questions of you. And so as they are being tested, they get pretty testy. And

3:07

so in Exodus chapter 17, I want to just read it because we're just going to cover a very small section today. Exodus

3:14

17:es 1- 7. So if you'll just follow along, we'll read it. Uh I'll read it as

3:19

a whole, please. Exodus 17:1. All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the

3:26

wilderness of sin by stages according to the commandment of the Lord and they

3:32

camped at Refodm. But there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the

3:39

people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said

3:44

to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" But the

3:50

people thirsted there for water. And the people grumbled against Moses and said,"Why do you bring us up out of

3:57

Egypt to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" Verse four.

4:02

So Moses cried to the Lord, "What shall I do with these people? They're almost ready to stone me." And the people and

4:09

the Lord said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and taking in your

4:17

hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. Behold, I will stand before

4:23

you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will

4:30

drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the

4:36

name of the place Massa and Meabbah because of the quarreling of the people

4:41

of Israel, because they tested the Lord by saying, "Is the Lord among us or

4:47

not?" And we're going to stop right there. May God bless the reading of his word. May our hearts be open to hear

4:52

from him. And so, uh, you can kind of see what is going on, uh, in Exodus

4:59

chapter 17. Uh, the Israelites emotions,

5:04

uh, begin to to escalate or probably more accurately spiral. I I don't know

5:10

how to I don't know how to say that. It's kind of like do sorry total aside when it's cold in your wherever you are

5:17

do you say turn the AC up or down it's kind of like I don't know how to phrase that exactly. So anyway their emotions

5:25

get more intense and they get uh angrier. You can tell because if you remember back in Exodus 15, it says that

5:33

they grumbled or complained against the Lord. And then now they are quarreling

5:39

or arguing with Moses and with the Lord. And it ends up in a test where they are

5:47

testing the the Lord. And I I wanted to uh give you a definition of what it

5:54

means to test the Lord. And this is at the top of of your sermon notes. This is

5:59

Cody's definition. You're this is not a theological definition or something I found. This is just the way that I think

6:05

about what it means to test the Lord. And so testing God means demanding or

6:12

commanding God to prove his ability, his character, and worth to your own

6:20

satisfaction. Let me say that again. To test God means

6:25

to command or demand demanding God to prove his ability, his character and

6:32

worth to your own satisfaction. And I say to your own satisfaction because

6:37

you're the one giving the test. You're the one providing those questions.

6:43

You're the one providing the the hoops to jump through or the bars to jump over. And so, uh, that's what they are

6:49

doing with God at this point in Exodus 17. Now, I want to be very clear about

6:58

something. Uh, testing the Lord is explicitly prohibited in scripture, and

7:05

it's actually prohibited explicitly in Deuteronomy chapter 6. Do not put the

7:10

Lord to the test. And if you went back and read that Deuteron, it's not going to come up. Deuteronomy chapter 6:1 16

7:17

it says, "Do not test the Lord like you did at Massa." It it it's prohibited

7:26

because of how they handled their frustrations right here. This is a watershed moment

7:34

for Israel. Pun intended. Thi this is something that is placed in their memory

7:40

as to never treat the Lord this way. And so what I want to do is I want to go

7:47

back through this and and ask ourselves the question what does it mean to test

7:53

the Lord beyond beyond the definition. Let me illustrate it for you from this

7:58

passage. What does it mean to test the Lord? because I want us to avoid testing

8:04

the Lord and learn to trust him because that's what the Lord wants of them. So,

8:09

we'll go back through it and I'll I'll break it down and then I'll give you some applications uh at the end. So, uh

8:16

the first thing uh we are tempted to put God to the test when things aren't going

8:23

our way. When things aren't going our way, we're

8:28

tempted to put God to the test. Uh, I told you that it is explicitly

8:33

prohibited in Deuteronomy chapter 6 to not test the Lord. I want to remind you that when Jesus is in the wilderness,

8:41

sound familiar? When Jesus is in the wilderness, uh, in uh, Matthew chapter

8:46

4, Luke 4, and, uh, Satan comes to tempt him, he says, "Turn these breads into

8:53

this these stones into bread." And he says, "I scripture says I shouldn't put

8:58

the Lord to the test." So, so he is even tempted there to put the Lord to the

9:03

test because it doesn't seem like things are going his way. He's in the wilderness with nothing to eat, fasting

9:10

for 40 days. And we are tempted to put the Lord to the test when things aren't going the way that we want them to go or

9:16

we think they should be going. If you look back at verses 1 and two, it says, "All the congregation of the people of

9:23

Israel moved on from the wilderness of sin by stages." And I'll come back to

9:28

that in a second. According to the commandment of the Lord, and they camped at Refodm,

9:33

but there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore, the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to

9:39

drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? And why do you test

9:44

the Lord? Why do you put him to the test? Now, when we talk about things not

9:50

going their way, there's many, many reasons why uh we could say that things

9:55

aren't going their way. I mean, they're in the wilderness. They uh are not where

10:01

they hoped they would be as far as uh the promised land where God promised that he would take them. Uh they are in

10:09

this this stage where God is leading them uh by stages. Now, I want to show you where they are in the wilderness of

10:17

sin, which by the way, I know that I told you that there are uh different theories or or interpretations as far as

10:23

the route that the Israelites took to get into the promised land. We're just

10:28

for sake of teaching going to take the most uh uh accepted route, the the

10:34

traditional route just for sake of maps and uh understanding. And so, you can see they are going way south. Remember

10:41

where is the promised land? The promised land is also called Canaan. Very good. And so they are supposed to be going

10:47

north and they are going in the opposite direction. And not only are they going the opposite direction, they are going

10:56

there slowly. If you notice, it says that they are going in stages that that

11:02

they're they're moving and then they're stopping and they're resting there and then they're moving and they're resting

11:08

there. In fact, where the Lord takes him, this place uh Refodm, the the

11:14

interpretation of the the place Refodm means resting place. That's that's what

11:21

it means. And so, you can imagine the Israelites going, they've been going in the the wilderness. They It's dry. It's

11:28

dusty. Uh God is providing for them food. God is providing for them meat and bread. And then they get to Refodm, the

11:35

resting place, and they go, "There's no water. There's no water.

11:41

Now, does that sound familiar to anyone who's been following our study in Exodus? I mean, didn't they just go

11:49

through this two chapters before in Exodus chapter 15? They get to Mara, remember, and the they're thirsty and

11:56

and the the water is bitter and they're going, "What in the world? God, we've

12:03

already been through this. I I've I've needed something to drink and you had to

12:10

provide. Now here I am again and I'm thirsty and there's no water. I I

12:16

thought we already had this test, Lord. How many of you have ever said that to him?

