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.

Title: Walking Into the Unknown | Walking By Faith

Video: zJiA-UHWcHw

0:02

Walking by faith was worth it before I saw the outcome. If you see like, oh man, God is good. He was with me. I grew

0:10

to love him more. I'm going to do that again.

0:18

So even in current seasons when the Lord is calling me into the rushing water, he

0:23

is present and he's taking care of me that whole time. [Music]

0:30

In my lowest moments when my mom was on hospice, I was scared. But in those

0:35

times of struggle, in those times of fear, I was met with joy.

0:41

[Music] God is faithful to say, "Hey, Eve, I'm

0:48

going to bring you all the way to the finish line. I'm going to walk with you, and I'm going to do everything that's

0:54

necessary to get you through that finish line.

0:59

[Music] When I look around and all I see is desert, I think walking by faith means

1:06

that I still trust that God will make a way, that he will provide, that he is

1:12

trustworthy, and that I can follow him.

1:18

[Music] Well, good morning, Christ,

1:25

man. And good morning and good afternoon to those of you at our 5:00 service. Uh excited to be preaching at the West

1:32

Campus today. So yeah, uh a lot of fun to to be here. But hello to all of you

1:39

at our South Campus, uh Fort Worth campus, and certainly if you're joining us online wherever you are. Also excited

1:44

to start a new series today. It's a new series, but we're still in Exodus. So if you will open your Bibles, please to

1:52

page 57. if you're opening one of those blue Bibles because we are in Exodus

1:58

chapter 15. Exodus chapter 15, page 57. If you're opening one of the blue Bibles

2:05

and I want to begin today by telling you a little story. Once upon a time, uh, I

2:11

had a job at a church while I was in college at a church in West Palm Beach,

2:16

Florida. I worked at First Baptist Church West Palm as a middle school youth intern. uh my junior summer at

2:24

Baylor and actually my uh senior summer at Baylor, too. Uh but anyway, had no had a random connection out there.

2:30

Didn't know a soul. Went out to West Palm. Loved that church. Loved those

2:36

people there. But anyway, had had moved out there my junior summer. And uh part

2:42

of that the the summer program was we were going to take our middle schoolers on a mission trip, which sounds about

2:49

right. And this mission trip was going to be to Biminy in the Bahamas, a small

2:55

tiny little island. It's the closest island to uh Florida mainland. And so uh

3:00

we actually put the kids on boats and took them out there. But uh the middle school pastor told me that we were going

3:06

to take a scouting trip out there before we actually took all the middle schoolers out there to, you know, uh

3:13

scope out the the land and the island and meet with the church and uh look at all the programming. What did they have?

3:18

all of those things. I know it sounds like I'm really suffering for Jesus working in West Palm Beach, Florida.

3:24

Mission trips to Beiminy. I got it. Anyway, so we're we're going to take the scouting trip and he said, um, okay, our

3:30

executive pastor, the executive pastor at First Baptist West Palm, uh, he's got a little four-seater plane and he's

3:36

going to fly us over again. Suffering, I know. He's going to fly us over to Beiminy just for the day and let us

3:42

scout it out and then bring us back. And I'm like, okay. And so, uh, the day comes and we meet him at that little

3:48

airport and we start, uh, flying out to to go to Beman and we're in the air and

3:55

then, uh, the the the executive pastor, he says, "Hey, do you guys mind if I fly

4:01

by the instruments?" Now, again, I'm a college kid. I've

4:07

never been on a small plane or anything like that. I did not know what he was

4:13

asking me. But the way he was asking me that question sounded like he wanted me

4:19

to say, "No, I don't mind." And so I said, "No, I don't mind." Now, if you

4:26

don't know what it means to fly by the instruments, and you were just like me as I'm sitting in this little

4:31

four-seater plane, let me explain what that means. Essentially what it means is

4:37

that he is going to practice flying without sight

4:43

that he is only going to look at the instruments below. Now this is very

4:48

valuable for pilots because obviously sometimes their vision is obscured if there's clouds or fog or what you know

4:55

storms or whatever it may be. And so he's essentially asking us, hey, do you

5:00

mind if I fly blind? Which I had just answered, no, I don't mind at all.

5:08

So because I had said, no, I don't mind at all. He chose to put on these uh

5:14

glasses that were essentially blinders where he could not see anything in front

5:21

of him, but he could only see down at the instruments on the cockpit.

5:27

It's at this point where I began to question my life and I began to um certainly make sure

5:35

that I uh had prayed the prayer of salvation and said uh Lord I'm yours

5:41

100%. But I I was like I feel like this was a question you should have asked me

5:49

when we were on the ground like before we ever got up in the air. Uh, also I

5:54

was beginning to think, what in the world made me think that this executive pastor could all of a sudden transform

6:01

himself into a pilot? And and do people just sell planes to anyone who has money

6:06

to buy a plane? Like, I have no idea what this guy's qualifications are to

6:11

put us up in the air. All that to say, we ended up making it to that little

6:17

island for the day and back with no incident. He did an excellent job. He was an excellent uh pilot. But I was

6:24

scared for my life uh for a long period of time uh that day as he flew without

6:31

sight, which is just just crazy to think, but obviously that's something

6:37

that he had to practice doing in case that ever happened because it was a bluebird day when we were flying. But he

6:44

had to look down and just train himself to just look at those things as far as,

6:49

you know, the the direction and the the wind speed and the the thrust, all all of those kinds of things and fuel and

6:56

all of those things that were right on his cockpit without what what was in front, seeing what was ahead. And I I

7:04

started thinking about it and essentially what he was doing was not walking by faith, but he was flying by faith. He was flying by by faith and not

7:12

by sight. He was he was flying by faith in in these instruments that were in

7:17

front of him that were telling him where he was and how things were going, which is very valuable when you can't see what

7:26

is ahead. And it made me think about the the faith that we have to have in our

7:33

very uncertain world. We live in a very uncertain world today where we don't

7:39

know what is around the corner. There are so many unknowns in in our world and

7:45

in our lives. I mean globally we have none of us have any idea what the next

7:51

hour will bring much less the next day next month. I mean you can talk about

7:56

the wars and the rumors of wars uh that we've heard about uh the economies all

8:02

of political all of those things that are going on in the world. We have no idea what tomorrow holds. But the same

8:09

is personally. Personally, we have no idea what is going to happen to us tomorrow and what not. You can talk

8:16

about that uh relationally. You can talk about it with your health. You can talk

8:21

about it with your job or or career or whatever it may be. There are so many

8:26

uncertainties uh that we can't foresee around the corner and that can make us

8:33

feel like we're not just flying blind but we're flying by the seat of our pants and we we don't know what's going

8:40

to happen and and and we we can't see what's ahead and so we feel very out of

8:46

control and we grasp for those things that we can see. We we want to be able to see ahead, but sometimes we can't.

8:53

And what we have to do is we have to learn to fly by the instruments or or

8:59

walk by the instruments. And so, uh, we're going to pick up our series and we're going to follow, uh, the Hebrews

9:06

here. Uh, if you'll remember last week, they they had basically their their most iconic victory ever as the God parts the

9:15

Red Sea. They they walk through it and then it's obviously closed up over the

9:20

Egyptians, separating them from their enemy in a way that only God could.

9:25

Well, now they turn from facing uh an enemy that was certainly obvious to them

9:32

to one that may not be so obvious because they're in a familiar spot. I mean, their their back was up against

9:38

the sea facing an enemy. Now, their back is up against the sea and they're facing

9:43

the unknown. They they don't they don't know exactly where they're going. They

9:48

don't exactly know where they're headed. And now they're going to have to begin

9:53

to walk by faith. It was really easy to know what they were running from when they were running from their enemies.

10:00

When they were running from those that had oppressed them for hundreds of years and enslaved them. Easy to know what

10:07

you're running from. A little bit harder to know what you're walking toward. And that's where they find themselves

10:13

walking in toward the unknown. And they're going to find themselves walking in the wilderness, not by sight. They

10:21

the the sight doesn't really help. They're going to learn to walk by faith.

10:27

So, what I want to do today with Exodus chapter 15 is show you how they're called to walk by faith. I think you'll

10:34

be able to relate to some of these principles. So, we'll we'll walk through Exodus 15, draw out some principles of

10:41

how to walk by faith. Throughout that, I'll give you some gauges, some ways

10:46

that you can reflect and say, "Hey, here are some instruments that I I might not be able to see what's ahead, but here

10:53

are some instruments that will tell me if I'm headed in the right direction and how I'm doing." And then I'll give you

10:58

some applications at the end. So, we're going to start in Exodus 15. And the

11:05

first thing that I want you to see as as you face the unknown, the uncertainties in life, I want to encourage you to walk

11:12

by faith remembering God's past victories.

11:17

Walk by faith remembering God's past victories.

11:23

The Israelites had obviously seen the greatest victory that they had ever seen

11:29

when when God uh destroyed their enemy, the one that was pursuing them, the one

11:35

that was was so close to them. And immediately after uh God swallows up the

11:42

Egyptians uh in the sea, we have recorded for us this song that Moses

11:48

leads uh the people in. And it's this like victory song. It reminds me like I

11:54

the way I would imagine it is they're singing, you know, queen like we are the champions. You know, we are the

12:00

champions, my friend. You know, but the pronoun is completely different. Because in this one, it's not about we, it's

12:08

about you, God. You, God. We We didn't do anything. You, God, did it. And it

12:14

this is in 1 to 21. But I want to summarize kind of what the song is

12:19

saying at the be end of verse one, beginning of verse two. This will come up on the screen. It says, "I will sing

12:26

to the Lord for he has triumphed gloriously.

12:32

The horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength

12:39

and my song. and he has become my salvation. Uh Moses goes from leading

12:46

the people physically to leading them uh spiritually and he's leading them

12:53

spiritually by getting them to focus on what God has done. This great victory,

12:59

this great deliverance, this great way that God showed himself that his strength is stronger than anything that

13:06

they could do themselves, much less uh stronger than their enemies. But what I wanted to focus on and why I emphasized

13:13

that verb there is uh reflecting on God's strength, reflecting on God's

13:18

power, reflecting on God's victory provided them current strength. That's

13:24

why it says the Lord is my strength.

13:30

We gain confidence in in the presence by remembering what God has done in the

13:35

past because God's character has not changed. He's the same yesterday, today,

13:40

and will be forever. And so that provides us strength today. So here's

13:46

your your first gauge uh for Exodus chapter 15, and it's this. Is the joy of

13:53

the Lord my strength? Is the joy of the Lord my strength? I

14:00

mean, I can imagine how joyfilled they were at that moment where God

14:07

showed up in a tremendous way to fight for his people. I I mean, they they had

14:13

to have been overjoyed. And that's why Moses says, "The Lord is my strength." The joy of the Lord is our strength. In

14:20

fact, Nehemiah says that in chapter 8 verse 10 says that explicitly. And I

14:26

think that that's really important for us to to gauge even on a daily basis. Do

14:32

we find strength from the Lord's joy because so often we look for joy in the

14:38

things that surround us rather than the one who supports us. And God is there

14:44

supporting us, upholding us with his right hand, the same way he upheld his

14:49

own people. And that provides us confidence and joy. Knowing who we are

14:55

and who he sees us as, as his uh prized possession. Remember, there's a

15:01

difference between joy and happiness. Joy is actually a fruit of the spirit. When we keep in step with the spirit, if

15:08

you go back to Galatians chapter 5, when we keep in step with the spirit, the spirit produces in us joy and that

15:16

provides strength for us on a daily basis. Is joy something that you feel like God

15:24

is producing in you or is it something that you're searching for? Those are two

15:30

totally different things. And if God is producing those things in you as you

15:36

keep in step with the spirit like Galatians chapter 5 says, then then that

15:41

joy is ever present. It's not something you have to search for. And that therefore provides the strength to

15:48

continue to walk by faith even when you're walking into an unknown. So is

15:54

the joy of the Lord your strength when you're flying by the instruments. That is a key gauge on the dashboard. A

16:02

second, as you face the unknown, a walk by faith following God into

16:09

future uncertainties. As you face the unknown, walk by faith,

16:16

following God into future uncertainties.

16:22

They go from this uh beach pep rally to

16:28

going, "Okay, now we're going to start walking into places that we haven't been

16:35

before." You see this in verses 22 to 24. It says, "Then Moses made Israel set

16:41

out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shure. They went three

16:48

days into the wilderness and found no water. And when they came to Mara, they

16:53

could not drink the water of Mara because it was bitter. Therefore, it was

16:58

named Mara, which means bitter. That that's how Mara translates. And the

17:04

people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"

17:12

They go from singing these great songs of we are the champions and God is great

17:18

and everything is amazing to now we're grumbling against Moses and it only took

17:24

three days that that's it. And it and in a sense I I don't I don't blame them. I

17:31

want to show you where they began to walk toward. So there is the wilderness

17:36

of of shore. Remember we're trying to get to Canaan. Canaan is the promised

17:42

land. That's that's where God eventually wants to get his people. So they cross the Red Sea. They're going into the

17:48

wilderness of shore. And shore means wall. It means wall. And when you talk

17:55

about what they were walking into, they were walking into a wall of the wilderness when this is what they would

18:02

have been staring down. I mean, you're just staring into nothingness.

18:09

You know, when when we tal when I talked about flying blind, being able to see this doesn't help you there. There are

18:16

no Bucky signs that are saying, you know, you can come this way in the distance there. There are no no

18:23

landmarks. It you're staring at a wall of of unknown. And that's what they

18:29

begin to walk into. And they it says that they walk for three days and they

18:35

don't find any water. Now, you all know this that going without water for three

18:42

days could be deadly. Essentially, uh day one, if you don't have any water,

18:47

you're going to have a headache. You're going to be uh dizzy. Uh you're going to be start to feel fatigued. Uh day two,

18:55

you're going to start cramping. You're going to start feeling mus muscle cramps and you're going to start getting very

19:01

confused. By day three, your organs start to shut down and you will probably

19:08

die very, very soon. I mean, that's the path that they're on. And they begin to

19:14

go, God, are you sure that you're here? Ironically, what are they walking in the

19:20

wilderness of? Sure. Just Cody's irony that I see there. God, are you sure? Are

19:27

you sure that we're supposed to be here? As we walk into this unknown and we

19:33

haven't seen or had any water now, they may have had some water stored up with

19:38

them, but these reserves, if they aren't running thin, they're out.

19:44

They're out of them and they don't have anything. And then they see Mara in the distance. Mara looks beautiful. Looks

19:52

beautiful. And so they begin to walk toward this this water that they they

19:58

believe is going to be their salvation. That that's going to save their lives.

20:03

Again, three days without water, you're going to to die. And they get to Mara and they begin to drink the water, but

20:10

they can't drink the water because the water is bitter.

20:16

Mara turns out to be a mirage which is your second gauge uh for Exodus chapter

20:24

15. It's this. Are my sights set on mirages that will not satisfy?

20:32

Are my sights set on mirages that will not satisfy?

20:38

You know, I think some of those things are are obvious that that we would say

20:44

um you're not going to find satisfaction in things or material possessions or all

20:50

of those things. And I hope that uh we're not pursuing those types of things

20:55

in our lives because those things will will rot and d, you know, moth will

21:01

destroy. I mean, this is Matthew chapter 6 19-21 all over again. So, I hope it's

21:06

not things because if they're things, those are certainly miragages. But I'll tell you the mirage that I often times

21:13

chase in my own life is a time. And what I mean by that is it's usually set by

21:19

tasks that if I can just get to vacation, then I will be satisfied or

21:25

then I will then I will rest. or if I I can just get this uh sermon series

21:32

kicked off, then I will be able to take a little bit of a break or if we can

21:37

just get past kids camp, which kids camp is amazing, but a huge undertaking by

21:42

the entire church, which you guys are unbelievable. Thank you for all of you that poured into that. But if you go, if

21:48

I can just get past this deadline, if I can just get to this vacation and we go

21:54

that then I will rest, then I will be satisfied. How often does that work for

22:00

you? I joke with I have a buddy, we joke about this all the time. It's always as

22:06

soon as I get past the next thing. Problem is, as soon as you get past the next thing, guess what? You're looking

22:11

at the next thing. That's right. It it's it's a mirage. It's a mirage that will

22:18

not satisfy. And I was thinking about these things that won't satisfy. And it reminded me of what Jesus says in John

22:24

chapter 7. In John chapter 7, I'm not going to go all the way into it, but he's at the feast and he stands up and

22:30

he says, "If anyone thirsts, let them come to me and drink and

22:38

they'll be satisfied." Like you you you keep going back to

22:43

those wells and you're not satisfied. You're not satisfied. Not satisfied. Not satisfied. It's because you're going to

22:50

the wrong wells. You're going to things that won't satisfy. You're going to mara. Mara is a mirage. We have to find

22:57

those satisfaction in Jesus because the real rest comes by walking with him on a daily basis. That's what he says in

23:03

Matthew 11:28 to30. So, are your sights set on miragees that will not satisfy?

23:13

And then finally, as you face the unknown,

23:21

walk by faith, trusting God to transform your daily troubles.

23:28

As you face the unknown, walk by faith, trusting God to transform your daily

23:33

troubles. As they're in the middle of this desert with no strength to go on, they try to

23:41

drink that water. They can't go any further. I mean, if you think about it, I mean, that's why I went through the

23:48

what happens to you days without water because there is no day four.

23:53

I mean, there we talked about rock and a hard place last week. This is rock and hard place still. They they can't keep

23:59

going on. Two million people have to have some water. And here's how God

24:05

answers uh their prayers. In verse 25, it says, "And he, that's Moses, cries

24:11

out to the Lord." Because remember the the people are grumbling against Moses. Moses goes to the Lord.

24:17

And the Lord showed him a log and some people translate that tree tree. And the

24:23

Lord showed him a log and he threw it into the water and the water became

24:28

sweet. uh in in doing my research supposedly uh

24:34

there are things that people did in that region of the world where water had um a

24:40

not good taste and what they would do is they would try to uh put in some

24:46

aromatic plants to be able to disguise the taste. That is not what is going on

24:54

here. That's what people do with LCROY. But that's not this. Okay. This is a

25:01

miracle. This is an absolute miracle that where God is uh making this water

25:09

somehow drinkable and not just drinkable but sweet to 2 million people so that they

25:19

can no longer thirst. They can have their thirst satisfied and quenched. I

25:24

mean an absolute miracle here. And I think what is interesting uh about this

25:30

is and what I want to draw on is how God shows up in in this this everyday way.

25:37

And what I mean in everyday way is they needed something to drink. I I think often times we cry out to God when the

25:45

enemy is obvious when we have when we have the big the big things, the big

25:51

things that are bearing down on us and the big things that we're super afraid

25:56

of. But those everyday things we don't necessarily re rely on God for. But God

26:03

shows up in this everyday way by giving them something to to drink. And so here

26:10

is my uh gauge for uh this point and it's this. Do I rely on God to turn

26:17

bitterness into a blessing? Do I rely on God to turn bitterness into

26:26

a blessing? When we talk about bitterness, I think

26:34

often times bitterness is uh attributed to unforgiveness

26:41

and anger and that's what causes us to be bitter. And that's absolutely true.

26:47

And if that has a hold of you, certainly pray for you, love you, want to walk

26:53

with you through that. Uh because there's freedom and there's something better for you than than bitterness. But

27:00

another way, a more common way that I see people fall into and and grow in

27:06

kind of a spirit of bitterness is really through boredom.

27:11

I I watch people who begin to go go through the motions and whatever is

27:18

going on in their life loses its luster and they begin to grow bored with that

27:27

life stage, that job, that relationship, that career, that whatever. And they

27:35

grow bored at that. and they begin to look at other people and what they have and how they perceive things are going

27:42

for other people and then they grow bitter about where they are.

27:48

that that is a far more in my experience far more common way that people grow to

27:54

be bitter and angry people. Not necessarily through unforgiveness but

28:00

just through everyday mundane boring routine.

28:07

And some of the things that I think that we need to lean into the Lord on and

28:12

rely on him for is to transform that everyday life into a blessing because

28:20

God is in those things. God is in the everyday. God is in the mundane. It's

28:25

just oftenimes we have our sights set on those mirages and we're not looking at what he's doing right in front of us.

28:32

just just just right there because there is a blessing in faithfulness. There is

28:38

there are blessings that are every day if we would just stop and look and and

28:43

and and and recognize what God is doing right there in our midst. But often times what that

28:51

takes is a change from the inside out. Because when I when I thought about uh

28:57

this this verse and when you think about how it says that the water was bitter

29:03

and then the water became sweet. Um how do we know that?

29:09

I I I'm meaning this rhetorically, but h how do we know that it was bitter and

29:14

that it was sweet? The only way that we know that it was bitter and it was sweet was was by how it tasted, right? It it

29:23

was their taste. They had to taste it in order for them to go, "Oh, this is bitter." And then then it's sweet. So,

29:30

here is it's just Cody's question as I thought and and as I was studying and I

29:36

journal and think about this stuff. This is Cody's question. Did God change the water or did God change their taste

29:43

buds? Again, Cody's Cody's just wondering

29:50

because I I think that the only way that we knew it was sweet was by how they tasted. I don't think Moses brought out

29:57

a kit, you know, and did a pH test and all these kind of things, you know. I

30:02

think he was just like, "Wow, it tastes sweet now." And certainly, there was a miraculous part where God used wood to

30:08

alter nature, which just happened with the staff and the sea and all of those things. Wonderful, miraculous workings

30:15

of God. But I think there's an aspect where God changed the people.

30:21

See, sometimes the way that God turns those bitter circumstances and into

30:27

blessings is by changing us. He changes our hearts. He changes our appetites

30:35

from the inside out. He changes our taste buds and he starts he start

30:40

remember go back to what Jesus says on the sermon on the mount. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for

30:49

righteousness. They will be filled not for the next thing, not who hunger and thirst for

30:55

something that is the the shiny new thing, the new the new exciting thing, the whatever. It's the hunger and thirst

31:02

for righteousness. They'll be filled. Sometimes God changes us from the inside

31:07

out, changing our appetites, our taste for things so that we can begin to see

31:12

that the circumstances that God put us in are not bitter. They're actually a

31:18

blessing and God has us exactly where he wants us. So those are your gauges if

31:25

you're flying by the instruments. But let me give you some quick applications here uh to finish up uh how we walk by

31:33

faith. So, first um expect your faith to be tested so that it can be fortified.

31:40

Expect your faith to be tested so it can be fortified. Now, you say, Cody, you

31:46

haven't mentioned test at all. Well, that's because it's in verse 25. Because God brings them to Mara. God brings them

31:54

to this place and he actually says it's in order to test them. Now, I know a lot

32:01

of you, you go, "Gosh, you know, especially if you're a student, you're like, "It's summer. I don't want to think about tests." Gotcha. But they're

32:08

every day in your faith. Our fa our faith is tested every day. But God is

32:15

not testing you to fail you. He's not testing you to fail you. He's testing

32:21

you to fortify you. He's testing you to see where your faith needs strengthening

32:28

so he can know what course you need to take next. And he says, "Okay, how are

32:33

we doing on this? Let's let's test you on this." It's just like an assessment. It's just like a gauge. How are we doing

32:39

here? That's what God is doing. And I think sometimes we don't expect that God

32:44

would test our faith because one, we don't want it, but two, we want normal,

32:52

comfortable things. And tests aren't always comfortable. But God is testing

32:57

our faith so he can fortify it and give us a stronger faith. And the best place

33:02

that he does it is in the wilderness. It's in the wilderness. That's the best

33:08

place because there are no distractions. There is no disguising uh those things.