12:22

God, haven't I been through this? Haven't we been through this? I I learned that lesson. I don't want to go

12:29

through that test again. I don't want to go through that stage again. And yet

12:34

here we are again, not getting as far as we want to go, not going as fast as we

12:41

want to go in stages that we, at least I become impatient with.

12:48

I don't know if you can relate to that, but that's how I imagine the Israelites feeling right now. Been there, done

12:55

that. I'm tired of these tests, Lord. I'm tired of being tested in this way. I

13:01

thought I passed the test in Exodus chapter 15, which by the way, they didn't pass the test. God passed the

13:08

test. But we give ourselves a lot of credit. We go, I passed that test, Lord. Move me

13:15

on. I I don't want to go back here. It reminds me when when I get impatient. Um

13:23

it it reminds me I'm I'm in college football mode right now, guys. Like it come on. It like it is it couldn't get

13:29

here fast enough. Uh, I'm excited for this and I was thinking of a quote that

13:34

at least I remember hearing from Nick Sabin and you guys might know Nick Sabin. Um, and he said, "We're not going

13:42

to practice until we get it right. We're going to practice until we can't get it

13:47

wrong." And it reminded me of even my own spiritual life where I go, "God, I

13:54

got through that one." And he's like, "Well, I got that. I got through that one and I got you through that one. And

14:01

why why are we going to to to go through another test that seems very similar is

14:07

because Cody, I'm fortifying your faith. I He hasn't changed, but he wants me to

14:12

change. He He wants to continue to to build and strengthen my own faith. And

14:18

that's why he continues to test him here. But we get testy with the Lord

14:25

when we feel like we're going too slow or we're feel like we're not going far enough or we're feel like we're going in

14:31

the wrong direction or we feel like we're getting tested over the same stuff

14:37

over again. It must mean that the Lord wants to do something else in our lives.

14:43

But we are tempted to start going, "All right, Lord, you want to test me? I got tests for you.

14:51

I I I got some questions for you. And which is oftenimes how how we we feel.

14:58

If if God is is picking on us, we go, "Okay, I'll pick a fight with you. Then

15:04

you want to pick on me, I'll pick on you." And that's exactly what they begin to do, which is the the second thing we

15:10

learn about testing. We often try to test God. We're tempted to when things aren't going our way, but then we often

15:16

try to test God by asking combative questions. We begin to ask him combative

15:24

questions. I I I can easily imagine how they feel

15:32

like God is picking on them. and and and I don't know if you've ever felt that

15:37

way where where you feel like I don't know where you feel like you are in the

15:43

wrong and there's no way to defend yourself and you go uh the only thing I

15:48

can do right now is fight back and sometimes that's what we do and we take

15:54

it out on on God and that's what they begin to do is ask these combative questions the reason why I use combative

16:00

is because I'm thinking of fighting fighting back in verse three it says but The people thirsted there for water.

16:08

And the people grumbled against Moses and they said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us and our children and

16:16

our livestock with thirst?" Um, the tone might be hard to get across

16:24

in Hebrew, but there's no kindness in these questions. I don't think you need to know Hebrew in order to get that. Th

16:32

this is very combative as far as they're beginning to ask Moses these questions.

16:38

And you go, why are they asking Moses these questions? Because he's there. Because he is the one who is

16:44

representing God as his servant. But let me take it a step further because these

16:50

aren't just combative questions. This is a formal accusation that the nation of

16:57

Israel is levying against Moses. And the accusation that they're levying against

17:03

Moses is uh you are a traitor that you are acting uh in a way that is

17:11

treasonous toward the nation of Israel because you are trying to kill us. And

17:17

and and I believe this because of what Moses says. If you look at verse four, which will not come up on the screen,

17:22

verse four says, Moses cried out to the Lord and he said, "What shall I do with this people? They're almost ready to do

17:29

what? Stone me. Yes, you guys are awesome this morning. Yes, I love it. Talk talk with me. Yes, you you they're

17:37

ready to stone me. Now, remember there's this capital punishment aspect where if

17:44

if you are going to to try to kill us, then you should be killed.

17:51

It's almost this tionic justice idea that is going on here. And so the the

17:56

accusation levied is you're trying to kill the nation. Therefore, you should be killed. You should be stoned. That's

18:03

the formal accusation going on against Moses right now. And they want to put

18:09

him on trial. Let let let's put you on trial. Let's put you to the test, Moses.

18:16

The these combative questions. Did you bring us out here to kill us? Two two

18:21

million people, us, our children, and our livestock. Those are the combative

18:26

questions that they begin to ask of of Moses. And they're not all that

18:32

different from questions that I'll admit that I've asked of God before that we've

18:38

all probably asked of God. And I put this on your sermon notes. These are just common questions that we use to

18:47

test God. And and I'm I'm not praising this. I'm just pointing it out that we

18:54

use these questions. Uh the first one the these might conceptually I think

18:59

we've all said these things to God but they might you might use different words but I'm just going to use these

19:05

conceptually. The first one is what have you done for me lately? What have you done for me lately? I mean

19:13

it Israel is doing that all the time here. Remember, they remember what

19:18

they're on the heels of. Not only the miraculous things done in Egypt, but the

19:24

miraculous uh water that turns sweet, the miraculous bread that falls from

19:29

heaven, the miraculous uh uh meat that comes and flies over the like miraculous

19:35

provision. Yeah, but what have you done for me today?

19:40

And we do we do that to God all the time. Yeah, God, you were good to me then,

19:45

but what about now? What have you done for me lately? Second, if you love me, then why did you

19:53

you fill in the blank? If you love me, then why did you X?

20:00

Third one, why? Why didn't you give me what I needed and I wanted? Why Why have you neglected me, God?

20:08

I thought you were a good father and I feel neglected. I didn't get what I wanted or what I thought I I needed.

20:18

Or D or the the fourth one. Why have you left me here?

20:24

Why am I still in this stage? You've moved me in stages and I'm tired

20:30

of this stage. Move me onto another. Why have you left me here? I don't like this

20:35

stage. I don't like this life stage. I don't like this uh uh position in life.

20:42

Why have you left me here? Or the last one, why won't you hold up your end of

20:47

the bargain? Which I think is pretty common. God, I did this. I God, I've

20:53

come to church. God, I have uh given my of my resources. God, I have volunteered.

21:00

You are supposed to hold up your end of the bargain. And it doesn't feel like you you are. And these are common

21:07

questions that we use to test God. And remember, testing God, go back to the definition at the top. Testing God is

21:13

demanding that that God prove himself to our own satisfaction.

21:20

That God, you must not be able. You must not be worthy. You you must not have the

21:29

character to be God because of how I see you and because of

21:36

how I see my experiences and because of how I see you treat me. And that's a

21:41

really dangerous place to be. Now, I want to be I want to be careful and I

21:48

want to pause here for for just a moment because there's a key in here of of what

21:54

the difference is between an honest question and a combative question because I I think God is okay with our

22:01

questions. We're going to get there in just a moment. But the the question the key to is this question honest or is it

22:09

combative? The key is the attitude of the heart. The the key is tone.

22:16

You know this. You know that tone matters. The attitude matters. Um

22:25

you if you're married or if you're have a roommate, close friends, the tone of

22:31

questions matter. Are you going to do something about that?

22:36

That's not like, hey, are you going to do something about that? totally totally

22:42

different attitude and question and I promise you will be interpreted completely differently by whomever you

22:48

were saying that to tone and attitude matter. Sincere

22:53

questions God can can handle. And honestly with the things going on right

22:58

now in in our state, there are completely sincere and honest questions that you should be and can ask God. Go

23:06

to him. go to him. He's big enough for those

23:12

things. But I think we need to be careful that we're not being combative

23:19

because we don't need to bite the hand that feeds us. We we we've got to remember that he he

23:26

is God. We're not. And that's hard. I'm not

23:32

saying that that's an easy answer. And I'm not saying that those conversations with the Lord are going to be easy

23:37

either. But we need to go to him with honest questions, not combative questions. But

23:44

when things aren't going our way and when God isn't meeting the things that we think that he needs to do for us to

23:50

our own satisfaction, we begin to ask these combative questions. But we are

23:57

constantly challenged to go from testing God to trusting God.

24:02

We are constantly challenged to go from testing God to trusting God.

24:14

And the Lord proves his trustworthiness again again and again and again and

24:19

again. Verses five and six. And the Lord said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the

24:26

elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. Behold, I will stand

24:33

before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people

24:40

will drink." I want to give you um I want to kind of

24:45

set the scene for for just a moment because of of what the Lord tells Moses

24:50

to do because there is a a a great sense of um God authenticating his servant

25:00

Moses in this picture. So what he tells Moses to do is to take the elders of

25:05

Israel. And so remember the elders would have represented uh different parts of the tribes and families of Israel. So

25:12

these were these were the representatives. So he said take the representatives because all two million people you know they be standing on

25:19

tiptoes can't see it. So he goes okay I'll take a representation take the representation to Horeb and I want you

25:26

to take the the staff that you struck the the Nile with which is also a symbol of authority here. And he says,"I want

25:34

you to go and I want them to be able to see that I am trustworthy so that that

25:41

word will trickle back to uh the people of Israel and they will will drink uh

25:47

the water." And so he goes and he takes the the leaders, the elders of Israel

25:52

there strikes the rock, water comes from the rock and the people are able to drink. They have water in the

25:59

wilderness. So this is authenticating Moses as the servant that God God's

26:06

appointed servant to lead and guide the people of Israel. But there's another

26:11

thing going on here that is is critical to understand especially for the rest of

26:18

the New Testament because there's a foreshadowing going on here because I want you to look back at it and notice

26:25

who is standing before the elders of Israel.

26:30

Who does it say is standing before the elders of Israel?

26:35

This is the easy answer. God is standing before the elders of

26:42

Israel. Look, look back. Look back at verse five. I God will stand before you on the rock.

26:52

Do I want you to imag at least in my mind there's imagine there's a semicircle of the the elders of Israel

27:01

and there's a rock at Horeb and yes Moses is there so yes you got it right if you said Moses too um Moses is there

27:08

because he's going to strike the rock but God explicitly says I will stand before you

27:15

stand before you and it's almost this idea that God is on trial that that that

27:21

there's this this idea of he is the one who is being tested now and what you see

27:29

is Moses is taking the staff and he's striking the rock.

27:35

Now what we know from first Corinthians chap 10 is that the rock in the

27:41

wilderness is Jesus. Jesus is the rock in the w he's

27:48

represented symbolically by the rock in the wilderness. And he says that

27:53

basically then what you're understanding is that Moses is striking Christ. This

28:00

is a foreshadowing of the cross. That's what's going on here. That God is taking

28:07

the place of Moses. Where Moses was being asked the questions and put on

28:12

trial. Now God is taking his place so that Moses can be reconciled with the

28:19

people and they can be reconciled back to God. And God is proven as the one who

28:24

is providing for his people the living water that they need for life abundant

28:31

that he is now Christ the rock is being stricken

28:37

that he he's he's being he he's struck with with the staff and we know that

28:43

from the the foreshadowing that this is exactly what happens. Isaiah even talked about this in Isaiah chapter 53. But he,

28:52

the Messiah, was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him

29:00

was the chastisement that brought us peace. And with his wounds, we are

29:05

healed. So this is a foreshadowing

29:11

of Christ being struck and providing water life for his people.

29:20

You go to the cross and Christ is on the cross taking the place of you and me,

29:28

the sin that we deserve on trial and we've got no defense. We're not adequate

29:33

in ourselves. He takes our place, takes our punishment, is stricken for

29:40

our sins, and is then pierced. And what comes from his side?

29:47

Blood and water. Do do you see the foreshadowing here? Do

29:53

you see the correlation? You see, when when God is put to the test, he's always proven trustworthy.

30:02

Always. And when he's put to the test, he always preserves the life of his

30:07

people. And that's why he's saying, don't put God to the test. He's wanting

30:13

us to move from testing God to trusting God to trusting him because his ways are

30:20

not our ways. I mean, how many people would say that, hey, the way that we're going to going to turn this ship around

30:27

is if God sends his own son and strikes him down for us. the one who's perfect.

30:34

Nobody would have thought that. Nobody except God.

30:41

Nobody. His ways are not our ways. That's why he wants us to move from testing him to trusting him. And I want

30:48

to give you some quick applications of of how we can do that because this is an

30:53

event. As I said, it's a watershed moment. If you look throughout scriptures, uh, Massa and Meabbah, this

31:00

specific event, it's mentioned throughout the Psalms. It's mentioned obviously in 1 Corinthians chapter 10,

31:07

where we get Christ as the the rock, the foreshadowing there. It's mentioned in Hebrews and all of these places. It

31:14

says, don't do what Israel did then at at Meba,

31:20

at Massa. Don't don't put the Lord to the test there. In fact, we get

31:25

explicitly in Psalm 95:es 7-9. For he is our God and we are the people of his

31:32

pasture and the sheep of his hand. I love how it says this today. If you hear

31:37

his voice, don't harden your heart. As at Meabbah, as on the day of Massa in

31:46

the wilderness, which Meabbah means testing and Massa means quarreling.

31:51

That's why they were named with those particular names. in the wilderness when your fathers put me to the test and they

31:58

put me to the proof. Prove yourself though they had seen my work.

32:06

You know, here's the irony in the the whole thing. When God calls us to walk by faith, it's not blind faith. He's

32:14

shown us his goodness. He's shown us his work.