33:16

You've got to depend upon God and depend upon him wholly. So expect it. It's

33:21

okay. If your faith is being tested, praise God. He wants you to grow. He

33:27

wants to encourage you. He wants to fortify your faith. Second, pick the right gauges to discern

33:36

God's direction. pick the right gauges to discern God's

33:42

direction. When we get when I get turned around,

33:51

it's easy for me to look for familiar landmarks to get my bearings. And I

33:57

think the world tells you what familiar landmarks are that shows you that you're

34:03

doing okay. And that is, you know, you're making enough money, enough

34:08

people like you, uh you have this much saved, you uh you know, have this

34:15

vacation on the books or what all these things and those become your bearings or

34:20

your health is great. But what if all those things are taken away? Are those the right bearings? Are those the right

34:27

gauges? Because again, if you're setting your your sights on those with your

34:33

gauges, you're going to be going in a completely wrong direction. And God has

34:38

given you the right gauges. And he's given us gauges in his word for us to look at and go, okay, how am I doing? In

34:46

fact, one of the things that I love in uh James chapter 1, uh he describes the

34:53

word of God as a mirror. a mirror that reflects back to us. Hey,

34:59

Cody, here here's how God sees you. Here's how you should see yourself. It

35:05

it it's a it's a mirror. It's a way for us to look. And this becomes uh the the

35:10

this becomes kind of the the dashboard for us that we're called to look at to

35:16

assess how are we walking by faith right now? and what direction is God taking us

35:22

in or what is he taking us uh toward? Pick the right gauges. If you pick the

35:29

wrong gauges, you're going to end up in the wrong direction. You pick the right gauges, you're going

35:34

to end up going the direction that God has called you to by faith. And then finally,

35:40

don't settle for what you know is less than God's best.

35:46

Don't settle for what you know is less than God's best.

35:52

Now, I want to be careful with how this is this is worded and I've tried to be very intentional with this because I

36:00

think the Israelites um could certainly be and we will see them as they go

36:05

throughout the wilderness. They are grumbling going, "God, this is not your best, you know, and they begin to grit

36:12

their teeth." And so I'm I'm not just I'm not saying that that it's all

36:18

health, wealth, and prosperity if you follow God by faith. That is not the message of scripture, and that's

36:23

certainly not the message from this pulpit. But what I am saying is

36:29

don't settle for less than you know is God's best.

36:35

And that comes from your own walk with the Lord. If you're making compromises

36:41

because you feel like, well, this is as good as it's going to get for me, God,

36:48

and uh therefore, I can compromise uh in this area of my job or I can compromise

36:54

in this relationship or whatever it may be, and I can take these shortcuts, then

37:00

you're settling for less than God's best. And he doesn't bless that and you're selling yourself short. And

37:08

here's what I would say is if you're settling and and selling yourself short,

37:13

you don't know what God has around the corner. You don't know what God has around the corner. So don't settle.

37:20

Don't stop short. Keep walking by by by the spirit, keeping in step with him,

37:26

walking by faith. Because what we see here in verse 27, I don't have it up on the screen, but but look at it. In verse

37:33

27 it says, "Then they came to Elilum where there were 12 springs of water and

37:40

70 palms and they encamped there by what?"

37:45

The water right around the corner,

37:51

right around the corner from Mara is Elum. Right around the corner from

37:56

bitterness is something better. is this place that is blessed by God where

38:02

there's a spring for every tribe where there are 70 palms

38:09

which is probably a number of completeness which means there was completely enough dates food for

38:17

everyone 2 million people God had everything they needed right

38:24

around the corner if you're struggling

38:29

if you're thirsty. I just want to encourage you, keep walking in step with

38:35

the spirit. Keep walking by faith because you don't know what God has around the corner. Don't judge

38:42

everything simply by what you see. I understand that sometimes you have to fly by the instruments. So, gauge how

38:50

are you doing and keep in step with him because you don't know what's around the corner, but I promise you, he's with you

38:56

every step of the way. Let me pray for us.

39:07

God, I thank you for the miraculous things that you did in the Israelites lives and Lord God really

39:15

the the wonderful things that you do in our life on a daily basis.

39:21

Lord, give us the eyes to see, not eyes that cause our hearts to wonder

39:30

in a sense where we walk away from you.

39:36

But Lord, help us to to wander in a way that we worship, that we say, "Oh my

39:41

gosh, we're struck in awe of how faithful you are to your own."

39:49

May we be encouraged today, Lord God, in the midst of our unknowns, in the midst of our uncertainties,

39:57

to walk by faith as we walk with you. We ask it in Jesus name. Amen.

Title: Between a Rock and a Hard Place | God's Strength Is Stronger

Video: eCweRDNtCfQ

0:00

Well, good morning, Christ Chapel. Morning, man. Great to come to you live from the South Campus today. So excited.

0:08

Yeah. Uh, a lot of fun, uh, being here. A lot of folks uh, in kids camp

0:13

t-shirts. I want to say a special thank you to all of you that helped with kids camp. I mean, it was a huge endeavor to

0:20

under to undertake. Uh, parents, uh, volunteers, uh, staff. Uh we'll hear

0:25

amazing things I know for many years of what God did at kids camp this past year. But thank you for all of you at

0:31

the West Campus, South Campus, Fort Worth campus uh for contributing to all the things that God did uh at Kids Camp

0:38

this past week. But we are going to study the Bible. So if you will open your Bibles, please to Exodus chapter

0:44

14. Exodus chapter 14. If you're opening one of the blue Bibles in one of our

0:49

venues, it's page 56. 56. and we're continuing our study

0:55

through the book of Exodus. But actually, today is going to be uh the last day in our little miniseries called

1:02

God's Strength is uh Stronger. We'll start a new little miniseries. We're just going to keep going in Exodus 15 uh

1:09

next week, but it'll be themed and look a little bit uh different. But uh this is going to be our last Sunday of God's

1:15

Strength is Stronger. And I think you're going to get a great some great evidence that proves that God's strength is

1:22

stronger this week as we see Israel backed up against the Red Sea. And God

1:28

does some amazing things to prove uh that his strength is stronger. And I'll

1:34

I need to go ahead and give you a spoiler alert in case you haven't seen the the Charlton H Ten Commandments

1:41

movie or you haven't Hey, Disney made a movie back in '98, The Prince of Egypt,

1:47

uh as well. You may have seen that. If you haven't seen either of those, then this is definitely a spoiler alert for

1:54

you. Uh Israel gets out. They they make a God makes a way for them, and we're

1:59

going to uh look at that. But I say that in in a way because I need to set that

2:06

up for the rest of the things that we're going to be doing. But I also want to say that because I want to address some

2:12

of the current events going on uh with Israel right now. I've had a lot of people ask, you know, how should I

2:19

interpret what is going on with modern-day Israel uh today? And let me

2:24

tell you, their situation today is not unlike Exodus chapter 14. I mean there

2:31

they are backed up against the sea, surrounded by their enemies and God makes a way. Uh today they are backed up

2:37

against the sea, surrounded by their enemies and God makes a way. So let me let me just tell you two quick things

2:44

about how to interpret what is going on uh with modern day Israel today. The first thing that people have asked is uh

2:50

is this the end times? Um we are clo no closer to the end times than the people

2:56

that wrote the New Testament. uh the people that wrote the New Testament, those authors of the New Testament epistles, they they knew uh that

3:04

Christ's return was imminent. That is the next thing to happen is the rapture.

3:10

God will rapture the church, those who are his own, and they will be saved from the tribulation, the the troubles, the

3:17

seven-year tribulation. So, I don't have time to go into all of that today and that esqueological timeline. Uh but I

3:23

would like to remind you of what Jesus says in Matthew chapter 24. He said, "Uh, see that no one leads you astray.

3:30

You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you're not alarmed, for

3:36

this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against

3:41

nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes and various places, and all of these are but the beginning of the birth paying."

3:48

So, this is, is this the end times? Uh, I guess it's as close to the end times

3:54

as the New Testament disciples thought it was the end times. The next thing is

3:59

the rapture. And so we wait for Jesus. And I think, hey, just as a leader of this church, please Jesus, come quickly.

4:07

Uh, we we want we want Jesus. That's what we want. And we want everybody to know him uh so that they would be saved

4:14

from that uh tribulation. So that's the that's the first thing. How do we interpret this? Is this the beginning of

4:19

the end times? uh no and yes. Uh hope hopefully that makes sense. Uh the second thing I would like to say is God

4:26

has a plan for Israel. God always has had a plan for Israel and he still has a

4:31

plan for Israel. What is going on right now with current events is not going to thwart his plan. God has preserved his

4:38

people from all the way from the beginning. And God will continue to preserve his people. We see his plan for

4:45

Israel go all the way through eternity. And so God has a plan. He will preserve

4:51

his people uh just like he does here in Exodus chapter 14. And I want to show

4:56

you how he did that in Exodus chapter 14 because God does some pretty miraculous

5:02

things. And so I want to show you what happens when Israel is between a rock

5:07

and a hard place. And I know uh for some of you, especially if you're of the younger generation, you may have never

5:13

heard that phrase before. Uh it means you're in a no-win situation. uh between

5:18

a rock and a hard place means you don't have a winning option. Uh you only have

5:24

a losing option. It seems like the only thing that's going to happen is if is

5:29

you'll lose. If you go this way, you'll lose. If you go that way, uh you lose. And so what this means is that God is

5:36

going to provide a way when they thought they were going to lose. Inevitably, they thought they were going to lose. So

5:42

what I'd like to do is go through Exodus 14. I won't have time to to point out every nuance, but I want to show you

5:49

what God does uh for his people that are between a rock and a hard place. And

5:54

then I want to show you though how we'll back up and I want to show you how God's people responded because they didn't

6:01

respond in faith, but Moses encourages them to respond in faith. And we'll look at that and make that our application

6:08

for today. So let's look at what God did to preserve his people when they were between a rock and a hard place. The

6:15

first thing that he did was this. God led his people to a place where they had

6:20

to depend upon him. God led his people to a place where they

6:25

had to depend upon him. Last week we looked at how God leads his people. And

6:31

we talked about how he led them in ways that were clear but not complete and orderly but not timely. in a way that

6:38

was best but not necessarily easiest. And the way that God leads his people

6:43

right now in Exodus 14 is he leads them to a place where they're going to have

6:49

to depend upon him. If you look at verses 2 and three, which by the way,

6:55

you you do need an open Bible because we're going to look at things that are not uh on the screens. Uh again, it's

7:02

page 56. If you thought I don't need to open my Bible, page 56. uh open it up.

7:07

But verses two and three, God tells Moses, "Tell the people of Israel to turn back and encamp in front

7:15

of Pahhiroof." I worked hard on saying that this whole week

7:22

between Mdall and the sea, in front of Bal Zephan, you shall encamp facing it

7:28

by the sea. For Pharaoh will say of the people of Israel, they are wandering in

7:34

the land and the wilderness has shut them in. Now, what I want to do is stop

7:40

stop right there and I want to explain what some of these terms mean because uh

7:46

these terms places were named for kind of landmarks back in those days. And so,

7:52

Mgdal actually means a tower or a high place. And so when he's telling them to

7:59

he's leading them to this place, he tells Moses, "Hey, let's turn these two million people and let's go toward this

8:05

tower or this this high place." And then he says, and it's by Pi Hahiroth. I

8:12

worked hard on saying that this week. And what that means is it's a mountain

8:18

with caves. Okay? And then uh the other term that's used here is the sea, which means the

8:25

sea. Okay. So it mean it means water. So think about these three places that the

8:32

Lord leads his people toward. He leads them toward on one side is Mdall, a

8:38

tower. On another side is a mountain with with caverns but a mountain

8:44

nonetheless and the sea. Now if you think about that, those are three places

8:50

that are not easy to navigate that you are surrounded by. Essentially, God is

8:56

leading his people into a culde-sac. There is one way in and one way out.

9:04

That's the picture that I need you to have in your minds where you're thinking

9:09

about where are the people right now. And this is where I got the why I put this phrase entitled the sermon between

9:16

a rock and a hard place because they've got no place. They've got no place to go. their back is against the sea and

9:24

they've got a high place over here that they can't necessarily climb and they got a high place over here that they

9:29

can't necessarily climb. And so they are in this culdeac that they've been led

9:34

into and there's only one way out which is not going to look good because Pharaoh says, "Hey, they are wandering

9:42

around in the desert." And the reason why he thinks he they're wandering around in the desert is because they've

9:48

wandered into a culde-sac. they they've gone to this this place where there there is no uh navigable way

9:56

out. They they can't get themselves out. That's why the Lord is going to make

10:01

them depend upon him. Now, I'm going to slow down uh very quickly here for just

10:08

a second because uh it's here where we find probably the most uh controversial

10:14

part of the book of Exodus. And the the part that is controversial is where are

10:20

these places and what exact route did the people go? What exact route did the

10:27

people go where they're going to cross the sea? Now, I have read a lot of smart

10:34

smart people. I'm not one of them, but I read them a lot of smart people and none

10:39

of them agree there. There are a lot of different options. And so here's what I

10:46

want to do is I want to show you the options. And so here's a map and and you

10:52

can see we started in Ramsey's last week. We went to Sukoth and Etham. And now he says to turn back. Now we don't

10:58

know exactly what that means to turn back. But you see three different Mount

11:04

Si. Now those aren't three those aren't three different Mount Si. There's only one, but those are three options. Uh

11:11

there's actually even a northern option that I read that goes up into the Mediterranean. But here here's here's my

11:18

point. I want to show you this option because uh there are smart people that have all of these options that hold to

11:25

all of these for for good reason. And you can hold to whichever one that that

11:30

you would like. But here are the non-negotiables for whatever route you choose. First, it

11:37

has to be by a body of water. And the body of water has to be wide enough for

11:45

two million people to go through and wide enough that the Egyptian army

11:51

doesn't say, "Why don't we just go around it? Why what why don't we just we we see

11:58

them right there on the other side. We'll just sidestep this body of water and go and pursue them." that they that

12:04

the Egyptians, it has to be wide enough that the Egyptians think, hey, the best way to pursue the Israelites is to go

12:12

follow them, go through this path. So, it has to be wide enough and it has to

12:18

be deep enough to drown the Egyptian army. Again, spoiler alert if you

12:23

haven't seen those movies, okay? It has to be deep enough where it drowns

12:28

an army. horses, chariots, soldiers, all of those

12:33

things. So, those of you that have chosen kind of uh well, maybe it was

12:39

just a marsh, you know, cuz it mean it really means sea of reeds and it's not

12:44

red sea and it's it's just kind of a marshy land. I don't think marshy land would drown an Egyptian army. So, I

12:52

don't think that can be in your options. So, again, open to you holding whatever options, but it's got to be wide enough.

12:59

It's got to be deep enough. And the third non-negotiable is God did it. God

13:04

did it just like he said he did it. We might not know exactly where that is because we haven't uncovered those

13:10

towns. Although there is a modernday Pipirroth.

13:15

Uh I I worked hard on saying that if you haven't gotten that by now. Um there is

13:21

a modern day, but we don't know if that is the ancient one or not. And so but just wait guys by by the way uh whenever

13:28

we we don't know exactly these things archaeology is always confirming what

13:34

the Bible says always just wait just wait it will always confirm what God

13:39

says uh in his word. So God led his people to a place where they had to

13:45

depend upon him as they were led into this culde-sac. But second, God created

13:52

a way of escape his people could not have imagined. God created a way of escape his people

13:59

could not have imagined. So again, the people have been led into

14:06

this culde-sac and there are really uh no good options.

14:12

Pharaoh thinks that the people are are stuck and they are trapped. Ironically,

14:19

he is walking into a trap essentially. But God is going to provide a way that I

14:25

I I guarantee you uh was not on any of the Hebrews bingo card. Look at verses

14:31

21 and 22. It says, "Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea." This is by the

14:39

Lord's command. "And the Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all

14:45

night. And he made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the people

14:52

of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, and the waters being a

14:57

wall to them on their right hand and to their left. And so, uh, this is kind of

15:05

going back to my point about the sea of reeds. We have to you got to believe that it's it's wide enough, deep enough.

15:11

And some people have tried to explain this part of scripture away where uh oh

15:16

the the body of water wasn't that that deep because this is just an east wind.

15:22

Now certainly Moses describes it as an east wind but there's so much that is supernatural that is going on here that

15:30

cannot be explained away by natural means. And and just think about it this

15:36

way. If there is an east wind that is going uh obviously toward the east um

15:43

then it's how is it splitting the sea there? There has to be something else

15:49

going on there to make a a walled where it says they're going between water. It

15:56

wasn't just pushing it all to one side. So there's some supernatural power

16:02

obviously it's God that is uh parting these these seas parting this this water

16:09

even though it's described as an east wind. The second thing as it splits the sea it holds it all night long that

16:19

that's a sustained uh hurricane type wind if if it's going to be uh something

16:25

natural which it wasn't natural. This is supernatural. So it holds back the sea.

16:31

Then thirdly, it says that they walked across on dry land. I mean, how do they

16:38

walk across on dry land? Again, supernatural. I mean, have you ever

16:43

tried to walk through like really deep mud? I mean, you're get you're you're

16:48

stuck. I mean, you're leaving behind shoes and socks and every everything else. It's there. It's like suction.

16:55

Like, you can't get your feet out. And so he holds back the seas. They go

17:00

through on dry land. And then finally, the last thing that's supernatural is they have a nightlight. They have a

17:07

nightlight that shines the way, that shows them the way. If you look back at verses 19 and 20, this is why you need

17:14

your Bible open. It says this. Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel, remember by pillar of

17:22

fire at night, pillar of cloud during the day. We looked at that last week about God's leadership. Moved and went

17:28

behind them and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them coming between the host of Egypt

17:36

and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness and it lit up

17:42

the night without one coming near the other all night. So the this pillar of

17:48

cloud and fire, it it becomes both at the same time. And God moves from being

17:56

their guide to being their guardian. And he moves behind the people and he

18:02

illuminates their way forward with by the fire being the nightlight that shows

18:07

them the way to go through the sea. But then it's a cloud on the backside being

18:13

complete darkness to the Egyptians so they don't see what's going on

18:18

so that they don't see that they can go through and continue to pursue the

18:23

Israelites so that they have enough time all night again wide enough to get 2

18:31

million people through this body of water overnight.

18:36

Supernatural. supernatural things going on in a way that the people could not have imagined.

18:44

There is no I Cody speculation here. There is no Hebrew that is sitting there

18:51

going should we pray that God open the sea back here like nobody thought that

18:58

God provided a a miraculous way through these seas that the people could not

19:05

have imagined. And then finally, God separated his people from their enemy in

19:11

a way that only he could. God separated his people from their

19:17

enemy in a way that only he could. And I want to just take some some

19:25

a moment to put context to this because remember that the Israelites had been

19:31

enslaved for centuries in Egypt and could not get away from their

19:38

oppressors, could not get away from from those that were enslaving them. They

19:44

were they were powerless in Egypt. They were powerless to get out of Egypt.

19:51

There's no way they could have gotten away from their enemy. Two million people cannot run away from their enemy

20:00

fast enough that they could all escape together

20:06

a and completely. God had to do something in a miraculous way that

20:11

separated his people from their enemy in a way that only he could. And this is

20:18

how he does it. As he uh leads the people into this culde-sac, then he

20:24

miraculously parts the sea. They go through on dry land, which is key

20:29

because of what we're about to look at here. So they go through on dry land and

20:34

then Pharaoh who had already pursued them thinking that they were confused and wandering around in the desert

20:41

pursues them into that sea and they get into that sea. If you look at verse 23

20:48

in your Bible it says the Egyptians pursued and went in after them. This is

20:54

why I said it has to be wide enough that they don't think let's just go around. They go in after them into the midst of

21:01

the sea and all Pharaoh's horses and his chariots and his horsemen. Pharaoh goes

21:07

all in all the eggs in this basket. We are going to go into this sea to pursue

21:15

the Israelites and then it says that God if in between here it says that God

21:20

throws them into a panic. It's interesting that word that is used there, panic, is oftentimes used in

21:28

scripture uh when someone is overwhelmed by an enemy that they that they panic.

21:34

They go, "We are in over our heads." That that's essentially what what this

21:40

this panic means. They begin to fear for their life because they realize they are

21:45

outmatched. In fact, Pharaoh says, "Uhoh, it looks like the Lord is

21:51

fighting for them. He knows he is outmatched and so they

21:57

they are now stuck. They are stuck because they are stuck in the sea.

22:04

Verses 27 and 28. So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and the sea

22:11

returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians

22:17

fled into it, the Lord threw the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. And the waters returned and covered the

22:23

chariots and the horsemen of all of the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea. Not one of them remained.

22:36

Now, I know that this might seem harsh.

22:42

I I I think you would go, "Oh my gosh, this is it. It's sobering." And it should be sobering.

22:49

But I wanted to remind you there there is talionic justice in a sense because I

22:56

want I want to remind you of how Pharaoh treated the Hebrew children. Go back to

23:03

Exodus chapter 2 and what was Pharaoh doing to the Hebrew boys? Do you

23:08

remember this? Throwing them into the Nile.

23:13

Total disregard for life.

23:19

And there's this sense where it's like, man, you don't treat my kids that way.

23:25

You don't treat my kids that way. And he goes in, goes into the sea and is

23:33

completely submerged, covered up, drowned, and dies.

23:39

All of those Egyptians that followed uh Pharaoh are are drowned. so that they

23:45

are completely separated uh from the Israelites. Again, this is something

23:51

that only God could do. He separates them from their enemy in a way that only God can. You they couldn't run fast

23:58

enough. They couldn't fight back strong enough. They didn't have horses. They

24:03

didn't have chariots. They didn't have all of those things. But as the Egyptians go through the sea, it says

24:09

that that their wheels are stuck in the mud. That they begin to spin their

24:14

wheels in the in the middle of the sea as they panic and realize the Lord is fighting for them before the sea uh in

24:21

encloses them. Now, there there there's probably a part of you that says, uh,

24:30

how foolish is Pharaoh? I mean, do we remember how le let's

24:38

remember what Pharaoh and the nation of Egypt just lived through? Do you remember it was called the 10 plagues

24:46

that are very familiar? And he just lost his firstborn.

24:51

And you go, how foolish is he that he continues to pursue? Did he not learn

24:58

from the plagues? Well, two things about that. First, it reveals and shows you

25:04

how hard Pharaoh's heart was. That he did not learn

25:11

that God is God and he cares about the life of his people. He didn't learn. But

25:18

but second thing I want to say that about that is is this that Pharaoh

25:24

wasn't the only person who forgot the lessons of the plagues because part of the lesson of the

25:30

plagues was to show his people that God's strength is stronger that God's

25:36

strength is stronger than the nation of Egypt the strongest nation on earth at that time. He was trying to prove that

25:43

to his people as much as he was trying to send a message to the Egyptians. And the people forgot as well. The people

25:51

forgot. I want to back up. I I so I went to the end and showed you how God delivered his people. But let's back up

25:58

and I want to show you how the the Israelites, the Hebrew people, how they

26:03

responded when they were between a rock and a hard place. Look at verses 10

26:09

through 12. It says, "When Pharaoh drew near," now

26:14

this again, they're they're in that culde-sac because we've backed up. "When

26:20

Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and

26:26

they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the Lord, and they said to Moses, "Is it

26:32

because there are no graves in Egypt that you've taken us away to die in the wilderness?

26:39

What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt?

26:45

Is not this what we said to you in Egypt? Leave us alone that we may serve

26:52

the Egyptians. For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the

26:59

wilderness. Does that sound like God's people?

27:08

No, it sounds like people

27:14

who are between a rock and a hard place. And when we are between a rock and a

27:20

hard place, every one of us panics and we panic. We we get afraid. And when

27:28

we when we're afraid and panic, we do crazy things.

27:33

So all all of us do our our natural response is is to is to fear. And I want

27:41

to show you I want to go back through there and show you what the faithless

27:47

response is by the people because I'll tell you at least for me it's very

27:52

relatable. This is on the left column of your sermon notes. Uh the first thing is

27:58

we fear the worst. We fear the worst when we're between a

28:03

rock and a hard place. Where where we feel like we have a a no-win situation,

28:10

whether that's in our our career, in our friend group, in our marriage, in our

28:16

family, whatever it may be, you fear the worst.

28:22

And that's what they that's what they did here. They said, uh, I mean, we're all going to die is essentially what

28:27

they say. This is the end of life. Are there not were there not enough graves in Egypt?

28:35

That's essentially saying we're all gonna die right here. This is this is how it all ends. And we all fear the

28:42

worst. We we all do and go, "Okay, this is the end of this. This is the end of

28:49

my marriage. This is the end of my reputation. This is the end of my career. This is the end of my

28:56

friendship. This is the end." We all go and fear the worst because we don't

29:02

believe that God's strength is stronger. We fear the worst. Second thing we do is we blame people who care the most.

29:11

We blame people who care the most. I mean, God bless Moses. I mean, poor guy.

29:22

I mean, think, yeah, he's he's had his ups and downs, and we've seen some of those ups and downs as we've gone

29:28

throughout uh the the book of Exodus so far, but I mean, I I want to give the

29:33

dude some credit. I mean, it probably took some courage to go in front of Pharaoh, and it probably took some

29:39

courage to lead the people out of out of Israel. I mean, out of Egypt and it

29:44

probably took some courage to to lead them as far as he's led them to this

29:50

point. Set again, remember leading them out of slavery.