32:20

If if you need reference for that, he he's always given you a marker in time called the cross, the empty tomb. That's

32:28

where he shows us that he's worked. And he says, "I'm asking you to walk by faith, not blindly, but based on my

32:35

character, based on how I've loved you, based on how I've led you, based on how I've provided for you." We are walking

32:43

by faith. Yes. But we can also walk by sight by looking at the things that God has done. He's proven his work to us and

32:51

therefore he's called us to walk by faith into the unknown, into tomorrow, into the next day, the next challenge,

32:58

the next stage. And so, let me give you a few quick applications to wrap up our time. First is this. Give God your

33:05

doubts, but also give him the benefit of the doubt.

33:13

Give God your doubts, but also give him the benefit of the doubt.

33:19

And and here's here's why I I say this. I I want you to take your if if you're

33:26

doubting things about God, I want you to one be surrounded in community of of folks that you can process that stuff

33:32

with, but you can take those doubts to the Lord. He's big enough. He's 100% big

33:38

enough. He's not scared of those conversations with you. In fact, he knows those conversations before you

33:44

begin to voice those to him. uh that's how much God he is. But you can voice

33:51

those those doubts to him. But let me tell let me tell you this. I if you are

33:57

doubting what you want is reassurance.

34:02

When when we doubt things, we want reassurance. And the reassurance that you need comes in the context of a

34:10

relationship with God. And if you write him off and don't give him any kind of

34:15

benefit of the doubt that he wants to hear from you, that he is waiting to

34:20

hear from you, then you will skip the relationship part and you will never get

34:25

to the reassurance of the doubts that you have. And so we've got to start with

34:31

a benefit of the doubt of God. You've proven yourself to me before,

34:37

but I'm hurting right now and I don't understand

34:43

and I do feel alone and I do feel lost.

34:50

But God, I'm going to give you the benefit of the doubt that you're listening to me now. And I'm going to give you the benefit of

34:56

the doubt that you care. and I'm going to give you the benefit of the doubt that you've not left me and you've not

35:02

forsaken me. So, I'm going to pour out my heart to you right now.

35:08

I'm telling you, when you if you will approach God that way, he will meet you

35:14

in your deepest and darkest places. I've seen it and I've heard it time and time

35:20

again. Time and time again. You can give God your doubts,

35:26

but give him the benefit of the doubt. Second, acknowledge God as the good

35:31

shepherd who laid down his life for his sheep. Acknowledge God as the good shepherd who

35:38

laid down his life for his sheep. If you go back to Psalm 95, we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his

35:45

hand. Jesus comes in John chapter 10 and says, "I am the good shepherd."

35:51

and and he says, "My sheep know my voice and and he knows his sheep by name."

35:58

But the sign of the good shepherd is that he lays down his life for his

36:04

sheep. That he takes their their place when they are going to be harmed. He

36:10

puts himself in in in between what will harm them and the harm, the hmer, that's

36:17

our adversary. That's Satan. And God puts himself in our place so that we are

36:24

protected from our accuser. And he proves that he is the good

36:30

shepherd by laying down his life, by dying the death we all deserve, but then rising again from the dead because he is

36:37

sinless and perfect and holy

36:42

and God. Acknowledge God as the good shepherd. If you're doubting and you say, "I haven't

36:48

seen him work." Go back to the cross. You have seen him work. You have seen

36:53

him work. You know, one of, by the way, real fast, and I say this to you, especially if

37:00

you're in a a healthy place right now, um, so often one of the hardest

37:06

questions that that we want the answer to is, "God, why?

37:12

Why?" And we we would love to know the answer to that question. But oftentimes

37:17

we only ask God that question in hard times, in bad times, in tragic times.

37:25

Let me encourage you, especially if you're in your place of health, um ask God, why in the good times,

37:32

God, why did you bless me this way? See, so often we give ourselves credit for the good and we give God credit for the

37:40

bad. And when things are going well, we go, "Man, I I must be awesome,

37:45

I I don't ask God why when it's going well because I know why."

37:51

But when things are bad, oh, it's not my fault. God's fault. Let's ask God why in the good times,

37:58

too. Because I think what we're going to find is it's grace. It's grace. God is

38:04

good. It's grace. He's kind. He's loving. Why me? I have

38:11

no idea. Don't deserve it. Don't deserve it.

38:18

And then finally, humble your heart so it doesn't harden. Unable to receive or

38:23

respond to God's guidance. Humble your heart so it doesn't harden. Unable to receive or respond to God's

38:30

guidance. I want to rem certainly go back to John chapter chapter 10, but I also want to

38:38

remind you of what James says. James chapter 4:6 that God brings low the

38:44

proud but he gives grace to the humble or he lifts up the humble. Um pride will

38:51

lead to a hardened heart that's unable to receive his grace, unable to hear his

38:57

voice. Let me remind you today if you hear his voice do not harden your

39:03

hearts. Let me pray for us that God may our hearts hear your voice. May we hear

39:08

from you, Lord God. Even when we're going through hard times, we we want to

39:13

hear from you, Lord God. We want to see you move in our lives. We want to hear

39:19

your reassuring voice that you know us. You see us. You love us. You care for us. You're there beside us. And Lord

39:26

God, there are so many situations in our lives where we doubt that.

39:32

So Lord God, as you have proven yourself over and over to us again and again,

39:40

God, in your grace, in your mercy, would you do it again?

39:45

It's in Jesus name. Amen.

Title: How God Uses the Wilderness | Walking By Faith

Video: \_YE2Yd2GD2U

**Intro**

0:00

Good morning, Christ Chapel. Good to be with you wherever you're joining us from, whether it's South Campus, West Campus, online, or if

0:08

you're worshiping at 5:00, special welcome to you. But just glad you're

0:13

here. If you have your Bibles, pull them out, turn to Exodus chapter 16. It's going to be, if you're using a pew

0:19

Bible, it's page 58. And as you're turning there, let me ask you this question.

0:24

Have you ever been stuck in the wilderness? I don't mean like a hiking trip gone

0:30

bad. I'm talking a spiritual wilderness. Have you ever been stuck in a wilderness

0:36

season? I think we all have. But just let me like explain what I mean. I'm talking

0:42

about a season where you're suffering and you don't sense God's comfort.

0:48

Time where you're spiritually dry and there's some persistent struggle and

0:54

you're just in survival mode. I can think of a ton of wilderness seasons in

1:00

my life and they vary in different degrees or intensity, but the one that keeps coming back to to me as I was

1:06

thinking through this is when I uh when Brandy and I got the news that we were pregnant with our third child, great

1:13

news, but we said praise God and oh no, in the same breath because we were going

1:19

from man-to-man coverage to zone defense, and that wasn't what we were thinking. But not only that, we had a

1:26

5-year-old and an infant with a lot of there were a lot of things going on. And

1:32

because we adopted, this is our first pregnancy. And there were challenges

1:38

that were heaped on top of that beautiful, wonderful news that led to sleep deprivation.

1:44

There was some work stress that all kind of came together where we were just on the struggle bus. And during that

1:52

season, I didn't feel I didn't have a really close walk with God. I was in survival mode. And when I would go to

1:58

try to pray, I wouldn't sense his presence. And I would walk away from my prayer time often more discouraged than

2:04

I did when I, you know, entered into it. And during that time, I would call that a wilderness season. One that stuck out.

2:11

That was 2014. That was the last time I ever struggled with sin. But um, no,

2:17

that stuck out for me. Have you been there though? Have you been in a season where you're just struggling and you're

2:23

not sensing God's presence even when you look to him? Uh our passage today in

2:28

Exodus 16 beautifully addresses what God wants to do for us when we're in the

2:34

wilderness. There's a purpose for the wilderness in the lives of God's children. But just for a brief reminder

2:40

of the context as we've been walking through Exodus, we pick up in Exodus 16

2:45

against the backdrop of a lot of amazing things that God has done up to this point. I mean, the Israelites have had a

2:52

front row seat to the se spectacular works of God. He he sent the 10 plagues.

2:58

Those are awesome. He he humbled Pharaoh. He led his people out of Egypt.

3:04

pillar of cloud by day, then a pillar of fire by night, which had to have been an

3:10

amazing sight. Lead led his people up to the uh bank of the uh the the Red Sea

3:17

with the Egyptian army coming behind them. This is an impossible situation. So, what does God do? He parts the seas,

3:24

rescues his people, and then judges his enemies as the waters come down,

3:29

crashing on the Egyptian army pursuing them. So, they've had this front row seat to an amazing God doing amazing

3:37

things. It all culminates in praise and worship, which Cody covered last week in Exodus chapter 15. They go through some

3:45

things in Exodus 15. But Exodus 15 ends with a vacation. They get some RNR in

3:51

Elim. That's verse 27. Elim was this place that had all these palm trees and

3:56

pools of water. It was like a destination resort. They got to just hang out and refresh. But all good

4:03

things must come to an end because chapter 16 verse one they set up they set out and go back into the wilderness.

4:10

So let me read verse one just to set the scene.

4:15

Says they set out from Elim and all the congregation of the people of Israel came to the wilder wilderness of sin

4:23

which is between Elilum and Syinai on the 15th day of the second month after they had departed from the land of

4:29

Egypt. So just to do the math really quickly, Israel has been on the road for about 6 weeks since they left Egypt. And

4:37

uh after their vacation in Elim, they set out into the wilderness of sin. Now,

4:42

this is an area that's just you see it's south of Elim, kind of along the coast of the Red Sea, but further inland is

4:49

this wilderness. And you might wonder why is it why is it called the wilderness of sin? Well, it's not what

4:56

you might think. It's not like it's named the wilderness of evil. It the the

5:01

name gets its association from its proximity to Mount Cyani. in in the Cyani Peninsula. It's it's its

5:08

association with its location, but uh it it's you could chalk it up to a misleading name. There's a lot of

5:15

misleading names out there. French fries are not from France, right? Grape nuts

5:22

contain neither grapes nor nuts and they taste like gravel.

5:27

Right? The funny bone is not a bone. It's a nerve and it's not funny at all.

5:33

If you hit your funny bone, it's painful. So the wilderness of sin is is

5:40

really it's its name comes from I think the Hebrew is midbar sin which means

5:46

wasteland of the moon. And so if you picture like the moon, what is the moon

5:52

like? It's it's kind of a wasteland. It's dry and barren and dusty. It's hot during the day and cold at night. Well,

5:58

the desert climate has a lot in common with this wasteland of the moon area that it is is barren. You have, you

6:07

mentioned last week, Cody, there's no Bucky signs up in the wilderness. They're in a difficult place to be, it

6:14

does, it's a place that doesn't support life. And the only things that you find that are living will probably bite or

6:20

sting you. So, they're in a difficult difficult place being in the wilderness.

6:25

So, let me ask, why are they in the wilderness? Why are the Israelites in the

6:31

wilderness? The answer is really simple. Because God led them there.

6:38

This was not the result of a wrong turn. It wasn't because of their disobedience.

6:43

It wasn't a punishment. They were in the wilderness because God had a purpose for

6:49

them in the wilderness. The wilderness was not a detour. It's disciplehip. It wasn't the result of a wrong turn. It

6:56

is God's training ground. So, they were in the wilderness because God wanted them there. And just a quick

7:03

reminder, Jesus after he was baptized was led by the spirit into the

7:08

wilderness in Matthew chapter 4 and Luke 4. It's it's purposeful. And God uses

7:15

the wilderness. So, let's see how. Look at verses 2 and three with me.

**Scripture Reading**

7:21

And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. And the people

7:28

of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt when we sat by the meat

7:35

pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into the wilderness

7:40

to kill this whole assembly with hunger." So things get real real quickly when

7:48

when when people are uncomfortable. The Israelites are uncomfortable. And what

7:54

happens really quickly is their hearts are exposed. Because you see, God uses the wilderness to expose slavery hidden

8:02

in our hearts. God uses the wilderness to expose slavery hidden in our hearts.

8:10

God has gotten his people out of Egypt, but he knows it's now time to get Egypt out of his people. And that best happens

8:17

in the wilderness. I mean, do you notice how quickly things turn from praise to panic? In Exodus 15, they're praising

8:25

God. They're allin with God, and now they're panicking. You say, "Worship gives way to worry. Worry turns into

8:31

whining." And in the case of the Israelites, why why were they whining?

8:37

Because they were hungry. And I I get it. Hunger is a powerful thing.

8:43

When stomachs start to rumble, mouths begin to grumble. That was cheesy, but I'm a dad and I'm a

8:50

pastor. That is a double whammy for really cheesy statements like that. So, forgive me and and pray for my kids.

8:58

When we're hungry, though, I mean, things come out of our mouths. How many of you have had to apologize for things

9:03

that you've said, things have come out of your mouth because you desperately want food put in your mouth? That's called being hangry, right? That's the

9:10

Hebrew term, hangry. Um, they're hungry, and I don't blame them.

9:15

Excuse me. But all they could think about when they were hungry was how good they had it back in Egypt. Apparently,

9:21

they had bottomless bread sticks, slowcooked brisket. I mean, look at verse three. It says, "We sat by the

9:28

meat pots and ate bread to the full." Do you think that's true?