29:55

We do remember what he led them out of. Not not just Egypt, but out of slavery.

30:00

And here they are. They say, I mean, they start blaming him. I mean, hey,

30:05

what have you done to us? You know, poor Moses.

30:11

I mean, this reminds me of that that old phrase uh you know, no good deed goes unpunished.

30:17

You've heard that before. But often times panicked people, we we

30:24

blame and we go, "It's your fault." And sometimes it's to the people that

30:30

care most. I mean, it it's to it's against a parent. It's against a friend

30:36

that is confronting us about our sin. and we go, "Oh, you're just being judgmental.

30:42

You're you're you're just jealous or you're just" and we start blaming the

30:47

people that are going, "Man, Cody, I'm just trying to help you. I just I just want want what's what's best for you."

30:54

And when we begin to blame those who care the most, we begin to isolate ourselves and we begin to separate

31:01

ourselves from the ones that are there to support us that God has put in our

31:06

lives to help us along the way toward his best.

31:12

But often times when we're in a panic mode between a rock and a hard place, we blame the people who care the most. And

31:18

then finally, we look for our own way out. We look for our own way out.

31:26

If you looked back at that passage in 10:11, they say, "Moses, why didn't you just

31:33

leave us alone that we could serve the Egyptians? Wouldn't it be better for us if we were just enslaved in Egypt?" I

31:41

mean, that's how far their faithlessness has gone in their

31:46

minds where they go, "Can we just go back to slavery? Let let's just let's just go let's just

31:53

go back there. Let's just and we begin to negotiate the the best thing that we

31:59

can think is our way out. The best thing that we can imagine is our our our best

32:06

way toward uh you know preserving whatever we think life might be. And

32:12

that's what they do do here is they just say can we just surrender to our captives? Can we just surrender

32:18

ourselves back to slavery? At least we might live. And God's going, "Is that life?"

32:26

I mean, do you really want to go your own way? You're You don't have the power

32:33

to take yourself your own way to the place that God wants to take you.

32:39

God has a place for you. It has to be his way and it has to be through his

32:44

power alone because only he will get the glory. That's it. That's that's the only

32:50

way that that happens. But when we get into between a rock and a hard place, we go, I got to figure this out. I got to

32:57

figure out how to move things around and how to finagle things, how to negotiate things, how to wiggle my way out. And

33:04

God's going, man, I'm telling you, you're not going to end up in the best place.

33:09

He's led you to a place where you have to depend upon him. And he can do things that you won't imagine.

33:16

and he will deliver you in ways that only he can because God's strength is

33:21

stronger. So therefore, here's how Moses tells the people to respond. Look at

33:28

verse 13. Right after they blame him for

33:33

basically leading them on this death march into a culde-sac, Moses says,

33:39

"Fear not. Stand firm

33:44

and see the salvation of the Lord which he will work for you today. For the

33:49

Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. I what a sobering

33:56

statement. What a I mean some of you just sit there on that

34:03

passage this week. Write it on a note card and look at that throughout your day every day this week.

34:09

I mean, God's strength is stronger. And because God's strength is stronger, Moses can give these commands. And the

34:17

commands are are simple, but I want to break them down and make them our applications for today. The first one is

34:22

this. Fear not. Fear not. Depend on God's strength.

34:29

God has led you to this place, and God can lead you through that. God can lead

34:35

you to a better place. and fear not. You see, one of the hard things about fear,

34:42

a side effect of fear is forgetfulness. And we forget all that God has done.

34:49

Again, remember, they're coming right off the heels of the 10 plagues. Right off the heels of God proving that he is

34:56

stronger than than nature, stronger than the strongest nation in the world. He's

35:02

for their good. All of these things. and they quickly forget which will be a

35:08

theme that we'll see throughout uh the book of Exodus. But fear not is one of

35:13

the most repeated commands in scripture. And I think it's I think it's one of the

35:19

most repeated because it's the thing that keeps us frozen the most.

35:25

When we fear, we freeze and we go, I I just I I I can't move

35:32

forward with God. I c I can't take a step of faith. And that's exactly where the enemy wants you. Exactly where the

35:40

enemy wants you. And so Moses says, "Fear not. Don't depend on your own strength to make a way. Depend upon

35:47

God's strength." Second, stand firm. Stand firm. Wait for God's intervention.

35:56

This is a super hard one. Super hard one. It reminds me, sorry, I just have

36:02

to have a quick Braveheart moment. Do you remember the Braveheart moment where they're all aligned and they have those big poles and Mel Gibson is going hold

36:12

and the I mean these horses and you can just hear I mean it mimics

36:18

the heartbeat of those that are just holding those sticks going are you sure?

36:23

Hold. [Music] Wait for God's intervention. Wait for

36:30

God's intervention. Stand firm. Stand firm not only where God has you, but

36:35

stand firm in the identity that he's given you. Because I want to remind you

36:40

of this, Christian brother and sister. You are his.

36:46

And he's not led you to a place that he's going to leave you alone.

36:52

You are his. We just went on a on a trip with our boys and there were a lot of

36:58

folks around and we we told them, "Hey, if for some reason we get separated, you

37:05

just stand still. We will find you. Don't keep running

37:10

around. That's going to be way harder to find you. Wherever you are, you just

37:16

stand still because I'm not leaving you there. We will find you, guys. You are

37:23

God's child. You're his. He is not going to leave you alone. You stand still. He will find

37:31

you. He will get you. He will protect you. Stand firm. Not only where God has

37:37

you, but in the identity that God has given you. And then finally, see the

37:42

salvation of the Lord. Look for God's leading. See the salvation of the Lord.

37:48

Look for God's leading. God will provide a way. And let me tell you something,

37:55

God's way is not our way. You think you can you can dream up a

38:00

scenario to scheme your way out of a between a rock and a hard place. And

38:05

that's not God's way. God doesn't work by schemes. In fact, to connect to the

38:11

point above, Ephesians chapter 6, God says, uh, Paul tells the church in Ephesus, and obviously it's God speaking

38:17

through his word. He says, uh, stand firm. Put on the whole armor of God so

38:22

that you may stand against the devil's, do you know what that word is? Schemes. Schemes. The devil schemes.

38:31

God's strength makes a way. And we look for his way. We don't preoccupy

38:37

ourselves with trying to make our own way. Look for his leading. In fact, we talked about one of those verses last

38:43

week in 1 Corinthians chapter 10 where he says, "Hey, you won't be tempted beyond what you're able to endure, but

38:50

God will provide a way of escape just like he did here."

38:57

Just like he did here, God will provide a way of escape.

39:04

Christian, God's strength is stronger.

39:10

And so often we try to scheme our way where we don't depend upon it.

39:16

And we try to run out and try to think our way through it or finagle our way uh

39:21

through it and we go, "Obviously, you didn't lead me here, Lord." Maybe he did. Maybe he did. so that he

39:30

can prove to you and show you time and time again that God's strength is

39:36

stronger. Let me pray for us.

39:44

God, we thank you that you do beyond what we could ask or

39:51

imagine.

39:56

that you provided a way out of our sin when we couldn't even get away from ourselves

40:03

in our sin. You sent your son. Something we could have never imagined

40:08

that the sinless savior would die the death we all deserve so that we could be separated from our

40:14

sin forever by faith in Christ. Separated from our sin as far as the east is from the west.

40:21

Thank you for the picture of salvation this is for us, Lord God. Thank you for working on our behalf. Thank you for

40:27

calling us your own. And thank you for never leaving us alone. We pray these things in Jesus name. Amen.

Title: Following God's Leading | God's Strength Is Stronger

Video: 3JWoLag6xg4

0:00

Well, good morning, Christ Chapel. Great to see you. And good afternoon to those of you at our five o'clock service

0:06

and all of you joining us uh online, no matter what time of day. So glad that you are going to worship with us.

0:12

Please, would you open your Bibles wherever you are, whatever time it is, open your Bibles to Exodus 13. Exodus

0:20

chapter 13. We're only going to do look at verses 17- 22 today, but you do need

0:25

a copy of scriptures open. We're going to read it as a whole. And I think it's great if if you can uh read the word and

0:32

hear the word at the same time. Uh help hope that embeds it into your heart. And let me also say happy father's day to

0:39

all of our our dads. Uh biological dads, stepdads, spiritual dads. Thank you so

0:44

much for the role that you play in the spiritual family we call Christ Chapel. Uh man, you are making such a difference

0:51

and we are so thankful. We want to be here to support you, love you, inspire you, encourage you, uh to keep going.

0:57

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for the role that you play. And if Father's Day is a tough day for you, you are in the right place. Uh this is exactly where we

1:04

need to be uh in the body of Christ to support one another. So, uh we'll we'll have some Father's Day things uh going

1:11

on uh the rest of the service, but uh excited for all of you and hope you've enjoyed the things uh outside of your

1:16

worship venue as well. Um, I was thinking this uh week about uh the most

1:21

popular app that you use on your phone or mo most frequently used app on your

1:26

phone. Now, I'm sure if you were to answer that question, I'm sure that that says something about your personality

1:32

and I won't ask you to tell me what that is at this time, but one of the most frequently apps frequently used apps

1:39

that I use on my phone these days is my map app. I am constantly using that and

1:46

it's not because necessarily I'm going someplace that I don't know where I'm going but it's because of all the

1:52

construction that we have around us at this time that I want to see if there's a a quicker route or something like

1:58

that. Now speaking of personality I know that there's a personality correlation between the map app that you use and

2:05

your personality. I mean you got Apple Maps people, you got Google apps people and you got ways apps people. like

2:12

they're they're those are very different types of people and you know who you are

2:18

but they're all very different and so what I mean I could be leaving work or I

2:24

could be uh just to go home and I could say you know hey Siri you know take take

2:30

me home get give me directions home and immediately I'll get you know my my map

2:36

that shows up and it'll give me a you know a direction to go it will tell me

2:41

an estimated time of arrival. It will tell me a a cost if there are tolls

2:48

along the way if I need to take the the toll road. And it'll even give me an

2:54

alternate route. Like it's it's so great that you can just say, "Hey Siri, give

3:00

me directions here." And I get all of this information and all of these choices. And it made me think, wouldn't

3:07

it be great if in our spiritual lives we could say, "Hey, God, take me to

3:13

happiness." And you would, he would just go, "Great, here's the route. Um, here's

3:19

the estimated time of arrival. Uh, here's how much it will cost. And oh, if

3:24

you don't like that way, here's an alternate route. You could also go this way if you like." And I started thinking

3:31

about, you know, how convenient that would be. And that might sound very enticing uh to you. And it doesn't just

3:38

have to be happiness. I mean, it could be your way to uh a spouse, your way to

3:44

uh the top of your field, your way to whatever it may be. And I started

3:49

thinking, if we had that available to us where we could ask God the directions to

3:55

whatever we want or wherever we want to go, would we actually take it?

4:01

I mean, okay, let me talk to the dads for a second. How many of you when you ask for directions to whatever and it

4:06

gives you directions on your phone, do you take an alternate route? You go, I know better than this app. I

4:14

It's telling me to turn here, but it's wrong. I know I should go a different way. I did that yesterday.

4:22

I We We take alternate routes. We know better than than the app. So, I don't

4:28

know if God gave us those directions if we go, "Oh, no. I'm going to trust that 100%." Sometimes we think we know

4:34

better. And honestly, if God gave us directions to whatever that is, fill in the blank. How many of us would say,

4:41

"It's not worth it." He would go, "Well, it's going to take this amount of time, and it's actually

4:47

pretty costly uh to get wherever you want to go or whatever that thing is."

4:53

And you go, "Yeah, no thanks, God. I think I'm going to sit I think I'm going to stay right here. I think I'm going to

4:59

sit this one out." out and he goes like, "Ah, that's why I don't show you. That's why I don't show you the route that I

5:05

have for you. It's why I don't show you the alternatives. It's why I don't always show you the exact cost ahead."

5:12

You see, God doesn't lead us the way that Siri leads us. He leads us step by

5:18

step because he knows how to lead us best. And so, that's what we're going to

5:23

be talking about uh today as we continue our series, God's Strength is Stronger. We uh saw how God delivered his people,

5:31

the Hebrews, out of Egypt and they had their first day of freedom. We talked about that last week with Michael

5:37

Barnham, our South Campus pastor. And that was really about worship. And now we're going to talk about how does God

5:44

lead his people? How how is he going to Okay, they've stepped out of Egypt.

5:49

They've stepped into a new territory and they're like, "Where are we going? Give

5:54

me direction, Lord." And now we're going to see how he leads his people. And we

6:00

see it in Exodus chapter 13 17 to 22. So what I'd like to do is read it as a

6:08

whole. So just uh follow along with me, please. It says, "When Pharaoh let the people

6:14

go, God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, although

6:20

that way was near. For God said, "Lest the people change their minds when they see war and return

6:27

to Egypt." But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. And the people of Israel went

6:35

up out of the land of Egypt, equipped for battle. Verse 19. Moses took the

6:41

bones of Joseph with him. For Joseph had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and

6:47

you shall carry up my bones with you from here." Verse 20. And they moved on

6:55

from Sukoth and encamped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness. And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of

7:01

cloud to lead them along the way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them

7:07

light that they might travel by day and by night. In verse 22, the pillar of

7:12

cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the

7:18

people. And we're going to stop right there. May God bless the reading of his word. May our hearts be open to hear from him. and we get a great snapshot of

7:25

how God is going to lead his people into an unknown place, unknown steps ahead.

7:33

So, what I'd like to do is go back through here. I'll show you how God led

7:38

his people. I'm going to give you uh three ways. I'm going to give you three principles that I think will re

7:43

definitely resonate with you and then at the end I'll give you uh three applications. So the first way that God

7:49

led his people, God led his people in a way that was best

7:54

but not easiest. He led his people in a way that was best

8:00

but not easiest. Remember one of the the things that that

8:06

God is doing as he delivers his people out of Israel. He certainly wants them to be free from being enslaved. That's

8:14

that's one reason or one purpose. Per purpose number two is he wants them to

8:20

worship him. Remember that was the that was the thing that Moses continued to say to to Pharaoh. Let my people go so

8:26

that they might go into the wilderness and worship me. So that that's a part of the reasons why God wanted to deliver

8:34

them. But the third reason was he wanted to take them to the promised land. That's where they're going to take

8:40

Joseph's bones. They want they want to take his bones out because God had made a promise back then and it was still

8:47

going to be fulfilled over 400 years uh later. And so he's trying to deliver his

8:53

his people to a promised land. Now if you were to say, let's say Moses, you

8:59

know, they step out of Egypt and Moses pulls out his iPhone and says, "Hey

9:04

Siri, give me directions to the promised land." um the the direction that would

9:10

have come up had Siri given that to him from point A to point B is not the

9:16

direction that they're going to take. That's not going to be the direction. And we have a a map for you here so that

9:22

you can kind of kind of see um the promised land was in Canaan. So you can

9:28

see Canaan on the the Mediterranean Sea. You see that there? They were in Gan.

9:34

the the Hebrews were in Gan where you can see the the Nile uh Nile's fingers spreading out there. And so the shortest

9:42

route, the easiest route to go would have been just to follow the Mediterranean Sea, just to follow that

9:49

coastline and go into Canaan into the promised land. But instead, it seems

9:55

like they are going the opposite direction from where they're supposed to be going. They go from Ramsy's where

10:02

they they had visited Pharaoh Suck off and then Etham. So you can see how they're going south instead of going

10:09

east into uh Canaan. The easiest route is not the route that God led them on.

10:16

And one of the reasons why he didn't lead them on that route was because along the Mediterranean Sea, there were

10:24

Egyptian military outposts that were there that had those people gone that

10:31

way, they would have encountered armed resistance,

10:36

those people, those those Egyptians would have been standing there saying, um, you need to go back to Egypt. you're

10:44

not supposed to be uh leaving, you are supposed to go back. They and he knew

10:51

that the Hebrews at that time, they if they had encountered resistance, they

10:57

would have been detained by the Egyptian outpost, they would have been certainly deterred and honestly discouraged and

11:04

started thinking, you know what, maybe we should just go back. Maybe we should just just go back. And

11:10

so the Lord leads them away from resistance initially. Initially, which brings us to

11:19

our our first principle that I want you to know about uh how God leads us. It he

11:25

leads us in a way that's best but not easiest. But you need to know that God knows the best way for us because he

11:31

knows us. God knows the best way for us because he

11:38

knows us. When when we talk about the perspective that God has uh oftenimes the way that

11:46

we talk about it is and rightfully so is very grand.

11:52

Meaning we we talk about how God's perspective is bigger. God's perspective

11:57

is higher. And that is certainly true if you look at like Isaiah 55 states that

12:03

very clearly. God's perspective is eternal. But oftentimes we forget that

12:09

God's perspective is very intimate. And what I mean by that is remember what the

12:15

psalmist says, God knows the number of hairs on your head. God knows you inside

12:21

and out. God knows what you can handle.

12:27

God knows what you struggle with. God knows what you delight in. God knows

12:34

what you tend towards. God knows you intimately.

12:40

He certainly knows the world in a grand way. But he also knows you inside and

12:47

out because he created you. And because he created you and knows you so well, he

12:54

knows how to lead you best. And sometimes that's leading you in a

13:00

direction that you don't even think you should be going. He He knows that if you go a particular

13:08

way that you might be tempted in a way that deters you from continuing to

13:14

follow him. That's what was going on with the Hebrews. He said, "If if they I

13:19

I know that I want to get them to the promised land, but the way I'm going to have to take them is not going to seem

13:26

like I'm taking them the easiest way. But what they don't know is if I take them the easiest way, they're never

13:32

going to get there. if if they take those steps, they're going to go right back into slavery. And

13:40

so God leads them in a way that is best for them. And he does the same for us.

13:45

He leads us away from temptation. In fact, Paul tells this to the the church

13:52

in Corenth in 1 Corinthians chap 10:13. He says, "No temptation has overtaken

13:59

you that is not common to man." Listen to this. God is faithful and he will not

14:05

let you be tempted beyond your ability. But with the temptation, he will also

14:14

provide the way of escape that you may be able to not only I think endure it

14:21

but also escape it. Now, if you take 1 Corinthians chapter

14:27

10 here and you apply that to the Egyptians, God's character is absolutely

14:33

consistent because he knew that they would be tempted to turn back and go to Egypt. And so, he says, "I'm going to

14:39

provide a way of escape." Now, the way of escape is not the easiest way. It's

14:45

not along the coastline, but it's to go south first, which to the Hebrews seems

14:51

like a detour. And you might feel that way in your own life. You might feel like, "God, why am I on this this

14:58

detour? Why are you sending me in a different direction from the direction that I think that I should be going?"

15:05

And here's here's the truth is you don't know what God is saving you from.

15:12

You have no idea what he's saving you from. And see, that's the thing is when

15:17

when to go back to the analogy that I used earlier, when we see that that route on on the app that you use,

15:25

whatever app that you use, and you go, I know better. It's telling me to go

15:30

straight, but I know I need to turn right. You You don't know what you're going into.

15:37

And the same is true with God. We don't know what he's saving us from as he

15:43

leads us. You see, he might be saving us from a temptation that we don't have the

15:49

ability to endure or escape. And he knows that we're going to fall into that temptation. And so, he's trying to lead

15:56

us away from that. You you see a a hard truth. And I I I say this in love and I

16:03

say it to myself. Sometimes the Lord doesn't give us what we want because we

16:08

can't handle it. And we say, "God, why are you keeping that from me? you're so

16:14

mean. And he goes, "No, I'm so good.

16:20

I'm not mean. You don't you don't know what that's going to do to you. That's

16:26

why I'm not giving it to you." I I'll use a very silly analogy.

16:32

Um our our older son, Dax, is uh very affected by caffeine. Very affected by

16:39

caffeine. And he uh but he also likes to sleep. And and as all of us when you lay

16:46

down to to go when you lie down and you want to go to sleep um and you can't fall asleep, doesn't that just make you

16:53

stay awake longer? Like because your mind starts racing you just stay awake, stay awake, stay awake. Well, just just

16:59

a few days ago, D was it was probably like five o'clock and dad's like he's like, "Dad, can I have a Dr. Pepper?"

17:05

And I'm like, "Buddy, I don't think that's good for you." But dad, I want a Dr. Dr. Pepper. I'm like, "Yeah, but

17:11

buddy, that's going to keep you up. You know, that caffeine is going to keep you up and then you're going to be anxious

17:16

and you're not going to be able to sleep and then you're g it's not going to turn out well for you." Now, am I mean as a

17:24

dad because I'm not giving him a Dr. Pepper? Maybe. I mean, I you know, maybe you go,

17:31

"Cody, it's summer. Give him a Dr. Pepper." Okay, maybe.

17:37

But here's the thing. I know my son. I know my son.

17:45

He doesn't really He might want a Dr. Pepper, but he also wants to go to sleep

17:51

and I know ultimately what he wants. And it wouldn't be good to give him what he immediately wants because I know what's

17:58

down the line. Same is true with God. God is not mean because he's not giving

18:03

you exactly what you want when you want it. He knows you and he knows what's best and he's going to lead you in the

18:10

way that's best. It's it might not always be easiest. It might not always be the most pleasing, but I guarantee

18:16

you it's always best. So that's the first principle. He leads us in the way that's best, not easiest. Second way

18:24

that God leads us, God led his people in a way that was orderly but not timely.

18:31

It was orderly but not timely. And this one's going to

18:36

take just a tiny bit of explanation. Um, if you look back at verse 18, look at it

18:42

with me. It says, "But God led the people around the way of the wilderness toward the Red

18:49

Sea. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for

18:56

battle." Now, if you're if you're paying attention, you're going, "Hold on, Cody.

19:02

You just told me that God led them away from battle, away from military

19:08

resistance, and now you're telling me that they were equipped for battle. This doesn't make any sense. Well, hold on.

19:15

We've got to understand what that what that phrase means. Because when when we read and and I honestly think too, if I

19:22

heard that they were equipped for battle, you think that they're carrying weapons. Am I correct? I mean, that's

19:28

that's my guess. That's that's what I would think is that they're they're walking out with, you know, a a shield

19:34

and a sword, you know, onward Christian soldier. That's how they're going out.

19:40

But that's not exactly the picture that is going on here. What it what it actually means is they're going out in

19:48

ranks, in order like a milit like a more like a military march. Does that make

19:55

sense? like uh in in lines and order. Now, not exact lines, but it just means

20:01

that they went out in an orderly fashion. Um because they weren't ready for battle and but they're going out in

20:08

an orderly fashion. Now, here's why that's really important. Because they're

20:14

not going out and just scattering like this uh crazy uh amoeba like I mean,

20:21

which honestly you would think that that's exactly how they're getting out of Egypt. like somebody pulls the fire

20:27

alarm and now it's they're free to go and it's just like,

20:32

you know, and they just uh scram as as far away and in every direction uh that

20:38

they can. But that's not how they go out. They go out in an orderly fashion.

20:43

And one of the the ways that they went out in an orderly fashion was they went out together. Together. They didn't go

20:52

out alone. And one family goes, "I'm going that way, and I'm going this way, and I'm going that way." They went, "We

20:58

are God's people, and he has set us free, and he has a place for all of us.

21:05

And so therefore, we will go out together." And that's how that's how they went out by basically by tribe, by

21:14

family, all all of those things. That was the orderly manner in which they left. But can you imagine that's not

21:21

timely? If if you were if if you were going to go out as an individual, you could go a

21:27

lot faster, but remember at this time there are probably 2 million Israelites.

21:32

And it's like, okay, where's everybody in your tribe? Where's everybody in your

21:37

family? Well, we got one in the bathroom. Can you guys hold up, please? You know, and it's like, oh gosh, man.

21:43

Come on. Let's go. You know, we we we got to go. But it's getting everybody

21:48

together so that they can all go out of the land of Egypt into and follow God um

21:56

together. Not always the the easiest thing, but it was orderly but not uh

22:02

timely. And I really think that that shows uh the character of God. And one

22:08

of the things that we see God characterize as far as his character in scripture is that God is patient. He's

22:15

not in a hurry. I mean, if he if if I'm one of these Hebrews, I'm like, "Let's

22:21

get out of dodge as fast as we can." And God's like, "I'm not in a hurry. We'll

22:27

go out in an orderly fashion. We'll we'll we'll go together. That that's okay." Which uh gives us a a a great

22:35

principle here in thinking about how God led his people during this time.

22:40

Principle for this is the long way is not always the wrong way.

22:47

The long way is not always the wrong way. God is patient. God has the bigger

22:55

view. God knows where he's taking you. God has the strength to hold back the

23:00

the Egyptians to give his people a a head start to get out. We now we know

23:06

that the Egyptians are going to pursue which we'll hit later on. But God knows all these things. And even though he's

23:13

taking them south from our perspective and that's the long way to get to the

23:19

promised land, it doesn't mean it's the wrong way. And often times whenever I I

23:25

think I I feel sense God leading me and I look at my own life. I look at your

23:30

lives, I look at scripture, uh the long way is oftenimes how God leads people. A

23:36

sanctification is the long way. God is all I mean think about uh scripture. How

23:45

many how many years that God is patient to to reveal himself but also to declare

23:53

who he is to lead his people. How patient is he? God takes the long way

23:59

because he wants what's best for us. Uh the long way is not the wrong way, but

24:05

oftenimes we get impatient with the long way and we start looking for shortcuts

24:11

and we start looking for shortcuts that ultimately lead to shortfalls

24:16

and we for instance um you feel a disconnect in in a relationship and so

24:23

you you want to to spark a connection and you immediately look for the shortcut of physicality in a

24:30

relationship and man spark Sharks fly quickly, but then they fizzle quickly as well because there's no foundation to to

24:37

the relationship. Or or you you really want to, you know, skyrocket your career

24:44

and you you make some some shortcuts there, but what you sacrifice is your integrity along the way. or you're in a

24:53

lot of of pain and and and there's a lot of really deep emotion going on uh

25:00

inside of you and you're really hurting and so you want to numb that pain or

25:05

mask that pain and all you are doing is digging yourself into a hole that's deeper and deeper. Shortcuts oftenimes

25:12

lead to shortfalls. Uh God's way is usually the long way. It's usually the

25:19

long way and the long way is not the wrong way. And we've got to remember

25:24

that because God is with us. God is faithful. His character will stay by us

25:29

all the way uh step by step. And he doesn't need our smarts to find the

25:36

shortcuts. We we think, "No, God, I I got this. I

25:42

see this shortcut. This is the this is the way to go." And we oftenimes find

25:48

ourselves sidetracked when when we do that. Shortcuts are not the answer.

25:54

They're not. And the scenic route is usually the sanctified route where God is taking us on a way where we're

26:01

learning to depend upon him. And so if you find yourself in the middle of the

26:07

long way, man, I hope you're encouraged. That doesn't mean you're you're on the

26:13

wrong path. God is still there. That's how God is leading his people and ultimately it's in a way that is best

26:20

for them. So he leads them in a way that is certainly best but not easiest. In a

26:27

way that is orderly but not timely. And then finally the last one God led his people in a way that was clear but it

26:35

was not complete. God led his people in a way that was clear but it was not complete. This is

26:44

really uh the the place where we get a glimpse into how God is going to lead his people through the wilderness. A a

26:52

place where there really aren't any landmarks where you where you can't say, you know, turn left at the bies. Like

26:59

there's nothing out there to to lead. And so God is going to lead his people here in verses 21 and 22.

27:07

Follow along. It says, "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way and by

27:14

night in a pillar of fire to give them light that they might travel by day and

27:19

by night." The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the Lord. So, I know

27:29

this is really uh hard to imagine and so we've just got a small kind of etching.

27:35

I I don't know uh how to picture this, but pillar, you you know what a a pillar

27:42

is? Something straight up and down almost like a column. That's essentially what they they had in the desert in the

27:50

middle of nowhere was a pillar, a column of of cloud of a cloud during the day

27:57

and a pillar of fire uh by night. Now, I don't know exactly what that looked

28:03

like. Somebody told me to imagine a lightsaber. I don't know Star Trek, so I don't have any idea what that means. So,

28:12

and all you Star Trek guys out there and Star Wars people, I know that those are different, okay? So, just chill out. All

28:18

right? Just doing that to get under your skin a little bit. But, cuz I love you. That's

28:25

how That's how we joke. I kid. I kid. But we This is how he led his people. He

28:32

had a cloud during the day and fire by night. And the reason why he did that was so that they could travel by day and

28:41

by night so that they could always be on the move. But they weren't always on the

28:47

move. What I mean by that is what we're going to find out later that is that if

28:52

the cloud didn't move, guess what? The people didn't move. I I if the fire

28:59

didn't move, the people didn't move. Which shows us that what this really

29:04

represented was the presence of God. It represented God's presence. And that's

29:12

why it says at the end of verse 22 that it did not depart from before the

29:18

people. That it was always a step ahead, but it never uh was uh it never

29:24

disappeared. It was always leading the people. It was always there to represent

29:30

that his presence was leading and guiding them along the way. It was a It

29:36

was not only a guide, but it was a reassurance, which man, isn't that a great thing?

29:42

Wouldn't you always want that? The reassurance that you are exactly where

29:47

God wants you to be. I mean, what a great gift. Every one of us uh would

29:53

want that. And praise God that he gives us the Holy Spirit that indwells us to

29:59

reassure us that we are exactly where God wants us to be as we keep in step

30:06

with the spirit of God. So he leads them in a way that is very clear that was

30:12

always present, this cloud and this fire, but it wasn't always complete.

30:18

The the way wasn't complete. And what I mean by that is he didn't show them what

30:23

where he was going to take them. Day three, day 30,

30:28

day 40, year 30, year 33. I mean, there

30:33

were there were so many steps along the way that he didn't show them. He just

30:39

showed them, here's where we are today, and when you wake up tomorrow, you're going to follow this this cloud, and

30:47

when you go to to sleep at night, here's where the pillar of fire is going to be. I'm going to show you step by step. It's

30:53

going to be very clear where I want you to be, but I'm not going to show you everything completely because honestly,

30:59

we couldn't handle it. We we couldn't handle the complete picture. So he leads

31:05

them in a way that is clear but not complete. Which gives us our final principle for today and it's this.

31:12

Contentment with God's presence is more satisfying than arriving at a destination.

31:20

Contentment with God's presence is more satisfying than arriving at a destination.

31:28

You know, there's a there's a an aspect here where

31:34

it was okay for the people to sit still because God

31:39

was right with them. They hadn't arrived at the promised land. It was something that they had heard of, and that sounds

31:45

like a wonderful place, but they were content to go at God's speed, content to

31:51

go as long as God's presence was with them. And in fact, we actually hear Moses say this later on in Exodus. I

31:57

think it's in Exodus chapter 33 where he says, "God, if you're not going to go before us, then I don't want to go.

32:05

If you're not going to be with us, I don't want to go without you." And so, he's going to lead by his presence. And

32:11

see, sometimes I think we get so wrapped up in the destination that we want to go

32:17

to that we we are so driven to arrive at

32:22

a destination that we forget God's presence and we don't care if he goes with us. I just want to get there.

32:30

And sometimes we take shortcuts to get there, too. But how many people do you know that have arrived at whatever they

32:37

were driven toward and they're still not satisfied? I know people like that.

32:44

Pe people that said, "Okay, uh marriage is the goal and as soon man, I'm just as

32:50

soon as I get married." And they get married and they're discontent. That spouse didn't solve all their problems.

32:58

Or somebody that says, "Man, I I I want to I you know, the end is to own my own

33:03

my own company." And they own their own company. They they they've got tons of money, all

33:09

everything they could ever ask for, and they're completely discontent, completely unsatisfied.

33:16

Whatever that arrival is is not the end,

33:21

it's never satisfying enough. If if that is what you're driven toward is, if that

33:27

is what you're looking for uh you to to satisfy you ultimately, satisfaction is

33:33

found in God and in God alone. And so in enjoying enjoying the daytoday

33:41

presence of God, walking in step with him, I find people that have far less,

33:47

people that aren't married, people that don't have any money, people that don't have whatever it is that this world

33:53

tells you that you need to be satisfied, but they walk with God and they are completely content and joyful and happy.

34:03

And you go, man, how what do they have? They have nothing that isn't available

34:09

to you. That's a walk with God. That's the Holy Spirit.

34:14

That's the word of God that is leading and guiding. That's available to you. He

34:20

knows you intimately. He wants to walk with you. He wants to lead you toward what is best. All of those things. Don't

34:27

confuse satisfaction with a destination. Don't don't confuse that

34:35

because honestly guys the ultimate destination is with God. That's where we'll all end

34:42

end up. That's where ultimate satisfaction is found. And he offers that to us now through a relationship

34:49

with Jesus Christ. And then indwells us with the Holy Spirit to always remind us of us of his presence so that we can

34:56

walk in step with him every step to to walk with him by day and by night so we

35:03

can follow God's lead. So let me give you some quick applications as we talk about following God's leading in our

35:09

everyday lives. The first one is this. Allow God's word to illuminate your

35:15

path. Allow God's word to illuminate your path.

35:20

You know, when we think about and you even see that visual of the pillar of cloud and fire, you go, "Oh my gosh,

35:26

wouldn't it be great if I just woke up one day and there was this cloud and I it was just like I got I would love for

35:33

it to be that clear. I would love for it to be that obvious." He is very clear

35:41

in what he's calling you to do and it's right here in his word. That's Psalm 119 105. God's word is a lamp to our feet

35:48

and a light to our path. It's always showing us where he's leading us and how

35:54

he's calling us to walk with him. It's clear. It's not complete.

36:00

It's not complete. It's it's not showing you what what day 30 looks like or year 30 looks like. similar to the Hebrews

36:09

walking with God through the wilderness here, but it's very clear. Go to his

36:15

word for your clear next steps, allowing that to illuminate your path. A second,

36:22

trust God's intentions when you don't understand his instructions.

36:28

Trust God's intentions when you don't understand his instructions.

36:36

I can imagine that the Hebrews whenever they were going out

36:42

and the pillar of cloud and fire starts to lead them south where it looks like they're going away from the promised

36:49

land, they go, "God, I think you're wrong." And I'm sure none of you have ever said

36:55

that to God. Neither have I.

37:01

And you say, "God, these instructions, they just don't sound like they make sense."

37:08

Like, like godliness, holiness, purity,

37:15

giving, serving, none of these things always make sense. Are you leading me

37:22

the wrong way? And and you go, I understand if you don't understand God's

37:28

instructions, but his intentions are for your good. His intentions are 100% for your good.

37:36

He loves you. He created you. He knows the hairs on your head. And he's moved

37:41

heaven and earth to have a relationship with you through his son.

37:47

Why is he going to withhold something that is so small that we get so myopically focused on in this world?

37:56

The only reason why he would withhold it from you is if it's not best for you. He

38:01

has great intentions for you. I understand if you don't understand his

38:08

instructions, but his intentions are great. and his intentions are pure and his intentions

38:16

are for your good. When you don't understand his instructions, please, please, please trust his intentions. And

38:24

then finally, take the next obedient step. Take the next obedient step.

38:33

And I understand that that sometimes you're going, I don't know what that next obedient step is. Okay? If you

38:40

don't know what the next obedient step is for you, where should you look first?

38:46

And I don't mean this rhetorically. Where should you look first? I don't mean this rhetorically. Where

38:52

should you look first? God's word. Thank you. I got to know that we learned something today.

39:00

You go here first. Open your Bible. That's where we look first. And if it's

39:06

still still not clear, maybe maybe maybe God is waiting and maybe you need to

39:14

wait and that's that's okay. We don't want to go if he's not going to go if if he's not going before us. I I totally

39:21

get that and totally understand. But there are still things that you do in the waiting. You can still pray in the

39:27

waiting. You can still read his word. You can still learn about him. You can still love others. You can still serve. You can still do all of these things as

39:33

you wait for whatever that next step is that God is leading you to, but then take the next obedient step, the next

39:41

obedient step. He might not give you step two through 10 that are coming. And

39:47

you don't you don't say, "God, I'm waiting till you give me one to 10."

39:52

No, you say, "God, just give me your next step." and you take your next step

39:58

and then you take your next step and your next step and your next step. Take the next obedient step because God's

40:05

presence will not depart from you. He will always be with you and lead you in what is best. Let me pray for us.

40:14

God, thank you that your presence does not depart from us.

40:22

Thank you that you not only walk with us, but you go before us

40:27

as our leader and guide. You come beside us as a friend

40:35

and you got our back as our protector, savior.

40:43

Lord, would we trust your intentions? Would we surrender to them? Would you

40:49

lead us and guide us into what those next steps are? Make it clear, Lord God,

40:55

and walk with us. We ask it in Jesus name. Amen

Title: The First Day of Freedom | God's Strength Is Stronger

Video: UIkn-t1khDE

0:00

Well, Christ Chapel, good morning. It is so good to be with you here today. If you're joining us from uh West Campus,

0:07

South Campus, or online, uh welcome. We're delighted that we get to study God's word together. And if you're here

0:12

tonight at the 5, thank you uh for worshiping with us at our 5:00 service. What a great time to be together. If you

0:20

would go ahead and open your Bibles to Exodus 12 and verse 33, that is page 54.

0:27

If you are looking at one of the blue Bibles that you have in front of you, we are going to be looking at a great

0:35

passage this morning, a passage of God's deliverance of his people. We have been

0:41

working toward this passage now for weeks, and I'm so excited uh to be here and to bring that message this morning.

0:48

In my pastor's desk, I talked a little bit about the first days that we often

0:55

come about in our life. Whether it's the first day of summer, which your kids may be delighted to be experiencing now,

1:02

summertime, or the first day of school, which will come this fall, the first day of having your driver's license, or the

1:10

first day of retirement. uh these first days that come along are often so monumental for us

1:17

because they mean a new chapter is here. I remember I've got a lot of first days

1:24

in in my life, but one that stands out in particular was my first day of being

1:30

a dad. That happened March 14th, 2005 when my son Noble was born. And I knew

1:38

going into that day that my world was about to change. But but I had no idea how

1:45

profound that change was going to be until I had an aha moment at the

1:51

hospital that I realized I have no idea what is about to happen in my life. We

1:56

were uh we were at the hospital. It was time to leave. And so my wife Holly

2:02

said, "Hey, can you go ahead and and get Noble, get him ready to go? It's cold outside. we need to get him best dressed

2:08

up and bundled up so we can head home. And so I'm like, got it. I'm ready. So I grab all the stuff and I start with a

2:15

pair of socks. I put my socks on my son. I don't want his feet to get cold. And

2:20

so I remember very clearly I got the first sock ready. And I walked up to my

2:26

son who is a day old. And I remember I held out the socks to him and I

2:33

paused. And then I realized, why am I pausing? And I thought, I am waiting for

2:39

my son who's 24 hours old to lift up his foot and to put his foot into the sock

2:45

that I was holding. And I realized, I have no idea what it means to be a

2:53

dad. My son doesn't know what a sock is. My son doesn't know what a foot is. And

2:59

here I am thinking he is going to stick his foot inside of this sock. And I

3:05

realized my world has changed and I am entering into a new chapter that I am

3:12

completely unprepared for. I have so much to learn just as a

3:19

dad. By God's grace, my wife knows how to work socks and so she stepped in.

3:26

Everything worked out just fine. But this was a new chapter of learning for

3:33

me because I had stepped into a new day, a first day that had changed my

3:41

life. Today, the passage that we're looking at, we get to see the very first

3:48

day of the Israelites on their first day of

3:54

freedom. We get to see the result of what God has

3:59

done in freeing his people. And we get to see them learn what it means to be

4:07

free and learn what it means to follow their God. And we get to see the lessons

4:13

that they learned that we might follow in them because God has freed us as well

4:22

today. So, I'm excited to take a look at this passage. Why is today a first day

4:29

for the Hebrews? Because God set his people free

4:36

from slavery. God set his people free from

4:41

slavery. He has stepped in and done this incredible act in freeing his people.

4:49

And so we get to see how this plays out for God's people. And so let's look

4:55

together Exodus 12 verse 33 through 36 to start our

5:04

passage. The scriptures say, "The Egyptians were urgent with the people to

5:09

send them out of the land in haste, for they said, we shall all be

5:15

dead." So the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading

5:22

bowls bound up in their cloaks on their shoulders. The people of Israel had also

5:27

done Moses had told them, for they had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold

5:33

jewelry and for clothing, and the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. And so they let them

5:40

have what they asked. Thus they plundered the

5:47

Egyptians. Here's this amazing story that has been unfolding now for these past weeks that God has been moving

5:54

toward this day that his people would be freed from

6:00

slavery. Not only the have the Egyptians learned about the power of God, but now

6:05

the Israelites are learning what it means in their freedom to follow this God. And so we get to see these

6:12

lessons that the text shows us. The first one is this. That in the fact that God set his people from slavery, his

6:20

deliverance shows us his power. The deliverance that we see here

6:27

shows us the incredible power of God. This is exactly this. What happened here

6:32

is exactly what God said would happen. When you look back to Exodus 3:20, Moses

6:40

is encouraged by God when God says,"I will stretch out my hand and I will strike the Egyptians with all of the

6:48

wonders that I will perform among them. And after that, he will let you go."

6:54

This day of deliverance, this day of freedom shows us God's strength because

7:00

this is where God has been directing the story all along.

7:06

that everyone would see the power of God. Remember back to chapter 5 when

7:13

Moses first first walks in to Pharaoh and he says, "The Lord says you should

7:19

let my people go." And Pharaoh says, "Who is this Lord? I don't know

7:27

him." How that has changed when we get to Exodus 12 and:e 33. The power of God

7:36

has shown to the Egyptians and to the Israelites that his will will be

7:43

accomplished because God's strength is stronger. And now that is clearly on

7:49

display. The Egyptians here it says in verse uh in verse 33, they are urgent to

7:55

send the people out with haste. Right? This is uh uh the text here is it's a

8:03

double uh emphasis that they are urgent to send them out and they are urgent to send them out quickly. Why? Because

8:10

they're afraid that they themselves might die if they do not obediently the

8:16

Egyptians. They don't obediently follow God's command to send the people out.

8:22

They move from saying you cannot go to now you cannot go fast

8:30

enough. God's strength to free his people is clearly on display and that

8:37

now God's people are being thrust out of

8:42

Egypt. But not only do we see his power in that God has freed them, we see God's

8:48

power to provide for their journey. The the Hebrews are in a place where

8:54

they were completely unprepared to leave. They are commanded to leave their

9:00

homes and they have not had time to get ready for this. My my family is a camping family.

9:07

Uh we love to go camping. We have the tent. We have all the stuff that it

9:12

takes uh to go out and enjoy camping. But in the weeks that lead up for us to

9:19

go for a couple of days to spend the night at a at a state park, the amount

9:24

of work it takes to keep my family alive, even just to drive down the road,

9:29

is substantial. We got to buy groceries. We got to make sure the packing list is updated and ready to go.

9:37

So when the Hebrews here at a place where they are thrust out and they have nothing, they are in a place of of need.

9:46

But God knew that. And so we went ahead and he softened the heart of the Egyptians. And

9:53

so that when the Hebrews go up and say, "Hey, would you mind? Would would you

9:59

give us something for our trip?" The Egyptians had favor because God had

10:06

given them favor into the sight of theirs. So they gave them gold. They gave them silver. They gave them

10:11

clothing. Things that they needed to help them on their journey. This is what

10:17

God has done. His strength is so great that he has provided not only freedom,

10:23

but he has provided provision for their trip. And if you think about it, the Hebrews

10:30

find themsel really in the same place that Abraham found himself in in Genesis

10:36

12, where God says, "I want you to go to a land that I will show you." This is

10:43

exactly where Abraham's descendants are today. They are leaving their place

10:49

following the God who will lead them. God's people had been enslaved for 430

10:57

years and now they are free because God's strength had delivered

11:03

them. But not only do in this deliverance do we see God's strength showing us his deliverance

11:10

showing us his power, but we see his deliverance showing us his care. If you remember back to Exodus chapter

11:17

2, way back in the beginning of our study, we had just met the suffering

11:23

Israelites and we had met Moses. And at the end of chapter 2, we read that God heard the groaning of his people. He

11:31

remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. He saw his

11:37

people and he knew God heard them and his heart moved

11:43

for them. And God knew that this day would come when

11:49

judgment, the death angel, would fall on the Egyptians, but mercy would fall on

11:55

God's people and it would lead to their freedom. And we see God's care all along

12:01

coming to this particular act of his power and his care. Look back with me at

12:09

verse 40. It says the time that the people of

12:15

Israel had lived in Egypt was 430 years and at the end of 430 years on that very

12:22

day all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. It was a night

12:28

of watching by the Lord to bring them out of the land of Egypt. So this same

12:33

night is a night of watching to be kept to the Lord by all of the people of

12:39

Israel throughout their generations. This is a a unique phrase here to this

12:46

passage that it was a night of watching. Uh watching here is is conveys

12:52

the idea not of how the how we might watch television where we just sit back and passively watch but it is a watching

13:01

that is active like a guard on his duty who is actively looking and

13:08

participating and finding what he needs to be seeing. This is the kind of watching that it says that the Lord did

13:14

on this night. And it specifically says here that it was a night of watching by

13:19

the Lord. And don't miss that. A night of watching by the Lord. If you remember

13:24

last week when Dr. Bailey was talking about how the Lord had sent the death

13:30

angel, the destroyer to go and accomplish freedom.

13:35

The Lord in that battle, he sent his messenger, his angel to go and accomplish that. But what was the Lord

13:43

doing? The The Lord was watching his people. He was watching as they huddled

13:50

in their shelters with the blood on the door that preserved their life. He was

13:57

watching in care. He himself was overseeing that his people would be

14:05

safe. This is the care and the concern and the kindness of God that on this

14:11

night of deliverance, his care, his attention, his focus was on his people

14:18

that they would be freed and delivered from their slavery.

14:25

As we look at this passage, I hope that you're encouraged to see that God's

14:31

strength is stronger than the the strength of the Egyptians. That his his care was

14:39

so fervent and rich for his people that he watched them in a place of care. I

14:45

hope that that's encouraging. But I don't want you to miss what is happening here.

14:51

God's strength and his care are on display because he is delivering his people from

14:58

slavery. And that's important to us today because the Bible talks about two

15:04

kinds of slavery. Certainly the kind of slavery here where God's people were enslaved to

15:12

others and they lived at the whim and the will of other people.

15:18

But the Bible talks about another kind of slavery and it is a slavery to

15:25

sin. And while we today here do not live under this particular yoke of slavery

15:32

that we see in the book of Exodus, the Bible is clear that all of

15:38

us apart from God's grace, we live under the slavery of sin. Listen to what

15:44

Romans chapter 6 and verse 16 says. Paul writes, "Do you not know that if you present yourselves to

15:51

anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either

15:58

of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to

16:05

righteousness." Jesus says in John 8:34, "Truly, truly, I tell you, everyone who

16:12

participates in sin is a slave to sin."

16:17

So the slavery that we see here in this particular chapter is not the kind of

16:23

slavery that we are at risk of being under. But all of

16:28

us so easily fall prey to the slavery of sin which holds us in our life. And this

16:36

slavery is one that is often we are blind to because we think we find in

16:43

sin comfort and rest and escape. But as we're reminded in the

16:48

scriptures that that particular slavery is a slavery to sin that leads to death.

16:56

I got to tell you as as a a pastor, this particular

17:04

reality that slavery that we are all under as we let sin creep into our lives

17:10

and that that slavery leads to death is one of the saddest parts of my job. The

17:16

saddest parts of what I get to do is to see and know and love people who allow sin and the mastery of

17:26

that sin into their lives and to see how this particular passage proves true that

17:31

that sin leads to death time and time again. and to watch how that plays out

17:40

in the lives of people that we know and love, people that are a part of our church, loved ones that are a part of

17:47

our fellowship. And to see how anger is allowed to creep into someone's

17:55

life and that anger leads to destruction of

18:00

relationships and sadness and aloneeness. to see how lust can creep

18:08

into our hearts. And we think that that lust offers a measure of of pleasure and

18:15

escape and happiness when in the end all that that does is it leads to

18:23

death. To see how bitterness wraps us in a cloak that

18:28

keeps us separated from others. how slothfulness, how substance abuse,

18:34

so many things that we think in sin we find comfort and escape and happiness,

18:42

but in the end it leads to death. The great news from this passage, the great

18:49

news that we have today is that God sets us

18:55

free from slavery, the slavery of sin. that when we stand under the blood of

19:04

the lamb that was here in chapter 12 on the doorpost, but when we stand under

19:09

the blood of Jesus, his strength is stronger than the

19:15

sin that holds us and we can find freedom in him.