9:34

Do you think they ate that well in Egypt? I think they had what you'd call

9:40

selective memory disorder, SMD. It's not a real term, but it's I

9:47

think we can all relate. When you're when when I'm miserable, I tend to think

9:52

back to the last time I had the thing that I longed for. And you could ignore

9:58

the dark cloud over that entire season and remember a few bright spots. And you could flip that. You can have a great

10:05

season, but have a few bad things happen and just remember selectively the things that stick out. Selective memory

10:12

disorder. And for the Israelites, the issue was hunger. But I want to I I want

10:18

to be clear and say, I don't think the Israelites were really starving. I think they just wanted to be in

10:25

control of when they could eat. I mean, sure, they were hungry, but out in the wilderness, you don't see any

10:30

restaurants. They were not in control of when their next meal would be or what they would be

10:36

able to eat. They were completely at the mercy of God. And I'm sure they were hungry and they began to panic as they

10:42

couldn't see where their their next meal was going to be. So they longed for the last time they had what they longed for.

10:50

In Egypt, they had some good meals maybe, but they wanted that even if it

10:56

meant being enslaved and miserable. But here's the thing. Longing for

11:01

something is not the problem. Grumbling is to long for something is not the

11:08

problem. To grumble about it is a problem. Grumbling, the Hebrew word for

11:13

grumbling at its root has the meaning of dwelling in residing in remaining in

11:20

something. It to grumble means to take up residence and opposition to God.

11:26

To take up residence and opposition to God. They were digging in their heels

11:31

against God and his leadership. They were again they were not satisfied with his

11:38

provision. They were discontent because they wanted to be in control. They

11:43

wanted to call the shots. So, do you see what's happening? God is using the

11:49

wilderness to expose remaining slavery hidding hidden in their hearts.

11:55

Just explain a little more here. One of the things things God does when

12:00

he redeems his people, he wants to set us free. Galatians 5:1, it is for

12:06

freedom that Christ has set us free. He wants to give his people freedom. And so technically speaking, the Israelites

12:13

were free. They were no longer slaves. But their grumbling revealed that out

12:20

while outwardly they were free, inwardly they were still in chains. Their hearts were still in Egypt and

**The True Condition of the Heart**

12:28

grumbling was the evidence. Grumbling was the proof. Their complaint effectively said that

12:34

they were ready to trade their freedom for some Texas day Brazil. Whatever it took, they wanted to be they

12:41

wanted food. And God knew that. He knew that about their hearts because he

12:46

always sees the true condition of the heart. And Jeremiah 17:9 and 10 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things

12:53

and desperately sick. Who can understand it? It's a rhetoric rhetorical question,

12:58

but it actually gets answered in verse 10. And it says, "I the Lord search the heart and test the mind." God sees the

13:06

true condition of our heart. He knew what was in their heart. But be

13:11

because before things were challenging, I bet you the Israelites thought that they were all in for God.

13:17

It's easy to trust God when life is easy. Comfort has a way of convincing us that

13:24

we're devoted to God. But when you take away comfort, the ugliness starts to

13:30

rise up. Ugly things start to make their way to the surface and they come out of our mouths

13:35

because our words reveal what our hearts conceal. Our words show what's actually

**The Wilderness**

13:41

in our hearts. So the wilderness for the Israelites was

13:47

a literal wilderness, literally. But for us, it's rarely a literal wilderness

13:52

that that God puts us through. It could be, but I think more often it's a spiritual wilderness of sorts. It can

13:58

come in countless forms. Just to throw out some examples, maybe you've been between jobs forever. It's been so long,

14:06

you've been struggling to find a job, or the job that you do have is dissatisfying. You you can't catch a

14:13

break. You can't get noticed. Uh maybe your wilderness is crippling grief over

14:18

or over over a loss or the pain of waiting. It could be that you're contending with

14:24

physical pain, a broken relationship, a difficult marriage, and you cannot

14:29

communicate with your spouse for the life of you and get on the same page. It

14:34

might be that everything's great on the outside. You've got it all, but you're

14:40

dissatisfied. You're lonely. you're anxious. I mean, depression, that's a great

14:46

example of a wilderness. There's so many forms of it, but I would

14:51

say that often the wilderness seasons that we go through, they're not

14:57

necessarily they're often not because of something that we've done. We go through them because God wants to do something

15:03

big in us. He wants to do something deep in us. He brings us to a place where our

15:08

personal sources, our personal resources for life seem to dry up. The things that

15:15

we think we need to live disappear. And so these sources of significance and

15:20

satisfaction and security, we lose those things. And God is revealing by by that

15:27

happening that we are depending on those things rather than him for security, for

15:32

satisfaction. And so it's the hunger the Israelites

15:38

had was a physical hunger. Ours is often a spiritual hunger, an emotional hunger,

15:43

a relational hunger. I I I want to be heard. I want to be understood. I want to be recognized. I want to feel safe. I

15:49

want to be praised. Whatever it might be, that's what God is doing. He's revealing

15:54

what's in our heart. So, can I ask you a tough question? When you are in the heat, when you're in

16:01

the wilderness, do you pay attention to what is being revealed in your heart? Or do you just want to get rid of the pain?

16:09

When you're in the heat, do you pay attention to what God is revealing, exposing in your heart, or do you just

16:15

want to make things better and get rid of the pain? Our season that I referred to in 2014

16:24

revealed some things about my heart that I would have rather have not known.

16:29

during that season like I said there's sleep deprivation there was a lot of tension in our family

16:36

and there were some times well I would say this during that time nobody I know would have described me as an angry

16:43

person except I'm married to someone who mentioned that on a few occasions Brandy

16:48

might say Ryan you need to deal with your anger and that would make me so mad because she was the problem

16:56

I hope you know I'm joking but I mean that's what I was thinking at the time. There was an anger being revealed in me.

17:02

But when I would come to work, I was surrounded by people. I mean, worked here. They would treat me with kindness.

17:08

It's easy to be kind to people who appreciate you. And so things were being

17:13

revealed in my heart that I would rather have not have known. And as difficult as

17:18

that season was, God was being good to me and revealing, exposing this the

17:24

remaining slavery in my heart. And I want to be clear. It's okay to be

17:29

miserable in the wilderness. I think it's natural. But when you're there, can I challenge you with this? When you're

17:35

tempted to grumble, can I challenge you to lament instead? Lament when you're tempted to grumble. Lamenting is how you

17:43

worship God out of misery. Grumbling is self-centered. It's

17:48

accusatory. It's faithless. But lamenting is God- centered. It's honest.

17:53

And it's rooted in trust. The Psalms are filled with laments.