19:20

Friends, if you are here today and you find sin to be holding

19:27

you, there is freedom in Christ because he frees us from slavery. That is the

19:35

strength and the care and the love of our God that he steps into our story to

19:41

free us. Well, not only did God set his people free from slavery, but there is more

19:49

going on in this particular story because we see that God set his

19:55

people free for worship. He frees his people from the

20:02

yoke of this terrible burden of slavery, but he does that for the purpose of

20:07

freeing them for worship. And this has been God's purpose all along. When you

20:12

look back in the story of Exodus, you see in chapter 4, chapter 5, chapter 7,

20:18

chapter 8, this particular phrase that comes up over and over

20:24

again where Moses goes into Pharaoh and he says, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, let my people go that they may

20:33

go and offer a feast to me, that they may go and serve me."

20:39

What Moses is saying here is that God's design all along is that we would be free to go and to worship

20:48

him. He frees us not just from slavery but to enter into a relationship with a

20:55

God who loves us and who was kind to us and frees

21:01

us and he this is his plan. And so you see God's plan unfolding from uh 12:43

21:09

into the end of our passage today in 13:16. You see God issuing

21:16

uh the ways in which his people would worship him. And I find this so very

21:23

fascinating. On their day of freedom, the very first thing that God gives them

21:30

is not directions on where you're heading. The first thing that God tells them is not here's the packing list of

21:37

what you need. The first thing God tells him isn't hey here's how you're going to get along with each other and here's how you're going to behave

21:44

well. The first thing that God addresses to his new people is here is how you

21:53

will worship me. And don't miss that. What an incredible thing. His very first

21:59

words are how you will worship. And he says three things. He gives them three particular

22:05

things. You will worship me by keeping the Passover. You will worship me by having

22:12

a feast of unleaven bread. And you will worship me in the

22:17

consecration of the firstborn. Now, two of these Dr. Bailey

22:23

wonderfully talked about last week. Passover and the feast of unleven bread.

22:29

these and the consecration of the firstborn really are just they are reminders of what God has

22:36

done that they as God's people will continue to remember this is who my God

22:43

is and this is how I will follow him and so these acts of worship really become

22:51

memorials to God's people to remember what God has done that their hearts

22:56

would be reminded ed that their hearts would be warmed to the love of God and

23:03

reminded of the strength of God that they would continue to look at God in

23:09

awe because worship changes us. Worship does a good work in us to

23:18

remind us of how good our God is. And so God wants to at the very beginning of

23:25

their freedom to say, "I want you to remember my goodness and my love in

23:34

worship." So I want to take a look at these particular memorials, these remembrances that God has commanded the

23:42

Hebrews, but not so that we can look further at how they play out. Dr. Dr.

23:49

Billy did a remarkable job last week. But to look at their function in our lives, to look at how they change

23:56

us, that the same principles that guided God's people in worship then would guide

24:02

our hearts today in worship right now. So my first look at this particular

24:09

passage. My first look is this is that worship reminds us to trust the God who

24:15

saves us in worship. It reminds us to trust

24:21

the God who saves us. This is from verse 43 through 49. here as Moses goes on to

24:27

expand what he uh had already delivered about the

24:32

Passover, he institutes this as an annual reminder, a reminder of the Passover. And if you remember from last

24:38

week, the Passover is the act in which they uh God's people got the spotless

24:46

lamb and they stayed inside of their house and they kept that spotless lamb until the time came for it to be

24:53

slaughtered. And the blood of that lamb would be put on their

24:59

doorpost as a sign to the death angel that came by that these were God's

25:06

people and that death should pass over everyone in this particular house. that

25:12

Passover celebration that they had just celebrated. God says, "I want this to be

25:18

an annual reminder to you that you would never forget what has happened here."

25:26

It reminded them that outside of that shelter of hope that they were at they

25:31

were slaves who were at risk of death. But inside because of the blood of this

25:38

lamb, death passed over

25:43

them. Why do we need to remember this today? I I think it it comes down to

25:50

this. We need this because we need to remember that we did not save

25:56

ourselves. Right? This is something that we so easily forget. But we need to remember every day that we did not save

26:06

ourselves. It was only by the death of the lamb here in the spotless lamb. for

26:12

us today, the lamb that was Jesus that we find our forgiveness of

26:20

sins. And this should in in in one sense, this should make us very humble

26:27

people. Make us humble that when we remember back to this particular act that death passed over us, we were

26:33

nothing but slaves to sin. But because of Jesus and the death that

26:39

he gave, my life does not remain as a slave to sin. But apart from him, I have

26:47

nothing. And so there's a humility that comes that I am nothing but someone who

26:53

was rescued. That is all that I was. But in that it makes us humble. It

26:59

should also give us hope because God loved me and saved me.

27:07

So we as New Testament Christians, we don't celebrate the Passover. But every time we take communion, it is a reminder

27:14

to this particular time that God passed over sin and that we have forgiveness,

27:20

forgiveness and deliverance because of God. When we take Passover, we can remember this. When we come together and

27:27

we sing the songs of our faith, if you listen, you'll hear the story of

27:33

God's act of forgiveness and his kindness that he passed over us. And we're reminded with hope to trust in the

27:41

God who saves us. This is the heart of the Passover celebration that God saves

27:48

his people. The second command that he gives us is to celebrate the feast of the Passover.

27:56

I'm sorry, the feast of unleven bread. Forgive me. The feast of unleven bread. And we're probably a little less

28:01

familiar with this than we are with the feast of the Passover. Let's

28:07

read verse chapter 13 6 and 7.

28:14

says, "Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the

28:20

Lord. Unleaven bread shall be eaten for seven days, and no leaven bread shall be

28:26

seen with you, and no leaven bread shall be seen in you in all of your

28:31

territory." What's happening here? Well, remember back to our passage.

28:39

God's deliverance had come and set them free with such

28:44

speed, such surprise that God's people were unprepared to leave. And so they had to

28:52

leave Egypt without being able to leaven their bread. What does that mean? Uh

28:59

unleavened bread is of course more like a cracker than it is bread. And so they

29:05

had to leave in such speed and haste because they did not have time to let their bread be leavened and let it

29:13

rise. And so God has instituted this particular feast that they would

29:18

continually remember that God acted and they had to respond quickly. So much so

29:23

that they had to leave behind the the time leave behind the leavened bread

29:30

that they would have loved to have eaten. But they they did not have time to do

29:35

this. God institutes this particular feast as a

29:41

reminder that this is God's power. Now, I think it's significant anytime you

29:46

start messing with somebody's carbs, you get their attention, right? I love my

29:52

rolls from Texas Roadhouse that are soft and warm and covered in

29:58

butter. So good, right? God is saying, "Hey, I want you to for

30:04

one week, I want you to not eat any bread like that. I want you to eat crackers as a

30:12

remembrance that there are things that when God steps into your

30:17

life and he calls you to leave that you must leave behind." Right? This is why

30:25

here in verses 6 and 7, Moses is very clear to say you will have no levan in

30:31

your house at all. It is all to be gone. It's a reminder that you we need to

30:38

leave behind the things of our former life. When God steps in and he changes

30:45

us and he sets us free, we leave behind the things of our former life.

30:54

Worship reminds us to follow this God who leads us. And so we follow him not

31:02

knowing where he might be leading us. And we follow him by leaving behind

31:08

the things of our past that are no longer to be a part of

31:14

our future. This is

31:20

important because so often what we do is we want to step into our new life

31:26

holding on to the things of our old life. But God has called us to leave

31:32

behind the things of Egypt, to leave behind the things of our old life, the

31:38

things that we loved and held on to that no longer honor

31:43

God. Because following him means we are putting our trust in who he is and where

31:50

he leads. And when we do

31:55

this, we are giving a testimony of God's love and his goodness in following him.

32:03

The passage goes on in verse 8 where he says, 'You shall tell your son on that day. It is because of what

32:10

the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt, and it shall be a sign to you on

32:17

your hands as a memorial between your eyes, that the law of the Lord may be in your mouth. And get this, for with a

32:24

strong hand the Lord has brought you out of Egypt.

32:30

When we leave behind the things of our old life and we follow God not knowing what he has in store for us, we are

32:38

giving a testimony to say the Lord's strong hand has delivered me and I trust

32:44

him and I'm no longer going to hold on to these things that used to give me life and happiness, but I'm going to

32:52

follow him because he provides for me. And then we get to tell those around us

32:58

who might see the way we are living our lives and see that we no longer hold on

33:04

to the things of our former life and say what what are you doing? Said the Lord has delivered me. So I will now follow

33:15

him. Worship reminds us to follow the God who leads us. And then the last thing that God has

33:22

commanded is the consecration of the firstborn. We're less familiar with this

33:28

as New Testament Christians, but there is a lesson in it to be reminded of, and it's this, that, that worship reminds us

33:34

to value the God who is worthy of our

33:40

best. Look at verse 11 through 14.

33:45

Moses writes, "When the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites as he swore to you and your fathers and he and

33:54

shall give it to you, you shall set apart for the Lord all that first opens the womb. All the firstborn of your

33:59

animals that are the males shall be the Lord. Every firstborn of a donkey, you

34:04

shall redeem with a lamb. For if you will not redeem it, you shall break its neck. Every firstborn of

34:13

man among your sons you shall redeem. What is happening

34:18

here? Remember the Lord is about to send his people into the promised land. It is a

34:26

land flowing with milk and honey. And the Lord knows that when they enter

34:32

into the season of bre of blessing, there is going to be an opportunity where they forget the deliverance that

34:38

God has given them because they don't need to depend on God anymore. Look at all of the abundance and the blessing

34:45

that they are experiencing. And so God says,"I want you to

34:52

consecrate to me the firstborn of all that you have, the firstborn of

34:58

animals and even consecrate to me the firstborn of people." Now consecrate here means to to

35:07

sacrifice. So he God is saying,"I want you to sacrifice to me as an act of trust that

35:14

in this firstborn that I will continue to provide for more, but to offer as a

35:22

sacrifice the firstborn of all or to offer as a means of substitute of

35:29

redemption for the firstborn, certainly firstborn of of God's people."

35:36

The lesson in this is that God is is showing us to value him as worthy of our

35:45

best. How do we do that today? Worship reminds us that God

35:51

should get the very best of our time. How are you spending your time?

35:57

Are you prioritizing the things of God in your life? You're here today. What a

36:03

wonderful thing that you are here to worship, to sing his praises, to commune with God and to hear from his

36:10

word. But do you prioritize him with your time as you go out through your week in the way that you work your

36:17

job? The way that you spend your time in sporting events with your

36:24

kids, the way that you prior prioritize prioritize your time in your hobbies.

36:31

God should get the first and the best of all of that because he is worthy. What about your

36:37

finances? What about your dreams for the future? Do we say all of these things? God is worthy of the best of all of

36:45

that. And so I will bring it to him first. When we gather to worship, it

36:53

reminds our hearts, of the value of God, of his strength, of his love, and of his

37:02

kindness, that we would be devoted to

37:07

him. God has set us free from slavery. He had to set us free for

37:15

worship. And so as worshippers of God, as people

37:22

that he has set free, as worshippers, what is our

37:28

response? Three things I'd like to suggest. As worshippers of God, let us

37:34

prepare properly as we come into this place to worship. Let us prepare our hearts

37:43

properly to come and to worship God. I hope that every time you come to

37:48

church, you are excited to come and to see each other. Certainly, this is a

37:54

place where we fellowship together. We It is good to be together and to say hello and to pray for each other and to

38:00

catch up. It is good to come to this place and to drink

38:06

coffee and to be here and and enjoy all that God has provided in a place to

38:15

gather. But friends, let us not forget that we come to commune with God. And so

38:22

when you come, would you prepare your heart to walk in and to say, "Lord,

38:29

today I get to meet with you." And I'm glad to see my friends. I'm glad to sing

38:36

songs. I'm glad uh to hear all about what your word would say. But I am first

38:42

and foremost here to commune with you because you have set me free that I

38:49

might worship you. So prepare properly. But secondly, would

38:55

you practice constantly? Would you practice the

39:01

worship of God constantly? Certainly constantly by by coming and gathering in

39:07

the house of the Lord for his worship. But would you practice worship

39:12

daily by reading your Bible in prayer, in

39:20

service, in finding the ways God would act in your life and you would respond

39:26

to him with hearts of gratitude, telling him thank you for all that he has done.

39:32

This is the kind of worship that we have been freed into to worship him daily. So would you

39:39

practice constantly? And then lastly, would you do all of

39:46

this in pursuit of delight? Pursue delighting in God. When we gather

39:55

today, it is an opportunity for our hearts to worship an amazing

40:03

God who gives his ear to us, who gives a

40:08

night of watching that we would be freed from our sins. We have the opportunity

40:13

to commune with him. And what joy we have in

40:21

that God freed the Hebrews for worship. God frees

40:29

us for worship of him. Would we respond in all of the goodness that he has given

40:36

us that we would worship him? Let's pray.

40:45

Father, thank you for the freedom that we have. You set us free from

40:53

slavery. You set us free that we might worship the good God who knows us and

41:01

who loves us. Would we be people who worship you

41:06

with our full hearts because you are good. We love you in Jesus name. Amen.

Title: The Passover: The Event that Changes Everything | God's Strength Is Stronger

Video: bqb\_G4zzbOQ

0:00

Good morning. Welcome to Christ Chapel. Welcome to those of you who are joining

0:06

online. And uh shout out to those of you who are uh at our 5:00 service here on

0:12

the campus. Rosie Greer was a uh big hulk of

0:18

an athlete. Played for the New York Giants. He was a part of the fearsome four of the Los Angeles Rams.

0:26

But a picture that I saw uh has stuck in my mind and for the life of me I

0:31

couldn't find it. But it's a uh it was a magazine cover where Rosie Greer is

0:37

sitting in a grandmother's rocking chair uh with his glasses sort of pulled down

0:42

on his nose and Rosie Greer loved to do needle

0:48

point. It was a weird picture to me as a youngster as I saw that. But years

0:54

later, it came back to me when uh I was taught that uh Psalm 19:1 says, "The

1:00

heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament or the atmosphere shows his

1:09

handiwork." That can be translated from the Hebrew as finger work. When God created the world, it

1:17

took finger work. But the Bible tells us that when he accomplished our salvation,

1:23

it took the wave of a mighty arm. That gives me

1:28

perspective. In fact, in Exodus 6 and verse 6, Moses is commanded by God to say to

1:35

the people of Israel, "I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the

1:41

burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I

1:47

will redeem you." Watch this. With an outstretched arm and with great acts of

1:54

judgment. We saw those great acts of judgments last week in the the nine

1:59

plagues that were discussed last week that uh God used to uh bring judgment

2:06

upon the Egyptians with an attempt to deliver his people. When God created the world, it

2:12

was stitchery. When God accomplished his salvation for Israel as well as for us,

2:18

as we'll see, he rolled up his sleeve and he waved his mighty

2:23

arm. We're continuing our series in this section of Exodus. God's strength is

2:30

stronger. Multiple times, Moses directed the people to remember God's mighty hand

2:36

and his outstretched arm. In fact, later in Israel's history, after 40 years of

2:42

wandering in the wilderness, when they were on the uh banks of the Jordan, ready to go into the promised land,

2:49

Moses said in Deuteronomy 5:15, listen to it, "Remember that you were slaves in

2:55

Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an

3:01

outstretched arm." Historian Claire Davis says, "The

3:06

Christian life is a combination of amnesia and deja vu." And I quote, "I

3:13

know I have forgotten this before." We keep forgetting what we've

3:18

already experienced. We've learned this lesson, but we just forgot it. So, Clare says,

3:25

"We we learn and relearn the same lessons over and over again." What does that mean? It means

3:31

we're simply human. We forget. Even after the nine plagues we

3:37

learned about last week, Pharaoh refused to let God's people go. So God sends the

3:44

10th plague, the deadliest plague of all, the death of the firstborn, an

3:51

event that's known as Passover. The Passover is a single event in the

3:58

Bible that gives meaning to the bigger story of the Bible. And it's an event

4:03

God wants us to remember again and again. If you have your

4:09

Bibles, turn with me to Exodus 12. It's page 53 in the Pew Bible. If you didn't

4:15

bring yours, there's one under the seat. Because even in Exodus 12, our section

4:22

for today, we have three narrations of the Passover story. It's as though the

4:28

Holy Spirit said through Moses, "Let me tell you, and then let me tell you again, and then let me tell you again."

4:36

In the first 12 verses, we have the instructions to Moses and Aaron. And then in verses 13- 28, Moses and Aaron

4:44

take that message to the elders and uh describe that event and a feast that

4:50

will go with it as we'll talk about. And then in verses 9 through32, the description of the event

4:57

itself is given. Listen to the first 12 verses as I read them from the text.

5:05

The Lord said to Moses and Herod in the land of Egypt, "This month shall be for you the beginning of months, it shall be

5:13

the first month of the year for you. Tell all the congregation of Israel on the 10th day of the month, every man

5:19

shall take a lamb according to their their houses to their father's houses, a lamb for a household.

5:27

And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of

5:32

persons, according to what each can eat, and you shall make account for the lamb.

5:38

Your lamb shall be without blemish. a male year old. You may take it from the

5:44

sheep or from the goats. And you shall keep it until the 14th day of the month

5:49

when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight or literally between

5:56

the evenings. Then they shall take some of the blood and they'll put it on the two

6:03

doorposts and the lentil the top of the door in which they eat it. And they

6:09

shall eat the flesh that night roasted on the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. They shall eat it. Do not

6:18

eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted with its head in its legs and its inner parts. And you shall let

6:25

none of it remain until morning. And anything that remains until morning you shall burn. In this manner you shall eat

6:32

it with your belts fashioned, your sandals on your feet, your staff in your

6:37

hand, and shall you say, eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover. And

6:44

look at verse 12. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night,

6:51

and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and on all the gods of Egypt I will

6:58

execute judgments. I am the Lord. And then verse 13, the blood shall

7:07

be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I

7:13

will pass over you. And no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike

7:20

the land of Egypt. This is a battle of the one true

7:27

God and the Egyptian gods of human imagination and superstition.

7:33

As Pastor Cody mentioned last week, each of those plagues was a direct attack by

7:40

God on uh a god that the Egyptians served in their

7:45

idolatry. And one of the gods that they served is they believed that the Pharaoh

7:51

or the Pharaoh's son would become a god. And so this last plague is a plague to

7:58

strike down the firstborn. In verses 1 to2, we have the instruction

8:04

for the Passover. And as stated in the opening words of this passage, this month shall be for you the beginning of

8:11

months. It shall be the first month of the first year for

8:17

you. Excuse me. So significant is this event in Israel's history that God

8:22

changed the calendar for his covenant people. The Jewish calendar is a lunar calendar

8:28

whereas ours is built off a solar calendar and Passover falls every year

8:34

on the first new moon of the spring. I want to show you that Jewish calendar in

8:39

comparison to our calendar and the diagram shows a comparison between the

8:44

two. As you can see up at the top about just about 12:30 or 1:00 is a month

8:50

called Nissan. Not a car but a month. And at the top becomes that becomes the

8:56

first month of their religious year. God structured their entire year

9:02

in a way that connected to the purposes for which he redeemed them. If you read in Leviticus 23, there

9:10

are seven feasts that you'll note concentrated in two months. the month of

9:15

Nissan which is in the spring of the year and that's the first month of their calendar and the month tishry in the

9:22

fall of the year. Pentecost is in between but on those uh two months

9:28

there's a concentration and according to the Bible and according to the law a

9:34

Jewish male had to come to Jerusalem to celebrate on three of those particular feasts.

9:41

The next slide shows you the week of the Passover events as described in our text. The selection of the lamb would

9:48

take place on the 10th of Nissan, the 10th of the month. And you would take

9:54

that lamb in as uh we read the family would select the lamb on the 10th. They

10:00

would bring it into the house. They would inspect it to make sure it was a male without defect. And they had that

10:08

lamb inside their house with their kids. Now, understand this. Imagine this. This

10:14

little one-year-old lamb without spot, without blemish. It was the best of the flock. It's in your house for 4

10:22

days, and you're taking care of it. The kids are starting to get attached to it. But you also know that God has said

10:30

you had to kill it. On the 14th day in the afternoon,

10:36

late afternoon and evening, the father of the house would take that

10:42

lamb, would hold that lamb, would stretch its head, expose the neck, and

10:48

slit the throat of that lamb in front of those kids, in front of the family.

10:57

every single house of the Is

11:02

Israelites experienced that. I want you to think about

11:08

that. Think about the implications of that. Think about what you would have to say to those kids. And in fact, that's

11:15

the very thing God's going to want you to say to the kids as to the why. The selection of the lamb was on

11:22

the 10th of the month. The slaying of the lamb was on the 14th day of the

11:28

month was killed at twilight literally between the evenings late afternoon and

11:34

the blood was applied on the doorpost with a hissup branch. It's like a paintbrush bush to the doorpost and the

11:40

lentil on the cross pieces of the door. And in essence that symbolized that there was blood covering the house. The

11:48

meat of the animal was roasted, couldn't be boiled or eaten raw. had to be totally eaten that night. It was

11:55

intended to serve as an annual reminder of what the Israelites suffered in Egypt. The unleavened bread would remind

12:02

them how they needed to flee in haste, as hinted at in verse 11 and stated more explicitly in verse 39 of the passage.

12:09

The bitter herbs would remind them of uh the bitter lives and the hard work that

12:15

they had been made to do with the brick and the mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields as Exodus 1:14 talked

12:23

about. They were to eat quickly with belts fastened, sandled feet and staff

12:29

in hand because they didn't know the time of that judgment on the firstborn

12:34

that God would bring. And they knew that God was going to deliver them while he slayed the

12:41

Egyptians. All were to stay inside until morning. According to verse 22, nobody

12:46

was to go out of the house until the event took place. It's

12:53

ominous. It's ominous. God passed through to strike and God

13:03

passed over to save. You have the striking down of the firstborn and the

13:10

whole sequence is called this is the Lord's

13:17

Passover. It was the institution of something very very sacred but very very

13:22

serious. The explanation point 2 is uh given in verses 13 to 28. And to

13:29

summarize that section, verse 13, as we've already said, the blood shall be a

13:34

sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will

13:40

pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the

13:48

land of Egypt. See the the Passover the Passover reveals that God

13:55

is holy and just to punish sin. But God is also merciful and gracious to save

14:05

sinners. God acted in such a way that he could be just and gracious at the same

14:11

time. And that is the way to save sinners by means of what we call a

14:18

substitutionary sacrifice. There's three elements here that I want you to see. The judgment,

14:24

the salvation, and the memorial. First, the judgment of God on the firstborn and the gods of

14:30

Egypt. He says, "I will pass through to strike." in verses 12 and 23. When you

14:38

read through this, God is the judge and he's personally involved. I will pass

14:43

through verse 12, 23, and 29 in all three of those. But we have a hint that

14:50

he'll do it through the instrumentality of an angel called in one of the passages the

14:56

destroyer, the death angel as it's sometimes called. God is so sovereign that he acts

15:05

immediately at times by himself and at other times he acts mediating through

15:11

other agents. I find it ironic and especially

15:17

when you get to the book of Revelation that the archeneemy of God is

15:23

taken out by an angel. I I think there's a bit of humility and

15:29

humiliation going on there when you get Satan, the beast, and the false prophet, and God dispenses angels to do that.

15:36

They thought they were hot stuff, but God's going to take him out. And it's not even going to be him. It's

15:43

going to be an angel. It also reminds us that the Bible says God will soon crush

15:49

Satan under your feet. We will judge the angels according to the New Testament.

15:56

God is sovereign enough to use mediating persons to accomplish his will,

16:03

including angels. The 10th plague was a sign of God's judgment against all humanity.

16:10

When you read the text, God brought the sting of death to every house and every home of Egyptian and Israelite alike.

16:19

The question is if you applied the blood that would make the

16:25

difference the judgment of God. He passed through to strike. Secondly, he

16:32

passed over to save to protect the salvation of Israel. In verse 23, it

16:40

says the Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians. And when he sees the blood on the lentil and on the two

16:45

doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to

16:51

enter your house to strike you. You see, the inevitability of

16:56

judgment is mitigated by the necessity of the blood. Let me say that again. The

17:02

inevitability of judgment, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The wages of sin is

17:08

death. But the inevitability of

17:14

judgment is mitigated by the substitution of a

17:20

sacrifice, the offering of blood that will allow salvation for those who apply it.

17:28

We will not look it up yet, but Leviticus 17:11 says this, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I've

17:36

given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls.

17:42

For it is the blood that makes atonement by the life." Now, there's some

17:48

preachers and teachers who would like to separate, is it the death of Christ or is it the blood of Christ that saves?

17:54

And they separate those two. Don't do that. There's passages that speak of both. The the life of the flesh is in

18:01

the blood. So it's the death and the shedding of the blood. It's that act of

18:07

both shedding of the blood that causes death. That is the satisfaction, the

18:12

atoning work of God that satisfies God.

18:17

That the death has been paid through the death of that animal or that substitute.

18:24

Hebrews 9:22 echoes this passage. Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins. These core

18:32

principles were and are so important that God has designed this event to be a per perpetual

18:39

reminder. And that's our third element, the memorial. The memorial is an event

18:44

of a day and it's also the participation in a week-long feast.

18:50

We heard a couple of weeks ago from Pastor Cody that the word remember is found 237 times in the translation we

18:58

use in the pulpit uh Bible and the pew Bibles that you have. 237 times. I think that says

19:06

something. The first is the day of Passover. It's called in verse 14 if you look at it in the text. It's called a

19:12

memorial day. We just came through Memorial Day here in in the United States. But this became, as he calls it,

19:18

a memorial day. It was an annual reminder of the seriousness of sin and

19:23

the saving grace of God as demonstrated in the history of their deliverance from the slavery and the idolatry of

19:30

Egypt. Listen as I read Exodus 12 24- 27. You shall observe this right as a

19:38

statue for you and for your sons forever. And when you come into the land that the Lord will give you as he

19:44

promised, you shall keep this service. And when you shall and when your children say, "What do you mean by

19:51

this service?" You shall say, "It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover. For he

19:58

passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses." And

20:06

the people in response to that message bowed their heads and

20:13

worshiped. You see, to celebrate what God has commanded is an act of worship

20:19

as well as an act of obedience. The feast that followed that

20:25

week is called the feast of unleavened bread. It starts with Passover and it

20:30

goes for seven days with unleavened bread beginning, you know, it's the feast of unleven bread beginning the

20:36

evening of Passover on the 14th and then going all the way through the 20th.

20:42

You'll see a chart that shows that when Passover is on the 14th, that starts a week of a feast called the feast of

20:49

unleven bread. There was a holy assembly or a service was to be held on the first

20:54

and the last of the feast. No work was to be done that entire week. It was like a a week Sabbath, so to speak, except

21:01

for meal preparations. And the Passover and the feast were to be kept and its significance taught throughout the

21:08

generations to come. I love that phrase. When when the children ask, "What does this mean?" You tell them.

21:16

Three times in verse 14, 17, and 24, the

21:21

Lord told Moses that the Passover and this feast should become a permanent

21:27

celebration on Israel's calendar. In the rest of the Old Testament, the festival is sometimes

21:33

called Passover for the whole period or sometimes it's called the feast of unleven bread. It refers to that same

21:39

week. But the instructions along with the feast were something that Israel, don't miss this, could hear as it was

21:47

explained. They could see, they could touch, they could taste, and they could

21:53

smell. God wanted this to be a whole person experience every single time.

21:59

Over the centuries, that Passover grew into a tradition that's been called the seder meal and the order of service

22:06

called the Hagada. We we've had seder services here uh to go through that and

22:12

show you what a Passover was like. It developed in a tradition that that that's grown. There's a seder plate and

22:18

on that plate are symbols of food and uh other things that reminded them of this

22:24

text and of this event. As the story of the Exodus is recounted to the family, each item on

22:32

the sader plate is eaten in order and an explanation is given for what each represents. In fact, the word seder

22:38

means order and the word hagada means telling. So in essence, they were telling the story in the order in which

22:44

these events took place. And they went through this order of service and it it contains scripture. It contains

22:50

explanation. It contains psalms. It's a wonderful celebration. It's a wonderful

22:56

commemoration. It's sobering, but it's also encouraging when you understand where it leads a person of faith.

23:03

The event of the plague and the Passover then is described very succinctly in verse

23:11

29-32. Look at it. The description God strikes down the firstborn of family and

23:18

flock. God strikes it down. When you look at the extent of it, it was from

23:24

Pharaoh all the way to the flock. It was from the prince in the house of the

23:30

pharaoh all the way down to the prisoner inside a jail. The effect of that was a great cry

23:39

in Egypt. And their text says there was not a house where someone was not dead.

23:45

Now just think about that. Think about a national

23:52

catastrophe where death came to every single house of the Egyptians, including

23:59

its leadership. That is some

24:04

night, that is some cry, that is some

24:10

stench of death. At the same time, there was

24:15

death by substitution in every house of the Israelites who

24:21

participated in what God told them to do. There was death of the firstborn or there was the

24:30

death of that lamb or that goat in front of that family.

24:39

bloody, graphic,

24:45

spectacular display of the power and the strength of God to

24:51

judge and to save. The result of that was Pharaoh says out of

24:57

here, send them out finally with the death of the firstborn. That was enough. He says go and serve the Lord. But then

25:04

there's a little phrase there. Don't miss it. and grant me a blessing. What a

25:12

pompous. Fill in the blank. Because he's going to chase him

25:19

down and try and kill him on the way, as we'll see. Now, why is the Passover, Here's

25:25

the question. Why is the Passover an event in the Bible that gives meaning to the bigger story of the Bible? That's

25:33

the implication section. Of all the Old Testament images or types that

25:39

anticipate Jesus in his ministry, the Passover is probably the clearest in

25:44

foreshadowing Jesus' saving work on the cross. I want to show you a slide.

25:50

Passover, the Hebrew word mean is pak and it commemorates the deliverance

25:55

of the Jews from the slavery in Egypt. But when Passover gets

26:00

understood by a believing Jew who believes in Jesus or we Gentiles who

26:08

believe in Jesus, Passover suddenly becomes more meaningful because it

26:13

commemorates the deliverance of one who believes in Jesus from the slavery not of the Egyptians but the slavery of

26:23

sin. Let's look at the chart in your sermon notes. And I just want to walk my

26:28

way through it. We'll quote some of the passages. On the left hand side, remember the text said it was called the

26:33

Lord's Passover. But in 1 Corinthians 5 and:e 7, it talks about for Christ our

26:40

Passover lamb has been sacrificed. So the New Testament says we have a

26:46

Passover lamb. That lamb was selected from the flock according to Exodus 12. But in

26:53

John 1:29, when John the Baptist sees Jesus coming down the road, he says, "Behold the lamb of

27:00

God that takes away the sin of the world." This is a lamb sent from God.

27:05

This is a lamb provided by God, a substitutionary lamb for the sins of the

27:13

world. It had to be a male according to verse three of chapter 12. And in 1

27:20

Timothy 1 uh 2:5 it says, "For there is just one mediator, one mediator between

27:26

God and man, the man Christ Jesus." Jesus Christ became

27:33

flesh. The incarnation was a necessity because we needed a lamb who could die,

27:40

but we needed a perfect lamb that had never sinned. Only with the incarnation

27:47

of Jesus Christ can you get God in the flesh. Paul later calls that great is

27:52

the mystery of godliness. God manifested in the flesh. So he became human. He was a man.

28:01

He was without blemish. That was the requirement of the Old Testament in Exodus 20 12:5. But uh he's without

28:08

blemish or spot. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, "He who knew no

28:14

sin became sin on our behalf." In other words, he took the punishment of sin on our behalf that we might be made the

28:19

righteousness of God in him. He had no sin. He did no sin. There was no fault in him. Even

28:27

Pilate agreed with that. But I love First Peter. Listen to First Peter 1:18

28:33

and 19. Knowing that you were ransomed from the feudal ways inherited from your

28:39

forefathers, not with perishable things like silver and gold, but with the precious blood of

28:47

Christ, like a lamb without blemish or spot. There is the parallel he's picking

28:54

up again. Next, he was sacrificed on the eve of Passover of the 14th of Nissan.

29:03

Jesus died at 3 p.m. on Passover the 14th of Nissan according to the gospels

29:09

between the evenings as it was called in the twilight. And so in the in the Jewish day as you're getting toward the

29:16

end of that day toward sundown which is the end of the day it goes from sundown

29:21

to sun to sundown on a Jewish calendar. You're at the end of that day in that last couple hours. That's the twilight.

29:29

That's when Jesus having died at the hands of men from 9:00 in the morning till noon.

29:37

Then darkness hit from noon till 3 and he dies at the hands of his

29:43

father in darkness. In darkness. So the

29:48

midnight the midnight call in Exodus in the darkness.

29:56

Verse 13 of our passage, it says there's a necessity of blood to

30:01

avoid judgment. Verse 13 says, 'The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are, and when I see the blood,

30:07

I'll pass over you, and no plague will befall you. Ephesians 1:7 says, "We are

30:15

redeemed through his blood." Redeemed through his blood.

30:21

What the blood signified to the Israelites was that they had a substitute, a lamb that had died in

30:29

their place. And what it meant for God was that he was satisfied with the death of that substitute that he demanded. To

30:36

go back to the Leviticus 7 17:11, for the life of the flesh is in the blood,

30:41

and I've given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls. For it is the blood that makes

30:48

atonement by the life. What does that mean for us? Ephesians 1:7 says this. In him,

30:57

Christ, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our

31:04

trespasses, and this is all according to the riches of his

31:11

grace. The threat of judgment was upon all, Egyptian and Israelite alike.

31:20

But guess what? 1 Timothy 2:6 says this. Jesus gave himself as a ransom for

31:29

all. We alluded it to it before, but listen to the whole passage in 1 Timothy

31:35

2:5 and 6. It says, "For there is one God." Don't miss that in com comparison

31:40

to what we're seeing in the Egyptian. There's one mediator between God and man. There's only one way to get to the

31:45

Father, Jesus said, by him. one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus who gave

31:53

himself, it is a self-sacrifice as a ransom for all,

32:00

which is the testimony given at the proper time. What was Israel to do with

32:08

this? They were to make a memorial. Uh, it involved

32:13

blood. It involved unleavened bread. And it involved bitter

32:19

herbs. What did God want us to do? We'll do it today as a church body.

32:27

He gave us a memorial. The night in which he was betrayed, Jesus said, "This is the blood

32:34

of a new covenant which is shed for many.

32:39

It becomes a memorial of bread and the cup representing the

32:46

blood. And guess what, folks? There's no bitter

32:51

herbs. He's taken the bitterness out of the experience with a transformed

32:59

life. We didn't do what Egypt did. We served sin, but nothing that we

33:06

do could take that place. Nothing we could do to symbolize

33:13

that. He said, "I did that in my body on the tree." He bore our sins on his own

33:20

body on the tree. First Peter says, "And we have a memorial of bread and blood."

33:28

Now very quickly let me give you a survey that I find very

33:35

fascinating with the ram caught in the thicket when Isaac was to be sacrificed

33:41

on the altar as commanded by God for Abraham to sacrifice his son and then God provides in fact his name becomes

33:48

Jehovah Gyra or Yahweh yra in Hebrew. God himself will provide a sacrifice. A

33:54

ram is caught in a thicket of thorns to take the place of a son of

34:00

Abraham. It was a substitutionary sacrifice for a person. Out beside that,

34:05

put the word provision. It's person provision. With a lamb or goat at

34:12

Passover, there's a substitutionary sacrifice for the family. And that brought about deliverance.

34:19

deliverance of the family with the sacrifice of the uh sacrifice goat and

34:25

the scapegoat that was sent into the wilderness on the day of atonement. You can read about that in Leviticus 16.

34:30

That was a substitutionary sacrifice that took care of the nation, the whole nation once a year. That brought about

34:38

forgiveness on an annual basis. God was satisfied that he had

34:44

substituted blood on their behalf.

34:49

But in Hebrews we read, "It's impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away

34:55

sin." So in Hebrews 10:14, it says, "For by a single offering, he has perfected

35:01

for all time those who are being sanctified." Because with the sacrifice

35:07

of the lamb of God on the cross, you see some verses there that you can look up. It is a satisfactory substitute for the

35:16

world. a person, a family, a nation. God said, "No, no. Let's take care of the

35:22

sins of the world. There's the personal

35:28

savior." If he's your savior, you can sing, "Because the

35:35

sinless savior died, my sinful soul is counted free. For God the just is

35:42

satisfied to look on him and pardon me. Behold him there, the risen lamb, my

35:51

perfect spotless righteousness, the great unchangeable I am, the king of

35:56

glory and of grace. When with himself I cannot die. My soul is purchased by his

36:03

blood. My life is hid with Christ on high, with Christ my savior and my

36:13

God. That's ours if you've trusted Christ. If you

36:18

haven't, now would be a great time to do it because he is the

36:23

ultimate sacrifice, the only one that paid for

36:29

the sins of the world. and that includes yours and mine. Let's

36:38

pray. Father, thank you. Thank you for the death of your

36:43

son that satisfied your wrath, your

36:48

holiness, the payment for justice, and the judgment upon sin.

36:54

But thank you also. It was an act of grace and mercy and love that then

37:01

applied to us. Thank you for the wonderful gift of

37:06

your son. We thank you in Jesus name. He met.

Title: Avoiding the Plague | God's Strength Is Stronger

Video: 2IgkYGzT5fo

**Welcome**

0:00

Well, good morning, Christ Chapel. Great to be with you. Good afternoon to those of you at the five o'clock service and

0:06

hello to all of you uh joining us online. Would everyone uh open your Bibles, please, to Exodus chapter 7.

0:14

Exodus chapter 7. We're actually going to be covering a large portion of

0:19

scripture today. So, uh if you're opening one of those blue Bibles, it's going to be page 49. If you're opening

0:25

one of the blue Bibles, whatever venue you're in, uh thank you so much for joining us. Uh today, uh again, we're

0:32

going to cover a large portion of scripture, the sermon notes are going to be imperative there. We're going to use

**Introduction**

0:38

something on the sermon notes as a reference uh that I'll talk through in just a moment, but you'll need to to

0:44

have that open as well so that we can refer back and forth to it. We're going to continue in our series, God's

0:51

Strength is Stronger. And we've been trying to show you that from the scriptures uh over the past few weeks.

0:58

If it hasn't been made clear to you beforehand, I hope it's clear today

1:03

because I don't know if it gets any clearer that God's strength is stronger than when we study the plagues that

1:10

plagued Egypt during that time. And when we were thinking about uh I was thinking

1:16

about the plagues, one of the phrases came to mind that you've probably heard and maybe even used. And it that phrase

1:22

is avoid it or avoid them like the plague. How many of you ever heard that

1:28

phrase before? You used it too probably. Um maybe not of someone, but something,

**Avoiding the Plague**

1:34

you know, avoid it like the plague. I wondered did did you know that did you think that it came from the

1:41

scriptures? It didn't. I I wondered though. I I got you got you there. I

1:46

wondered if it did. And it actually didn't, but it was actually attributed to a Christian, attributed to St. Jerome

1:54

uh back in the early uh 4th century actually talking about avoiding people. It was an idiomatic phrase that he kind

2:01

of coined there uh that was talking about uh avoiding people who had mixed motives. So avoiding them like the

2:08

plague, meaning stay as far away from them as you can because uh there could

2:13

be harm if you get too close or if you get uh engaged with them. So avoiding it

2:20

like the plague doesn't actually tie here, but it got me thinking about that question. Could these plagues in the

2:28

Bible from Exodus been avoided? Could they have been avoided? Would you say yes or

2:34

no? Yes. Yes, they could have been avoided. Yes, the plagues could have

2:40

been avoided if Pharaoh would have just let people go. And I started thinking,

2:47

if they could have avoided the plagues, if they just would have let people go,

2:52

and if thematically, if we're talking about how God's strength is stronger,

2:58

could God have avoided the plagues altogether? Could he have just done

3:03

something different to get people out of of Egypt? In in fact, let's take it even

3:10

a step deeper than that. Could God have avoided all the suffering that all the

3:15

people had? That's a scary question. I I I think he could have. Could he have just

3:22

gone in and said, "Pharaoh, let the people go." And he goes, "I don't think so." And he goes, "Uh, servant, uh,

3:29

Pharaoh, your servant and that servant and that servant, that servant die." And he goes, "You're next, buddy.

3:35

You want to let him go?" He could have done that. And and then it's just like a

3:40

few people suffered, but not an entire nation. So So why why

3:45

why the plagues? Why why so much suffering? Why so long? I think that's a

3:53

very valid question for all of us to understand because the plagues are very misunderstood. And if you misunderstand

4:01

the purpose of the plagues, then you misunderstand the character of God and you begin to misunderstand how you

4:09

relate to him and you misunderstand his character. Because remember, his character doesn't change. He's the same

4:15

God then as he is today and will forever be. And so if we misunderstand who he

4:21

was then, then we're going to misunderstand who he is today. So you have to understand what the purpose of

4:28

the plagues was. And so I I want to explain that to you. I'll try to uh

**Purpose of the Plague**

4:35

unpack that for you and uh then obviously relate it because we've got to understand uh God's character for us

4:42

today. I'll give you some applications at the end. But as I said, the the sermon notes are going to be imperative.

4:48

So, if you look at the sermon notes very quickly, uh you'll notice that at the top there is a a chart. And uh that

4:56

chart was put together very purposefully, meaning we just we didn't just rip one from a book or another

5:03

resource. We put this to together. Shout out Lori Agnar. She works so hard uh on

5:08

the sermon notes. She does every week, but she did a great job uh with this one. uh but each column was very

5:14

purposeful in the details that we put here because we're going to use this as a reference to the points below. And so

5:21

as we go through this and I tell you the different purposes of the plagues, I'll refer back to that chart at the top uh

5:29

and we'll go through each of these columns will will be referenced throughout the message. So uh let's

5:34

begin going through the purpose of the plague so that we can avoid it. The

5:40

first purpose, God enacted the plagues to demonstrate his power is

5:47

unmatched. God enacted the plagues to demonstrate that his power is unmatched.

5:55

If you remember, we I talked about this last week. If you go back to Exodus 5:2,

6:00

remember that's the first time that that Moses goes into Pharaoh and he says, "Hey, God said it's time to let my

6:06

people go." And Pharaoh's response in chapter 5:2 was, "Who's God? Who I I don't I don't know God and

6:15

uh I don't think I have to obey him. So, no, I I I'm not going to let people go."

6:20

So, he was placing himself uh in in a position of authority and power over

6:26

people's lives. And God said, "Well, I'll show you who I am." In fact, he

6:32

says that in Exodus chapter uh 7. Exodus chapter

6:37

7. And you, Moses, shall say to him, "The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, sent

6:44

me to you, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the

6:49

wilderness. But so far you have not obeyed. Thus says the Lord, by this you

6:57

shall know that I am the Lord." Um, it reminds me, it just makes me

7:04

think of the um I I told you who's boss. Now I'll show you who's boss. And and he

7:11

shows them through these uh different uh plagues. You can see that in in the columns if you were looking at an Excel

7:17

sheet. That's column B. Uh I don't know much about Excel except that. But uh you

7:24

see the different plagues that are are there. And we're going to I'm just going to reference some of these throughout.

7:30

I'm not going to go through all of these uh particularly. In fact, I would like to pat myself on the back though because

7:37

I'm sure there's a joke here about the frogs being a plague, but I am so spiritually mature that I am not going

7:42

to make that joke. So, I don't want to brag, but so you can see the different

7:48

plagues that that are there. And uh but I'm not going to go through them individually. We're going to go through

7:54

them as a whole. and we'll cover the last one uh next week. But uh you see those different plagues. So God says, "I

8:00

will show you my my power. I I will show you that." And one of the the ways that

8:07

he shows him that is this. He's he's he's forcing his hand on on Israel. So

8:14

there's two ways. First is he's forcing his hand. And what I mean by that is he's imposing his will against the gods

8:23

of Egypt. If you went through different gods of Egypt and and many commentators

8:29

do and you could listen to many sermons that in fact break down each of these plagues one by one, uh each of these

8:35

correlate with a a a god over some sort of uh part of nature in Egypt. And so

8:43

God is saying, okay, you worship, remember, we've talked about this one before, the God Happy was their god of

8:50

the Nile. You remember this, the the God was named Happy. And so what the first plague is is turning this water into

8:57

blood. So he's going against the god. He's going toe-to-toe with the gods of

9:02

Egypt to show them that he can impose his will. That his will is greater than

9:10

their god of the Nile. Remember Egypt was they were polytheistic. They

9:16

believed there was God over everything. They had a pantheon of gods. And so all

9:21

of these gods that they worshiped, God was going toeto toe to forcing his hand

9:27

saying, "You think that they rule over those elements of nature?" No, no, no, no, no. I do. And he's showing them that

9:35

by his power. And in fact, um, some there are magicians that are referenced

9:42

if you looked throughout this or or another way to interpret that is sorcerers. And Pharaoh had these

9:47

magicians or sorcerers uh really as a form of uh social control over the

9:54

people of Egypt that he could uh try to trick them whether it was demonic power

9:59

or a slight of hand by trying to show people that uh he had control over the

10:06

gods. And so in fact there are a few of these things that it says that these

10:11

magicians or sorcerers are able to replicate. problem though, they can't go

10:17

backwards, but God can. So they c that God can can turn the the Nile into

10:23

blood, but he can also then go, okay, back to water. M magicians couldn't couldn't do

10:29

that. And so there's there's a way in which God is showing and demonstrating

10:34

that his power I is unmatched. There's also a second way and I think

10:40

this is really interesting and I I I give credit to I read this from Tim Keller. Uh so I got to give him credit

10:47

but it's amazing. So if the first way that God is showing that his power is unmatched by forcing his hand, the

**The Second Plague**

10:54

second way that he's showing his power is by removing his hand. And what what I

10:59

mean by that he draws uh Keller draws a correlation. It's very uh interesting to

11:05

Genesis 1:2. And if you remember in Genesis chapter 1 verse one, God in the

11:11

beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. But in verse two, it says that there was chaos hovering over the

11:16

waters. So there's chaos. God steps into the chaos and creates order. He orders

11:24

all of nature. He orders the water. He orders light. He orders the plants, the

11:30

animals, the insects, all the way to people. He orders all of those things.

11:36

And what you see here in Exodus chapter 5 or Exodus chapters 5-10 is it's reverting back to chaos.

11:45

It's going it's going backwards. Everything is getting more chaotic. As God says, "Hey, I am in authority here."

11:52

And Pharaoh turns his back. God removes his hand that is holding the earth together. And he's going, "Great. if you

11:59

don't want to have anything to do with me, then I'll remove my hand uh that is controlling everything and keeping

12:05

everything in its place, but I'll move back. And now chaos moves in as God

12:11

removes his hand as a consequence for Pharaoh's disobedience. So that's that's

12:19

two ways in which God is demonstrating his power through the plagues by forcing

12:24

his hand but also in a sense removing his hand as well. The second way that

12:30

God is uh using the plagues and why he's doing it that God is using the plagues

12:36

he's enacting the plagues to execute his judgment for disobedience.

12:43

God is enacting the plagues to execute his judgment for

12:49

disobedience. Now, we just saw that in uh chapter 7 verse 16 where Pharaoh or

12:56

where Moses says to Pharaoh uh you have you knew what you were supposed to do yet you have not

13:02

obeyed. And so this is a consequence for disobedience.

13:08

uh we will cover this in the application but uh I don't want to go move past it guys sin has

**Sin Has Consequences**

13:15

consequences disobedience has consequences and God is merciful to keep

13:22

us from many of those consequences praise God but sin still has

13:28

consequences and we see that he is executing judgment for the Egyptians

13:35

disobedience in Exodus 8 18 it says then the magicians said to

13:42

Pharaoh this is the finger of God like we can't we can't replicate this kind of

13:49

power this is uh divine this is of God but Pharaoh's heart was hardened and he

13:56

would not listen to them as the Lord had said he had already foretold uh that

14:02

that would happen so the the magicians get it the magicians get it. That that

14:08

God I love how it says, you know, we talk about God's hand being over things.

14:13

I love how the magicians say that's the finger. Like that that's not the hand.