17:59

You get to listen in on a saint pouring out their heart when they're miserable. And it it's sloppy often. There's a

18:06

whole book of the Bible named after it, lamentations. Right? But the thing is,

18:11

laments are marked by turning to God, not turning against him. I tend to turn

18:17

silent. I will go silent. When I'm angry, I just stop praying and then I

18:22

grumble some, but I tend to go silent. The alternative is to lament. We actually inserted uploaded a worksheet

18:30

called writing your own lament in the Christ Chapel app. So if you go there, it's under the uh be resources under

18:38

adult. You go to further resources. It's in there. But I just want to encourage

18:43

you if you are going through the wilderness, lament when you're tempted to grumble. So how does God respond to his people's

18:51

grumbling? He doesn't scold them. He doesn't smite

18:56

them. Instead, he feeds them. So, look what he does in verse four with me.

**God Rains Bread**

19:02

It says, "Then the Lord said to Moses, behold, I'm about to rain bread from

19:08

heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day

19:13

that I may test them whether they will walk in my law or not."

19:18

What a powerful picture of grace. In response to the smoke of their complaining, God reigns mercy and love.

19:26

He literally causes it to rain, but he doesn't cause it to rain water. He causes it to rain bread. Of course,

19:34

how crazy is that? He causes it to rain bread. Now, if you're familiar with this

19:40

story, can I just encourage you to hear this aresh?

19:45

This is crazy miraculous. You've heard it mentions if you've been

19:51

listening to the series. There are 2 million Israelites following Moses in the desert. The the population of Fort

19:58

Worth just hit the 1 million mark. I don't know if you knew that. So, how much bread would it take to feed two

20:05

Fort Worths? Well, someone calculated this. It would take four freight trains of 60 cars each

20:13

every day. It's a lot of bread. This is like truly

20:19

wonderbread. So bad. So bad.

20:25

It's actually called mana. Mana means literally what is this? What is it? This

20:31

is such a new thing. But God provides this mana every day but one day at a

20:37

time. And that leads to the second point here. God uses the wilderness to train us in daily trust.

20:45

I mean, what an impossible situation. How are you going to feed this many people? Oh, bread from heaven. Okay,

20:52

maybe that can happen once. Let's do it again. And he teaches his people to rely

20:57

on him day by day. And he's teaching his people to trust. And it's tied to

21:02

obedience. To trust and to obey it. It's it's to be a way of life. Look at the end of verse

21:09

four again. The command here is to gather a day's portion every day that I

21:15

may test them whether they will walk in my law or not. So his provision is tied

21:20

to their obedience. They are told to gather daily and only enough for that

21:25

day. If they don't gather, they won't eat. If they try to hoard it or stockpile it,

21:32

whatever they keep is going to rot. it's going to spoil overnight. What God is doing, the Lord is not just

21:39

feeding their bellies. He's forming their faith. He's saying to them, "Follow me. Let follow my lead by

**Dependence on God**

21:47

letting me provide for you one day at a time." I prefer a monthly salary or an annual security. But he rarely works

21:55

that way. God's goal is to teach his children to depend on him. One moment

22:01

like moment by moment dependence. His dependence on God is not something that

22:07

can be stockpiled. He gives his grace daily,

**One day at a time**

22:12

one day at a time. It makes me think of Matthew 6:11, the Lord's prayer, give us this day our daily bread.

22:20

Where do you need to learn to trust God one day at a time?

22:26

Imagine a number of us in the room are tend to worry.

22:31

Do you need to break the habit of anxious forecasting? What if this happens? What if that happens? What if

22:37

this doesn't happen? Can you work on one day at a time asking

22:44

every day, God, what are you doing for me today? How have you provided for me today? He'll answer that prayer. You'll

22:51

see him getting you through one day at a time. Because he doesn't promise next week's grace today. He promises one day

22:58

at a time. His mercies are new every morning. Just imagine if we exerted as much energy to trusting God and

23:05

imagining what he's doing as we do to worry. Be superheroes. I mean it it's

23:11

amazing to imagine. Are are there daily rhythms you need to put in place? Spiritual disciplines that you know you

23:16

want to get into the habit of reading your Bible and okay try one day at a reading uh one day of read one day at a

23:23

time reading plan. Jes is he challenging you to practice generosity because you have a tendency

23:29

to want to hoard what you have. But there's a thousand ways to apply this

23:35

one day at a time trust in the Lord because he provides every day. He shows up every day. The Lord gives you today's

23:42

bread and he's not being stingy. He's being your father. He wants you to learn

23:47

to walk with him every day. And we also see this lesson. God uses the wilderness

23:53

to reset the focus of our heart. God uses the wilderness to reset the

**The Sabbath**

23:59

focus of our heart. Verse 29, the first part says, "See, the Lord has given you

24:06

the Sabbath." Verse 30, "So the people rested on the seventh day."

24:13

I there's so much more that could be said about all this, but all I'm going to say here is that God introduces a

24:19

crazy new idea in the wilderness and it's called rest. Verse 23 is the first

24:25

occurrence of the word Sabbath in your Bible. So the Sabbath is introduced here. This is before the Ten

24:31

Commandments and it's a command to rest. And and I think it's easy for us to assume that

24:39

well I'm going to be clear about this. This is a new thing for the Israelites because they never got a break under

24:45

Pharaoh. Slaves don't get a day off, right? Sons do.

24:51

God is not a slave driver. He's their father. And he's reshaping their

24:57

identity by saying, "Hey, I'm your father and I'm providing for you, so rest."

25:04

And this is the this is how he does it. He builds this this rhythm into their

25:09

schedules to reinforce their identity. It's the rhythm of rest of of working

25:16

and then resting as an act of trust. So this is so amazing. Days 1 through 5,

25:22

they're called to go out and gather just enough for the day. And if you gather more, it's going to spoil overnight.

25:29

So mana only lasts a day, except for day six. gather twice as much

25:35

mana, save half of it, and on the seventh day, don't go out and gather anything and eat

25:42

yesterday's mana. Now, if you've ever had spoiled milk, I'm I don't want to risk drinking

25:48

spoiled milk all of a sudden if I know it spoils by a certain date. Hey, ignore the expiration date on the seventh day.

25:54

This this is a this is there's no naturalistic explanation for this. Why would the same bread only last one day

26:03

and then suddenly on the sixth day it lasts two days? God's doing something

26:08

here to train them that I'm at work here. I'm providing for you. You can trust me. This rhythm teaches that he is

26:16

not a slave driver. He's present. He's actively taking care of them. And he does this by

26:23

teaching them to rest. Rest resets the focus of our heart. God causes people to

26:29

stop and to trust and to delight in him, which is hard to do in the wilderness.

**Rest**

26:36

Do you trust God enough to rest? Because rest is a spiritual act of obedience.

26:43

I think it's easy to misunderstand rest and assume it's always supposed to be easy. But if you like to be in control,

26:50

if you like to be productive, rest is really difficult. It's an act of discipline.

26:57

Sabbath is like a weekly trust fall. God says, "Hey, you can stop. I've got you."

27:04

And he designed us, by the way, I even if we refuse to rest on a weekly

27:10

schedule, he designed us in our bodies to have to rest about onethird of our

27:15

lives. If you think about it, we are all sleepers. Some of us try to defy that

27:21

rule and we pay for it. But did you know that for onethird of your life, assuming

27:26

you sleep 8 hours a night, which is probably a few of us, but if you sleep

27:32

eight hours a night, you are completely unproductive and defenseless for a third of your life. It's like God's way of

27:39

telling us, I'm God and you're not. And he works that into our volitional

27:44

schedule that, hey, you're going to choose to rest because I'm going to provide for you.

27:50

God wants to teach us that he's our father and rest is the one one of the

27:55

ways he teaches us this. He's given us proof after proof that we can trust him

28:00

even in the wilderness. Let's say that again. God has given us proof after proof that we can trust him

28:07

even in the wilderness. But as I say that, I'd be naive to to assume that

28:12

there aren't some of you thinking, "Yeah, that sounds nice for you, but where was God when I went through this?

28:20

Where was God when that happened to me?" I remember praying and he didn't answer. It's a fair question. I mean, even David

28:28

prayed in Psalm 13, "How long, oh Lord, will you hide your face from me? How

28:33

long will you keep forgetting me?" I and I'd be lying to you if as a pastor I I

28:40

would I told you that I didn't go through seasons like that even recently where I'm just wondering are you even

28:48

involved? I tend to assume that God is either punishing me or he's forgotten

28:53

about me or he doesn't care. Those are my three assumptions that I kind of bounce around with. But when I look back

29:00

on the times I've thought that way, I realize, wait, you were with me, God. you were taking care of me. You were

29:06

forming something deeper in me than I wanted to happen, but he was doing it. He He doesn't always answer the way we

29:14

want in the moment. But his faithfulness is not proven by our feelings. His

29:22

faithfulness is proven by what he's doing over the course of our lives. His faithfulness can see be seen usually

29:29

retrospectly retrospectively in some of the darkest moments. That's most clearly proven at the cross. The darkest thing

29:36

that has ever happened, God turned to the greatest thing that has ever happened because he's faithful. He's

29:42

always with his people even in the wilderness.

29:49

The wilderness though is powerful. It causes us to forget what we should remember and sometimes makes us remember

29:55

what we should forget. But this there's there's a reason that this chapter closes with a call to remember. This

30:03

chapter closes with a call to remember. Look at verse 33. And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar and

30:11

put an R of mana in it and place it before the Lord to be kept throughout your generations."

30:18

So there's an there's this rule established to take one jar, put some

30:23

bread in it, preserve it, and this becomes this tangible testimony to God's

30:28

faithfulness. He can call it a jar of remembrance because God knows that we are prone to forget. And forgetfulness

30:36

is the enemy of faith. And if you're wondering what an omer is, verse 36

30:41

clarifies, an omr is the tenth part of an epha. You may go in peace. Knowledge is power.

**What is an OMR**

30:49

No, I God wants his provision. I don't know how much an OMR is, but he wants

30:54

his provision not just to feed the present. He wants it to shape our future. Because folks, chances are

31:01

you're going to be in the wilderness again. I mean, verse 35 says, "The people of Israel ate the mana 40 years

**The Israelites**

31:08

till they came to a habitable land." 40 more years of being in the wilderness

31:14

for the Israelites. Folks, there's a lot of sands between here and the promised land. I hope that we have relatively few

31:22

wilderness experiences, but chances are we're going to have them again. And we are prone to forget God's goodness when

31:29

we don't feel his comfort, when we don't feel his presence, when our stomachs are rumbling. And so, here are some things

31:36

that I hope you remember from this. The wilderness is not a place of abandonment.

31:42

It's God's ordained course for transformation. He's not punishing you. He wants to grow

31:48

you. He wants to free you. He wants to free you from self-reliance and reenter

31:54

us on his provision, his presence. God doesn't save us from the wilderness. He

32:00

saves us through the wilderness. He uses our biggest difficulties to

32:05

teach us dependence. And he wants to teach us to learn to trust him so much that we we would even rest with him.

32:14

I came across this quote. You you will never realize God is all you need until God is all you have. That's best taught

32:21

in the wilderness. So how are you remembering God's faithfulness? How are you remembering what he's done for you?

32:28

Well, here's three ideas. One, keep jars in your life, jars of

**Momentos**

32:34

remembrance. They could be journal entries. That could be a list of answered prayers,

32:40

momentos of God's grace, could be a baptism certificate that you frame, or

32:45

maybe you frame a verse that really strengthened you through a difficult season. Maybe you were battling cancer.

32:51

You're recovering from an addiction and this verse really was something for you

32:57

to hold on to. Keep that nearby. You jewelry with a story. There's a lot of

33:02

ways just reminders that he fed me before, he'll feed me again.

33:08

Another another idea, establish rhythms that help you remember God's provision in dry seasons.

**Rhythms**

33:15

Folks, I couldn't commend this one highly enough. Learn to be in your Bibles every day. Don't try to knock out

33:23

an hour a day if you're not doing this. Start with 5 minutes a day, a small reading plan, uh something just the

33:30

Bible is filled with 66 books that capture God's faithfulness beautifully

33:36

from different angles, pray, be in community, learn to rest,

33:43

practice silence, sing. I'm I'm no singer, but we sing to our kids. Uh we

33:49

try to sing the doxology every night when we put our kids to bed. Beautiful reminder.

33:55

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. He He is faithful. One more. Just let the memory of

34:02

provision strengthen dependence going forward. Because dependence is one of the

**Dependence**

34:08

fundamental building blocks in the Christian life. Blessed are the needy who know they need

34:15

God. Blessed are the meek. Meek and needy are the same things. Right? God wants his

34:22

people to need him and to remember his faithfulness so that moving forward we

34:27

can come become the type of people who has this attitude from Psalm Psalm 23 that surely goodness and mercy will

34:34

follow me all the days of my life. I will fear no evil because if you're in

34:39

Christ folks surely mercy surely goodness and mercy will follow you all

34:45

the days of your life. Would you pray with me? Father, thank you so much uh for doing

34:53

something better in us than simply saving us and then bringing us right to heaven. You save us and you keep us here

35:01

and teach us how to walk with you in the wilderness. My prayer Lord is for all of us who are

35:08

struggling in a season where we don't feel your presence, we don't feel your comfort. Would you be especially

35:14

gracious and merciful to to those people who are there and teach them to rely on you to to expectantly depend on you and

35:23

look to you and remember you. And Lord, teach us to establish these daily rhythms and just become people who

35:32

walk with you whatever this season, but especially in the wilderness. Lord, we love you. We pray to you in Jesus name.

35:39

Amen.