14:19

That's only the finger. Like we don't want the the full meal deal. Like just th this is this is God. We can't

**Does God Delight in Judgment**

14:27

replicate uh things. And and really the magicians were only able to replicate the first couple of things. uh when it

14:34

got more severe, they couldn't replicate those things. And they say, "This is the finger of God." And so he is he is

14:43

pressing in on us, executing his judgment because of our disobedience.

14:48

But Pharaoh's heart was hardened. Now, one of the questions that I think this

14:53

brings up is go, does God delight in judgment? I is this what God wanted? I

15:01

mean, Pharaoh's heart is continuing to to be hardened. And we talked about that last week that it's an equal number of

15:08

times where it says that Pharaoh is hardening his heart and God is hardening Pharaoh's heart. And we talked about how

15:13

he's just ringing it out. He's twisting it. He's saying, "Let's see what's on the inside of of Pharaoh's real

15:19

intentions." But God does not delight in judgment. I I want I want to be clear on

15:26

that. God doesn't delight in judgment. In fact, in Ezekiel 33, it says the

15:32

exact opposite. It says, "God does not delight in the death of the wicked." And

15:37

we find that in 1 Timothy 2 as well, where he says that God wishes that none

15:43

would perish, but that all would come to salvation. God doesn't delight in in

15:49

judgment. Yet, God is holy and and sin deserves judgment. He

15:56

has to judge sin. that is counter to his nature. That's

16:02

counter to his character. And and so he doesn't want to judge the Egyptians. Yet

16:10

they continue to disobey. And I want to show you just a few reasons why he

16:16

doesn't delight in judgment specifically uh from these plagues. And if if you

16:21

looked at your chart, there's a couple things that I want to show you here. And the first one is I want you to notice

16:26

the warnings. This tells you did did Moses go what what I mean by warning here is

16:33

did Moses go in and warn the Pharaoh specifically but the Egyptians. Hey, if

16:39

you don't let people go, here's what's going to happen. Here's the consequence. And you see, yes, yes, but then

16:47

no. Yes, yes, and then no. There there are warnings. And in fact, guys, if you

16:54

go back to Exodus 7, I think it's 8 to 12, um, before the

17:00

plagues even start, Pharaoh is warned at the get-go, before any plagues even

17:06

start, there's a warning. So th this this idea that he's just going to step

17:12

in and judge because he loves to smite people, that's that's a misunderstanding of God. That's not who he is. That's not

17:20

his character. So he warns them about most of these but not all of them. And I

17:26

think part of that is because I think some of that is Pharaoh saying, "Okay, I

17:32

can live with that. Okay, I can live with that. Oh, I can live with some some gnats. Okay, I

17:39

can live with some frogs. Okay, but some are unintended consequences." And

**Negotiating with God**

17:45

sometimes we like to negotiate with God and go, "Okay, God, if that's it, that's

17:51

not bad. I that's I'll live with that. That's kind of bothersome, but okay." And you can see the severity on on the

17:58

on the uh a column where it says first cycle, second cycle, third cycle. You

18:03

can see how the severity increases. How first it was just kind of bothersome,

18:09

but then it gets to pain. the they're very painful things where uh the flies I

18:15

don't even want to go into it because it'll gross some of you out what the flies were doing but uh boils on the

18:20

body uh the the disease of the livestock that then die. I mean the the the

18:26

severity continues to increase as the disobedience increases. And and again I

18:33

think that's a form of warning where he warns him this is going to happen but then he continues to gosh you're not

18:41

getting the message. And so here I'll turn up the heat a little bit and it'll get it'll

18:47

get more than bothersome. it'll get get painful and then as you can see uh

18:53

there's destruction and then ultimately death which we'll cover uh next week and

18:58

so you can see how that uh progresses on on and on and you go why is this

19:04

progressing I think it's because God wants to relent if the Egyptians will

19:11

repent if they will repent if they will turn away from enslaving his people and

19:17

obey him then the plagues would stop and he and he he doesn't want to for the

19:23

severity to continue to increase. In fact, he gives them time to repent. If

19:29

you look back at the chart in the duration, you can see the the first one was about 8 days, about 2 weeks, about 8

19:36

days. So, you can see how long. So, it wasn't just boom boom boom day after day after day. It was I'll give you time to

19:43

think about this. and they continue to persist in their disobedience, in their

19:50

stubbornness, in their obstinence. And God's like, "I guess you're I guess you're not going to. I've

19:56

given you time to think about this. I've given you time to repent." And and so he

20:02

enacts another plague. You can see the warnings. You can see the durations. You can see the progression of the severity.

20:10

And God God could have just wiped everybody off. In fact, he says that in Exodus chapter 9 15 and 16. It was this

20:18

was during the seventh uh plague which was uh hail. And he says this won't come

20:25

up on the screen but uh chapter 9 15 to 16. If you want to write it down I'll read it to you. It says for by now I

20:32

could have put my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence and you would have been cut off from the earth.

20:40

But for this purpose I have raised you up to show my power. Again, that was the first point that we talked about to

20:45

demonstrate that his power was unmatched. So that my name may be proclaimed in all the

20:53

earth. You have preached all of these other gods and I am going to show you

20:59

who is God. I've tried to tell you and you didn't believe me. So I will show you

21:06

and demonstrate my power. I will execute judgment for disobedience. But then the third purpose of the plagues, God

**Rescue from enslavement**

21:13

enacted the plagues to rescue his people from

21:19

enslavement. God enacted the plagues to rescue his people from

21:28

enslavement. That's the ultimate. If you if you

21:34

remember, that's that's all that God wanted was for his people to be able to

21:40

leave Egypt so that they freely wor they're able to freely worship God. That

21:46

was the whole point. Let his people go, not just so that they can so that they

21:51

go and they're released from slavery, but so that they can serve God, so that they can worship him. And so the plagues

21:59

were enacted because God is just trying to free his people. That's what they were crying out for. If you remember in

22:05

Exodus 2 23, it says their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And

22:12

then God says in Exodus 11 uh verse one

22:17

uh towards the end right right after the the ninth one he says the Lord said to

22:22

Moses yet one plague more I will bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt

22:28

afterward he will let you go from here and when he lets you go he will drive

22:34

you away completely. the uh this is in the order he hasn't uh

22:41

the the 10th plague the death of the firstborn hasn't been enacted yet and

22:46

that will be the ultimate plague that breaks Pharaoh's will that that

22:52

ultimately breaks him and when it says drive them away completely the reason

22:58

for that is because Pharaoh had promised or or he had at least pledged earlier on

23:05

that he would let at least part of God's people go. You can see that in the last

23:10

column where it says Pharaoh's response. Pharaoh's response was this kind of

23:17

halfway compromised negotiated uh obedience. Uh first he refused to let

23:24

people go, but then he said uh he said, "Hey, I'll let people go if the frogs are removed." And then the frogs are

23:29

removed. Ah, actually no. Then he ref refuses the advice of the

23:35

magicians when they say this is the finger of God. No way. But then Israel,

23:40

okay, you can worship God, but you have to stay in Egypt. You're going to stay under my my thumb. Uh refused, refused.

23:47

Israel free. Hey, you're free if the rain and hail stop. Then he says, only the men can go, but the women and

23:53

children stay. Then it's okay, the people can go, but not the animals. It's it's it's this flip-flopping negotiated

24:02

obedience where I I'll obey as much as I want to. And God has God has been very clear

24:11

from the beginning that the message is let my people go. Everybody, everybody, let them go.

24:21

That that's that's that's the call that Moses h that Moses is telling Pharaoh,

24:28

hey, this isn't going to end until you fully obey God. You want to you want to half step

24:34

it? Here's another plague. You want to negotiate it, God's not a negotiator that way. He He Here is

24:43

the full consequence for your disobedience. And I I love it from from

24:48

the Israelites perspective because it shows that God's love is

24:54

relentless pursuing you, pursuing his people, pursuing your freedom. He

25:01

doesn't stop. He continues to run after. Again, he doesn't wish that anyone would

25:06

perish, but all that would come to a saving knowledge of himself. He's always

25:12

pursuing. He's not stopping and he's not going, "Well, that's so strong. I'm kind of tired of dealing with it. I'll I'll

25:18

just leave my people there. No, he fights for you. He fights for his

25:26

people. He doesn't want you enslaved by sin. He doesn't want you living less

**Avoiding sin**

25:32

than his best. And so I think, you know, as we think about the plagues a as a

25:39

whole, I know we didn't go through them uh plague by plague, but as we think about it as a whole, I want to give you

25:45

some quick applications. And and really the the header that I have here is you

25:51

need to avoid sin like the plague. You need to avoid sin like the

25:57

plague. Sin is what brought all of these problems on. It was Pharaoh's

26:03

disobedience that he would not obey God. And not obeying God is

26:09

sin, not aligning with God's will. That is sin with God's purpose. And we know

26:14

God's will from God's word. And we need to avoid sin like the

26:20

plague. Now, there are some aspects of sin that we cannot avoid.

26:25

And what I mean by that is our world is plagued by sin and there are

26:31

consequences for other people's sin that you feel on a daily basis.

26:37

In fact, I think we see that in the plagues. If you look back at the chart where it says uh uh affected

26:46

whom when you look at it, the first few plagues, they affect Egypt and

26:52

Israel. And there's an aspect of our broken world where the ripple effect of

26:59

other people's sin affects us and and we are affected by our own

27:04

sin as well. But at least what we are in control of, meaning our ourselves, our

27:11

we're in control of our own obedience, our own yieldedness to the Lord, we need

27:17

to commit to avoid sin like the plague ourself. So let me give you some quick

**Turn to Jesus**

27:23

applications. The first one is this. Uh turn to Jesus who took on the judgment

27:30

of God. turn to Jesus who took on the judgment

27:35

of God. One of the purposes of the plagues was to execute judgment for

27:43

disobedience. And when we think about our own sin, uh that's what Jesus came

27:49

to pay for. Jesus came to pay the penalty for our sin. He came to take the

27:57

judgment and wrath of God. The wages of sin is death. Romans is very clear about that and God

28:04

has always been clear about this that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin. And so Jesus came

28:12

to pay the penalty to die the death that all of us deserved where the full wrath

28:18

of God was poured onto him for sin once and for all from everyone from beginning

28:25

to end. that his death, his payment would be sufficient for our

28:31

sin. If you do not turn to Jesus as the sin sacrifice for your sin, to pay for

28:38

your sin, then you will pay for it yourself. There are only two people that

28:44

can pay for sin. Jesus or yourself. There there there are only

28:50

those two options. And he doesn't want you to pay for your own sin. That's why

28:55

he's given you these warnings. And take this as a warning in

29:01

itself. He doesn't want you to pay eternally for your sins. He doesn't want you to experience

29:07

the consequences of your sin now. In fact, he wants you to turn to Jesus for

29:13

the forgiveness of your sin, so that you wouldn't experience the wrath of God

29:19

which your sin uh deserves. really cool correlation too about when we think

29:25

about the wrath of God being poured out on Jesus on the cross which I don't know what that was like to think that my sin

29:32

was placed on him but when you think about that and the

29:37

plagues if you go through the plagues and you look at the ninth plague is what

29:44

look at your chart the ninth plague was darkness what happened right before the

29:49

crucifixion darkness is at the crucifixion. Do you remember

29:56

the chaos that happens? The earth goes into chaos. Earthquake veil toward

30:02

chaos. Chaos ensues as God pours out his judgment. And then we have the death of

30:09

Jesus who was the son of God. Death of the firstborn, firstborn of all

30:16

creation. I mean there's a correlation here. God is consistent in his character. God

30:23

is consistent in his nature. But God has always made a way for his people to be

30:28

saved from his judgment. And he's made a way through

30:34

Jesus. His strength is stronger than your sin. His strength is stronger to provide

30:39

a way out. And he provided a way out by giving you his son. so that you don't perish but have

30:49

eternal and everlasting life. If you have never placed your faith in Jesus Christ, please place your faith in him,

30:57

not trusting in anything else to be made right with a holy God, but Jesus and

31:02

Jesus alone, his life, his death, his burial, and his resurrection. because he

31:08

lives today as a proof that his payment was sufficient as he paves a way for you

31:15

to have everlasting life. Place your faith in Jesus today. Turn to Jesus who

31:21

took the judgment of God for your sin personally. A second

**Trust Jesus with Wholehearted Surrender**

31:26

application, trust Jesus with wholehearted surrender. Trust Jesus with wholehearted

31:34

surrender. I I told you about Pharaoh's response and how he flip-flops from uh

31:39

this halfhearted obedience uh to God saying ah this is what I feel

31:45

comfortable with God. I I don't want to fully obey but I feel comfortable uh with this. And so often I I know in my

31:54

my own life how I can um commit to halfhearted

32:00

obedience, half half steps where I I say, "God, that's really uncomfortable

32:06

to take a full step of disobedience, so I'll just take a baby step." And it are

32:11

you are you okay with that? Is that good enough? And he's like, "Man, Cody, I've been clear since the beginning. what

32:18

I've asked you to do has not changed. Just take a full step of obedience. You know, every every week at

32:26

at the end of every worship service, we encourage you to go out if you need to take a next step in your walk with

32:33

Jesus. We encourage you to go out and talk to someone uh outside of whatever venue you're in and go to that next step

32:40

kiosk. Let me just encourage you, make your next step a full step, not a half

32:46

step. We we want you to take your next step with with Jesus. And he might be calling

32:52

you to a a radical step. And that might we're here to support you

32:58

wholeheartedly. Wholeheartedly. But what God is asking you to do, he will relentlessly ask you

33:04

to do until you follow through in obedience. Whatever he's calling you to.

33:10

I It's It's time to start taking these things seriously. It's time to start

33:16

taking obedience seriously. It's time to start taking sin seriously and stepping

33:21

away from that and avoiding it uh like the plague. Don't don't do this like

33:27

Pharaoh. Don't do this like this half-hearted. Negotiate with God. Well,

33:33

if I give up this, will you give me that? Jesus has always been better.

33:38

Don't negotiate because honestly, he always gives you more than you would even think of negotiating for.

33:48

So, just stop playing games. I I wonder I mean I don't know. I wonder if if

33:57

God was, I don't know, just leveling with Pharaoh at some time and he and he

34:04

just said, "Pharaoh, stop playing games. Just stop playing

34:11

games. I'm God. You're

34:16

not. This is going to work the way that I want it to work because I'm God."

34:22

Which mean leads me to my my last application for us today. Worship Jesus who holds all

**Worship Jesus who holds all things together**

34:28

things together. Worship Jesus who holds all things together.

34:35

And when you think about the plagues and I told you a part of God demonstrating his power was him

34:43

enforcing his hand enforcing his hand uh through nature but it was also removing

34:50

his hand of protection. Removing his hand that that does hold all things

34:55

together. It it makes me think about my own life that when Jesus is not at the

35:02

center of my life, things are out of control. Things get pretty chaotic in in

35:08

my life when he's not in the center. And the reason for that is because God was

35:14

always designed to be the center of our lives. You you go you go back and we've

35:19

we've done a series on this, go back to the beginning. That's how God created it. God created for us to be in perfect

35:27

fellowship with him to to to be at the center of our our world, the center of

35:34

our hearts, the center of our mind, the center of our universe. But Adam and Eve disobeyed

35:40

just like all of us would have. And there was a consequence to their sin and they're removed from the garden. And God

35:47

continues to chase after them. And as long as people have put Jesus at the

35:53

center of their lives, he's held things together. And you go, "Hold on, Cody.

35:59

Everything hasn't worked out in my life." And and guess what? It hasn't always worked out the way that I thought

36:05

it would either. But it reminded me of what it says in Psalm 46:2. Though the earth give way, I will

36:13

not fear. You know, there's a peace that surpasses all understanding when God is at the

36:19

center. But he's going to hold all things together. And though chaos

36:26

surrounds, there's still a calm amidst the storm. I mean, isn't that what

36:31

Jesus's disciples learned when they're on the boat and nature is chaotic?

36:38

There's a storm and and it's a storm that is so severe that these fishermen are afraid. And Jesus is where? Asleep

36:46

in the boat. Just completely at peace. Like, come on, guys. Don't you

36:54

know I rule nature? It's going to be okay. Though the earth give way, though chaos

37:03

surrounds, it's well with my soul. I'm good. See, you were designed to have God

37:10

at the center. And when God's not at the center, you will see things around you

37:15

dissolve and decay. And you can work as hard as you

37:21

want to to try to hold all the those things together, but only he holds those things together. He holds you

37:28

together. He holds us together. That's what it says in Colossians chapter 1. He

37:36

that is Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all

37:41

creation. For by him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible

37:47

and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities. All things were created through him and for

37:54

him. And he is before all things and in him all things hold

38:01

together. That includes you. That includes me. See, the reason why he

38:07

wants you to avoid sin like the plague is because that's what's best for

38:14

you. God is not mean. He's not

38:19

vindictive. But he is jealous for you because he loves

38:27

you and he created you in a way that he cherishes you. and

38:34

he wants what's best for you. And what's best for you is to avoid sin and to have

38:41

him at the center of your life. Let you pray for

38:48

us. God, thank you that you made a way for us to avoid sin like the

38:56

plague, to not experience the consequences that our sin deserves. Lord

39:01

God, would we take that seriously today? Not play games, not mess

39:09

around, but to say that we ourselves are not the

39:15

ultimate authority, but you are. And we'll do things your

39:22

way because you're God and you're good and you're worthy of

39:27

it. You are our maker. You're our creator. You're our savior. Let us align

39:34

our hearts, our minds, and our lives to you. We ask these things in Jesus name.

39:40

Amen.

Title: Remember to Prepare | God's Strength Is Stronger

Video: Zncv266jSNw

**Welcome**

0:00

Well, good morning, Christ Chapel. Good afternoon to those of you at the 5:00 service and hello to all of you

0:06

joining us online. If all of you would please open your Bibles, open your

0:11

Bibles to Exodus 7. Exodus chapter 7. We're going to be in verses 1-7 today. If you're

0:19

opening one of the blue Bibles, it's pageuh 49. uh excited that we just got

0:24

to celebrate some of our graduating uh seniors at all of our venues. And uh

0:30

seniors, you're going to face a lot of uncertain things and a lot of unknowns as it comes up uh in your lives and you

0:36

take this next step and opening the new chapter. Uh I certainly hope that you take away from uh Christ Chapel, the

0:42

gospel. Certainly always remember that. But when you face these unknowns, please remember those three great words from

0:47

Christ Chapel. Open your Bibles. uh open your Bibles and see what God says about

0:52

all of the things uh ahead of you. It will it is a lamp to your feet and a

0:58

light unto your path. And so uh we're opening those Bibles today. We'll be there. We'll read the passage as a whole

1:04

and there's going to be some of the scriptures that I want to show you that aren't going to come up on the screen. So that's why you need to open there to

1:09

page 49 in those blue Bibles. Uh I know summer is quickly approaching as we just

1:15

celebrated those seniors that are graduating. Uh although my sons have a whole week of school left, I feel like

1:20

summer has already started in their brains. Uh I I'm I'm constantly giving

1:26

them uh reminders for school, you know, hey, remember to study for your finals,

1:32

remember to do your homework, remember to uh turn in your library book, all of

1:37

those things that are I'm trying to remind them so that they're prepared for the next day. And I I I've thought about

1:43

that and I I I do that for more than just school. I mean, I do do it for sports, you know. Hey, remember to make

1:49

your water. Remember to take both colored jerseys. Remember to take your cleats, um, uh, your shoes that you

1:56

need, you know, remember these things to prepare. Remember in life, remember brush your teeth, remember take a

2:02

shower, remember make your make your lunch. Like trying to prepare them for

2:08

what is next, whether that's a bed or the next school day or the game,

2:13

whatever that is. and and we're getting into those years. We have great boys. Uh

2:20

but we're getting into those years specifically with our older one uh who is a teenager now where you can imagine

2:27

what the reaction is sometimes to some of our reminders. Uh you know when I'm

2:32

reminding him of things that I'm know that I've reminded him of a million times. Sometimes I get the eye

2:40

roll and I get the deep breath or the uh sigh like and can anyone relate to that?

**Reminders**

2:49

Okay, come on. And so I I get those reactions and then I get a I know,

2:55

Dad. You know, tell me something I I don't know, but I I feel like it's it's

3:01

my job to make sure that he's prepared. I I'm really only trying to help him.

3:08

And you know, every once in a while he does forget some of those those things. And so it's important to to remind them

3:15

in order to uh prepare them. And it's the same way in in our spiritual lives.

3:21

In in our spiritual lives, we need to be reminded of things in our lives. Whether

3:26

it's who God is is who he's called us to be or what he's called us to do. And

3:33

sometimes when we get those reminders though, we act like teenagers. And and and we roll our eyes

3:40

at God and we go, "I know God. Tell me something I don't

3:47

know." And and and to be quite honest with you guys, sometimes I feel that

3:52

pressure, too, where I'm like, "Okay, I I feel like I've got to tell everybody something new." But but often times what

3:59

God is doing to prepare us for the next day, for the next stage, for the next

4:04

chapter, for the next uh battle we're going to fight ahead of us, whatever it is, sometimes the best preparation is

4:11

just reminding us of who God is, what he's called us to do, and who we are

4:17

because of his love for us. Those reminders can't be overlooked. We we we

4:24

can't eye roll those things and go, I know that they're not insignificant reminders. One of my

4:31

buddies this past week reminded me of what CS Lewis says in Mere Christianity where he said, "People need to be

4:38

reminded more than they need to be instructed." I thought, man, that is

4:43

that is so true. So often I look for the next instruction, the next thing, the next quick fix. And God is going, "No,

4:50

could you just remember this is who I am and this is what I've called you to do."

4:56

Remembering is a part of preparing our souls for whatever is to come. And

5:01

that's what we're going to talk about uh today is this remembering to prepare. Uh LA, if you were with us last week, we

5:08

talked about this sovereign pause that that Moses provides in the book of

5:13

Exodus as he's about things are about to get pretty crazy here at the uh picking

5:19

up in chapter 7 where we're going to find probably one of the most uh

5:25

memorable things that anybody remembers out of the Old Testament whether they know Jesus or not, which are the 10

5:31

plagues. Like that is like stamped on everybody's memory. They understand

5:37

that. But we have this sovereign pause where Moses is reflecting on uh his

5:42

spiritual heritage. But now he's having this conversation with God, this

5:48

conversation with him, which is honestly nothing new. Nothing new from the things

5:55

that he's been told before, but all of the things that are reminders to Moses.

6:00

And we're going to read through this uh entire section because it's only seven verses that we're going to study today.

6:06

And and what I want you to notice as we go through this is all of the future oriented things where God is saying, "I

6:14

will." And then he's telling Moses, "You shall he he's reminding him of all of

6:19

these things of all the plays that are about to be run." So let's pick up here in Exodus chapter 7. Uh just follow

**Exodus Chapter 7**

6:27

along with me. I'm going to begin in verse one. And the Lord said to Moses, "See, I

6:33

have made you like God to Pharaoh." And we're I'm going to explain that in a second. "And your brother Aaron shall be

6:40

your prophet. You shall speak all that I command you. And your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the people of

6:48

Israel go out of his land. But I will harden Pharaoh's heart. And though I

6:54

multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt

7:04

and bring my uh bring my host, my people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of

7:11

judgment. Verse 5, the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord when I stretch

7:16

out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them.

7:22

Moses and Aaron did so. They did just as the Lord commanded them. Now, Moses was

7:29

80 years old and Aaron 83 years old when they spoke to Pharaoh. And we're going

7:34

to stop right there. May God bless the reading of his word and may our hearts be open to hear from him. And so we have

7:40

this sovereign pause that that extends into the beginning of chapter 7 of this

**Remember the Plan**

7:46

conversation where Moses is only being reminded of everything that God had already told him. We have these things

7:53

explicitly at the burning bush in Exodus 3 where God reveals this plan to Moses.

8:01

So chapters before he reminded Moses of what he was going to do. And if you've with been with us this entire year, you

8:08

remember that Moses may have even had some inklings of how God might use him

8:13

early on in his life. And so this is all just a remembrance of of him pulling him

8:21

aside and saying, "Remember, this is what I'm going to do and this is your

8:26

part, Moses." And you go, "Why is this important? Why is it important that they have this conversation where he's

8:33

reminding him of I will and you shall. And I think it's important because

8:38

things are about to get pretty chaotic here. And when things get chaotic, we

8:44

often times forget the plan. We often time as as the the great American

8:50

philosopher Mike Tyson once said, "Everybody has a plan until they

8:58

get punched in the face. Everybody has a plan until they get

9:03

punched in the face. And let me tell you, Christian, you have an enemy that

9:08

you wake up to every morning that wants to punch you in the face. And he wants to punch you in the

9:14

face not only to hurt you, but so that you'll forget the plan of God. That

9:19

you'll forget who you are. He wants to hurt you by stealing your life, killing

9:25

you, and destroying all the godly things in your life. But he also wants you to forget who God is and who God's called

9:32

you to be and what he's called you to do. And often times when we get punched in the face, we do forget the plan. When

9:40

things get chaotic, we get chaotic inside and we start running to all of

9:46

the things that are quick fixes around us. Instead of taking that sovereign

9:52

pause and remembering, hold on, God, you're still sovereign. you're still in

9:58

control. You still love me. God God wants us to remember those things before

10:05

we get into those chaotic times. These are great reminders for us on a daily

10:12

basis. And so what I want to do is I'd like to go back through this uh passage

10:17

and I want to highlight some of the things that God is reminding Moses and Aaron. I think they're great reminders

10:24

for us. So I'll make some correlations as we go throughout the passage and give you some applications at the end. So the

10:31

first thing that we need to remember is we need to remember God's role for us as

10:36

his ambassador. Remember God's role for you as his

10:43

ambassador. God has a very specific role for you just like he had for Moses and

10:51

Aaron. If you look back at verses one and two, so the Lord says, "See, I have

10:56

made you like God to Pharaoh. And your brother Aaron shall be

11:01

a prophet. You shall speak all that I command, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel

11:08

go out of the land." Now, that that phrase can certainly it should raise

11:14

some red flags and alarms where you're like, "Well, hold on. Moses is God." No, Moses is not God. I want you to notice

11:20

what he says here. He says, "You will be like God to Pharaoh." Now, why does he

11:27

say that and what does that mean? I think part of it has to do with remember Pharaoh

11:33

himself deified himself. He saw himself as divine. He saw himself as a god. He

11:42

had complete authority and power over that nation. And so when Moses comes

11:50

into Pharaoh's power and says, "Let my people go, the the Israelites, he is now

11:56

claiming a different authority that the God of the universe, the sovereign one of creation, who has set aside the

12:04

nation of Israel as his own, it is opposing Pharaoh's authority." And so he

12:11

says, "You will be like God to him." Now, part of that too is he will be

12:16

implementing some of God's judgment through these signs and miracles, which we'll talk about in a second. And so,

12:23

there's there's an aspect here where he is like God to to Pharaoh because of how

12:31

Pharaoh sees himself, not just because of what God is going to do through Moses. And then he says, Moses, you will

12:38

be like God to Pharaoh and Aaron will be like a prophet. Remember, a prophet is

12:43

one who speaks for God. That that's why he says he's going to be a prophet. Now,

12:49

remember, Aaron was requested by Moses because Moses said that he wasn't an eloquent speaker. And so, he wanted uh

12:58

Aaron to help him because I guess Aaron was a great speaker and so he wanted that help. So, he will be like a

13:04

prophet. He will speak. So, God will speak to Moses. Moses will communicate

13:09

that to the prophet Aaron. Both of them obviously will represent God in front of

13:17

Pharaoh, in front of this authority that has enslaved his people. And what we

13:23

need to remember is we have a similar role as God's ambassadors as Paul talks

13:31

about in 2 Corinthians chapter 5. In 2 Corinthians chapter 5, we are told that

13:37

we are God's ambassadors, ministers of reconciliation. Do you remember this?

13:44

Ministers of reconciliation. What are we reconciling? We're trying to help reconcile people back to their creator

**Represent God**

13:52

God. Because God created people to be in perfect fellowship with him. But people,

13:59

us, you, me, we sinned. We have been separated from a holy God. Now we carry

14:05

that message to represent God and tell people you don't have to be enslaved to

14:11

sin. You don't have to be enslaved to the one who is destroying your life. You

14:17

can now be set free and back in a right relationship with God. Similar message

14:23

that he has here that Moses and and Aaron are taking to Pharaoh. We have

14:30

similar represent. We represent God by being his ambassadors. Now, I want to

14:36

warn you though that not everybody likes that message. I I know that that doesn't make

14:43

sense because you'd go, "Man, that sounds like good news." That's why we call it good news. It is good news. But

14:50

if you'll go back just a little bit further, uh if you a little bit earlier in 2 Corinthians, you go to 2

14:55

Corinthians chapter 2, it says that Christ leads us in this triumphal procession where we are the fragrance of

15:03

God, spreading the knowledge of Christ. And it says that that fragrance to some

15:08

is very positive and very pleasing as they come to know Christ. But to some we

15:13

are the stench of death. Not everybody likes that message as you

15:20

are an ambassador for God because you're going into places where he is unknown.

15:27

And sometimes people are receptive and sometimes people aren't. Just like Pharaoh is not going to be receptive to

15:34

this message. But we've got to remember our second thing and it's this. Remember that God's always working in ways that

15:42

you cannot see. God is always working in ways that you

**God is working in ways you cannot see**

15:49

cannot see. This is one of the things that that we've got to uh remember as well because

15:57

uh and Ben even talked about this a few weeks ago when we are being faithful and it doesn't seem like it's making a

16:04

difference. I I don't know what the conversation was between God and Moses

16:10

extensively. Obviously, we have the ones that he's recorded here, but I don't know how many uh plagues or if God had

16:18

even revealed the plagues to Moses. He says by acts of of judgment, but I don't

16:24

know if he told him, "Okay, Moses, there's going to be 10." Like, this is going to go on for a little while. I I

16:30

don't know. I don't know what he revealed to him there. But Moses, he he might be going, "Okay, play one, play

16:37

two, play three. How long are we going to do this? How long is this going to go on? And it it it feels like it's not

16:45

making a difference even though he's doing what God has called him to do.

16:51

Which is why we've got to remember we are just called to be faithful. God is working even when we don't see it. And

16:59

he explains a little bit of this in verses three and four. He says, "But I

**God works in Pharaohs heart**

17:04

will harden Pharaoh's heart." And we'll talk about that in a second. And though

17:10

I multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, Pharaoh, he's not going

17:15

to listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and bring my hosts, my people, the

17:22

children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. And so

17:29

some of the ways that uh God is going to work in ways that Moses couldn't particularly see is through those signs

17:37

and and miracles, the plagues that we'll talk about next week. But that's

17:42

definitely one way. But another way that he's working is in Pharaoh's heart. He's

17:48

he's working there. Now, we need to pause here for just a second because this is a a huge theological tension

17:55

that we have to hold. And we have to hold that God is sovereign but also gives us free will. There's a tension

18:02

point there. And we've got to hold that tension because if you read this verse

18:09

solely on its own without the context of the rest of scripture, then the way that

18:14

you would read this is that God only he's going to harden Pharaoh's heart. And Pharaoh had no ability at all to

18:25

listen and heed that message. and repent. That God could only reveal

18:30

himself through judgment. And that's not true. And I I'll tell you if you if you

18:37

will go back to Jonah and the Ninevites. Do you if you remember this quickly,

18:44

remember Jonah goes and reveals to them, hey, God said you need to repent. And

18:50

then the leader of the Ninevites goes, you're right. We need to repent. And so the whole city repents there. There is

18:57

mercy there, not just judgment. And so there's an opportunity for them to turn

19:04

here. If you read it on its own, it feels like Pharaoh doesn't have a choice. But remember, first that Egypt

19:12

had enslaved the Israelites for 430 years. And second, they had an

19:20

opportunity to let people go. In fact, this particular pharaoh had an

19:25

opportunity to let people go. If you look back at chapter 5:2, this is one of the reasons why I wanted you to open

19:31

your Bibles because it's not on the screen. But if you look back at chapter 5:2, it's probably just a page flip. It

19:37

says, "But Pharaoh said, this is when Moses goes to him and goes, hey, uh, God

19:42

said, let his people go." And but Pharaoh said, "Who's the

19:48

Lord? Who is this? Who is the Lord that I should obey his

19:54

voice? This is that authority that we just talked about. And let Israel go. I

20:01

don't know the Lord. And more and moreover, I'm not going to let Israel go. I'm I'm not going to do that. And

20:09

so, there's a there's an aspect here where where Moses uh where Pharaoh had

20:15

already hardened his heart to God's voice. In fact, if you looked throughout

20:22

uh um Exodus, the book of Exodus, there is an equal number of

20:27

times where it says that Pharaoh hardened his own heart as there is God

20:34

hardened Pharaoh's heart. It's an equal equal number. And in fact, we see

20:39

Pharaoh hardening his heart first. See, right right here, you say,

20:45

"Well, God says that he's that he's going to do this." Yes, he's going to do it after Pharaoh has already hardened

20:53

his heart. Which leads us to a a a spiritual application here that's just a

21:00

a quick aside. And it's this. Persistent sin desensitizes us to sin.

21:10

Persistent sin desensitizes us to sin where we where we think there there's

21:16

nothing wrong with it and we keep keep going down that path. You see, one of the ways that you can interpret this

21:24

hardening of heart that I think is very helpful is in a figurative manner. And

21:29

in a figurative manner, that word harden can actually mean to

21:35

twist. And I I think that's very helpful. Um, I don't know if have any of

21:40

you ever tried to ring out a wet towel or your washing machine broke and it

21:46

wouldn't drain and so you had to ring out all the clothes. That's only happened to me. Okay. Um, multiple times

21:53

actually now I think about it. But if you think about ringing out a a towel or

21:59

clothes or wet socks or wet t-shirt or something like that, what are you doing to that piece of

22:05

cloth? You're twisting it, right? You're twisting it and what is coming out is

22:11

what was on the inside. You you didn't you didn't put anything in in there

22:16

yourself, but you're you're ringing it out. You're twisting it to reveal and to

22:21

get out what was already there. I think that's a great interpretation for us to

22:27

think about as we interpret this passage that Pharaoh had already hardened his

22:33

heart and what God was going to do was put him in these situations where it was

22:38

going to squeeze him and reveal what was already in his heart which is I don't

22:44

want to listen to God and moreover I'm not going to let his people go. I I I

22:49

think that's a great interpretation and and that often times you know this that oftenimes happen to happens to us in our

22:55

lives. I've told you this quote many times that one of my mentors back in seminary said we're all like

23:02

sponges. We don't know what's on the inside until we're squeezed. And we get into those

23:08

situations where we're squeezed and our true colors show. And that's what's

23:14

going on here is that God is working in a way where he's going to to ring

23:19

Pharaoh's heart out and go, "What's what's really in there?" Oh, it's it's pride. Oh, it's stubbornness and

23:27

selfishness and obstinence. Oh, that's what's in there. And now it's revealed for all to see.

23:35

God is working in a way that that favor that Moses can't

23:41

always see. By the way, we see this same thing happen in Romans 1. If you go to

23:46

there's a New Testament example for you where the people they exchange the truth for a lie and God says, "Great. If

23:54

that's what you want, have it your way. You don't want to listen to me.

23:59

Have it your way." And and they end up falling deeper and deeper into sin. It's

24:06

not because God doesn't care. He He's ringing their hearts out. So it's

24:11

revealed that they have exchanged the truth for a lie. So God is working. We

24:17

need to remember that even when we're being faithful and it seems like it's not making any difference, that God is

24:24

always working in ways that we cannot see. And then the final reminder is

24:30

this. Remember that God's plan will ultimately

**Gods plan will prevail**

24:35

prevail. Remember that God's plan will ultimately prevail.

24:42

You know, when we're in the midst of chaotic

24:47

situations and it feels like the odds are stacked against us, it's easy to

24:53

forget the finish line. It's it's easy to forget to go to the

24:59

end. And remember that Christ is victorious. And again, we are led in a

25:06

triumphal procession as we follow Jesus.

25:11

Verse five, it says, "The Egyptians shall then know that I am the Lord." In

25:17

fact, f fun fact, it seems like some Egyptians through all of this actually

25:23

come to know Yahweh and place their trust in Yahweh and leave with Israel. that there are actual uh

25:31

conversions in a sense because of this that all of the Egyptians hearts were

25:38

not hardened to God. The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord when I stretch out my hand

25:44

against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them. And Moses and

25:50

Aaron did so. They did just as the Lord commanded them. And Moses was 80 years old and Aaron was 83 when they spoke to

25:59

Pharaoh. This is just a a great reminder that God's plan wi will will prevail

26:05

sometimes in spite of us and definitely not because of our strength. I love that

26:10

Moses includes uh their ages. I mean, this is like two grumpy old men that are

26:16

are walking in, you know, and you know, get off my lawn, you know, kind of, you

26:21

know, get get Egypt out of here. and get us out of here. Um, but God's plan will

26:28

prevail. It It will prevail. And And that's easy to forget. It's easy to

26:34

forget. You turn on the news and you go, "God's not winning." Hold on. God's

26:39

working in ways that we cannot see. And we know that he wins in the end. This is

26:45

why this is why I go back to that that CS Lewis quote that oftenimes we don't need to be instructed. We just need to

26:51

be reminded. We need to be reminded that our God wins that his ways win. That we

27:01

don't have to adopt o other ways. That we we don't have to adopt the ways of

27:07

this world, but we just need to be faithful to do what he's called us to do. And that he'll work in ways that we

27:13

can't always see, and he will win in the end. And so I want to give you some

27:18

quick uh applications and uh really this I I've put this under the header of

27:25

remember to prepare by preparing to remember. Remember to prepare by

**Remember to prepare**

27:31

preparing to remember. We need to prepare to remind

27:38

ourselves. I mean, we set reminders for things in our lives all the time because

27:44

we're trying to prepare for what is ahead. And sometimes we need to remember to prepare and that will prepare us to

27:52

remember. See, very cyclical this whole thing. But ultimately, that that's what

27:59

that's what we need. and and you say and and I've I've put this verse on here

28:05

that I'll read to you in just a second uh from from Proverbs because I I want

28:10

to remind you of this as we hold this tension even between God's sovereignty

28:16

and the free will that he he gives people. There is a tension where

28:22

absolutely God's strength is stronger and we 100 100 100% depend upon him. But

28:29

he also asks us to walk in step with him to be prepared ourselves to to to play a

28:35

part in his plan just like he asked Moses and and Aaron to play a part in his plan. And this proverb we we talk

28:42

about here uh at church on staff a lot amongst one another. But I love this.

28:47

Proverbs 21:31. The horse is made ready for battle, for the day of battle. But

**Gods strength is stronger**

28:54

victory belongs to the Lord. The horse remains ready for battle, but victory belongs to the Lord. The way that I

29:02

interpret that is that there is a part where God asked me to prepare. that he

29:07

asked me to I I I don't I I'm sorry if it comes across this way, but I don't

29:13

come up here and just wing it Sunday to

29:19

Sunday. God's strength is stronger. God could absolutely do something and and

29:25

and do that in miraculous ways. But I also feel like he's like, Cody, I give

29:31

you a brain. Prepare. small one, but I gave you a

29:37

brain. Prepare, be faithful, sit and listen, soak in the passage, think about

29:44

me, pray for pray for our people. Like all of all of those things. Now, I could

29:49

just show up and go, "Well, your strength is stronger. God, take care of it." But when I think of this verse in

29:55

Proverbs, what if the Lord wants to use the horse? And he goes, "Where's the horse, Cody? You didn't prepare the

30:02

horse. That's how I was going to use that's how I was going to use this in this battle. Yes, victory ultimately

30:07

belongs to the Lord. And yes, it's ultimately his strength. But I've also

30:13

asked you to play a part. I I want you to be involved in this one so that you

30:19

can have a front row seat to see God work. So that you can see him work in

30:25

and through you. Yes, God's strength is stronger. And yes, victory ultimately

30:31

depends on him. But part of preparing the horse for battle, preparing yourself for the battle tomorrow, the next week,

30:38

the next month, the next year, is remembering who God is and who God

30:45

called you to be. And so, let me give you some quick applications here, just things to remember that I think

30:51

correlate with this passage. The first is remember your role. Remember your

**Remember your role**

30:57

role. Moses and Aaron had very specific roles to

31:03

play. Remember, you will be like God to Pharaoh and Aaron will be like a

31:09

prophet. Now, I'm not asking you to be like God to anyone. But I am I am encouraging us

31:17

all, myself included, to be his ambassadors, to be his servants. I mean

31:22

there you can you can dissect that as much as you want depending upon uh the

31:28

sphere that you are in that God has a role for you to play a role in your

31:33

family a role in your marriage a role in the body of Christ at at large re

31:40

remember your role and and that's important to remember because one I just

31:46

want you to be reminded that God has a role for you. He's not set you on the

31:52

sidelines. He wants you in the game. He wants you playing, not passing. He He wants to work in and

31:59

through you. So remember your role. And And that's also encouraging, too,

32:06

because everybody has a particular role to play. And it's not all up to you. I I

32:12

mean, imagine if uh I'll use a sports analogy quickly. Imagine if it's time

32:18

for the baseball team to to all go out to the infield and they all run to play second

32:23

base. That's a problem. Or if everybody runs out onto the football field and

32:29

everybody wants to be the star wide receiver. That's a problem. We We all We

32:35

all have a a role to play. And you don't have to do everything. You just have to

32:40

have to do your your role, your particular role. So remember your role.

32:45

Second, remember your assignment. Remember your assignment.

32:50

This is my role and this is my assignment. And and what I I mean by that is going back to verse six. I love

32:58

how it says Moses and Aaron did just as the Lord commanded them. They did just

33:04

as the Lord commanded them. I love that because they did no more and they did no

33:09

less. They didn't try to take matters into their own hands and go, "Okay, I got to

33:16

be a superhero here." You know, while I got your attention, Pharaoh, and this

33:21

too, you know, they didn't do more and they

33:27

didn't pull punches. They didn't do less. They they just they did just as

33:33

the Lord commanded them. And and I I I hope that encourages you too that that

33:40

God hasn't asked you to be superhuman. He is. He's divine. He's supernatural.

33:46

He can work through those things. He just says, "Remember your role. Put

33:51

yourself in the place where I can work in and through you. And then just do what I ask. Ju just just that. Nothing

33:59

more, nothing less. Remember your assignment. And then finally, remember your God.

**Remember Your God**

34:06

Remember your God. Victory belongs to him. And I want

34:14

you to remember him uh in in two ways. First is remember the I wills, not just

34:23

the you shalls. Remember remember remember God's promises that he says I will do this.

34:29

And you've got to be in his word if you want to know what your role is and what your assignment is. Go back to those

34:36

promises. You can bet your life on it. You can bet your life on it. A as

34:44

sure as scripture was fulfilled when he said he was going to bring out his people, he brought his people out. And

34:51

as sure as he tells you, he's never going to leave you. He's never going to forsake you. Even when it seems like the odds are stacked against you. Even when

34:58

it seems like your obedience isn't making a difference. Even when it feels like you don't belong. Even when it

35:03

feels like nobody's listening. Even when it feels like you're

35:10

invisible. He's never left you. He's never forsake you. His plan hasn't

35:16

failed. His plan is right on time. You're right in the place that

35:21

you're supposed to be. Just continue to to be faithful to him.

35:26

Remember your God. Your God is always faithful. Remember his promises to you.

35:33

As faithful as he was in the past, so he will be in the

35:39

future. You guys remember our our Irish friend, Dr. Murphy. Um, love him, man.

35:48

Such a such a great friend. was with him on on Monday just uh hanging out and I

35:54

was reminded um one of the things that his dad and this is in his he actually

35:59

put this in his book uh that we've that we've looked at before authentic influencer but one of the things that

36:05

his dad um always said to all the kids whenever he dropped them off at school

36:11

was remember who you are and remember whom you

36:16

serve. Remember who you are and remember whom you serve. Nothing

36:23

new. Nothing nothing earthshattering, mindblowing, nothing

36:29

like that. But gosh, so powerful.

36:34

So powerful to remember that you are a child of the utmost

36:41

king and you get to serve him and serve him faithfully and he will always be

36:47

with you till the end. Remember who you are and remember whom you serve. Let me pray for us.

36:53

God, I don't know what the battles are ahead for each one of

37:00

us, but Lord God, I know that we need

37:05

reminders in the midst of a chaotic world. When we feel like we've gotten

37:11

punched in the face by our enemy or circumstances, you're always

37:18

faithful. You're always there. You're always working for our good and for your

37:26

glory. So Lord God, will we plant our feet on you as our firm foundation,

37:32

remembering that you have set us apart. You have called us your own. Remembering who we are in

37:41

Christ and whom we serve for your glory. And we ask it in Jesus name. Amen.

Title: The Strength of a Spiritual Heritage | God's Strength Is Stronger

Video: 9d-5h2-DzCE

0:00

Well, good morning, Christ Chapel and good afternoon to those of you joining us at the five o'clock service. And

0:05

certainly a happy Mother's Day to all the the mothers out there. So thankful

0:11

for you. Uh you are a huge part of uh the disciplehip and the Christ Chapel family. Uh thank you, thank you, thank

0:17

you for your prayers, for your support, for your example, all the ways that you lead in our church. Uh we are certainly

0:24

thankful for you. Also want to say I know today can bring a roller coaster of emotions uh for uh some folks today.

0:30

Thank you for planting your feet on God's word uh God's fellowship and this wonderful uh family. Uh thank you for

0:37

putting one foot in front of the other. Uh excited that you're here. Uh but one of the things that's fun for me for

0:43

Mother's Day is uh seeing the moms and and the kids come uh together. And so,

0:50

uh, you know, it's fun to see them come together because I can see the physical, uh, resemblance of those children. And I

0:57

know, uh, if you are a child that came with with mom today, uh, you're doing the right thing that I I hear it from

1:03

moms all the time. That's all they want is for their kids to all be together, but you still need to get her a gift.

1:09

And, uh, let me just tell you, she's like, that's all I want is just for all of us to be together. caution, get go

1:16

ahead and and get at least a card or something like that. But it's fun seeing all the families together because you

1:22

can see those physical resemblances. You know, you're like, "Oh man, you know, you have your mom's eyes or smile or or

1:29

whatever that that is." And I I think you know that uh cuz I think you can see that in your world. But I had planned

1:36

this fun little uh Mother's Day game that we were going to play where I was going to show you um celebrity

1:43

motherdaughter combos where I would show you the daughter and then you would have to guess who the celebrity mom was. And

1:50

I think it would be very obvious because they looked uh almost identical. Uh but

1:56

uh late Thursday I found out that to get the the picture because of copyright

2:01

issues, it would cost $500 per picture. Moms, you are totally worth

2:09

that. 100%. But I thought you would rather use those tithes and offerings in better

2:15

ways. Uh so we are not going to do those photos and you're just going to have to get the concept. Okay. Um so but you get

2:22

it. I mean, you could just look around and see those looking at people uh around you, seeing the the moms and and

2:28

the the daughters or sons and how they look alike. And I was using that whole example uh because I was trying to show

2:36

how uh that's that physical DNA gets passed down obviously uh naturally. And

2:43

I don't know if those celebrity uh moms want their daughters to look like them

2:48

or not, but when you compare celebrity moms to spiritual moms, uh I don't hear

2:54

many spiritual moms say, "I hope my kids look like me." Uh when I talk to

3:00

spiritual moms, spiritual moms say, "I want my kids to look like Jesus. I I

3:05

want them to look look like him." But passing on a spiritual DNA is obviously

3:11

much harder than passing on a a physical DNA. It takes an intentionality. It

3:17

takes an an everyday discipline and everyday effort. But when you pass down

3:22

that that spiritual DNA, it creates a spiritual heritage and a spiritual

3:28

heritage that can provide a lot of strength for you, for those around you, and for generations to come. And that's

3:34

what we're going to look at today. So, if you will open your Bibles, please to Exodus chapter 6. Exodus 6. We're going

3:42

to be in uh uh page 49 in one of the blue Bibles. If you're opening a blue Bible, wherever you are, Exodus 6:es 14

3:52

uh to 30. We're continuing our series uh God's strength is stronger that we

3:57

started on Easter, which by the way uh just for Easter, guys. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so

4:04

much uh for those of you that made so many sacrifices to go to a Saturday

4:09

service or come to that uh Sunday sunrise service. It made a huge huge

4:16

difference. We were able to host over 15,000 people at Christ Chapel uh at all

4:22

of our campuses because you made room for them. Uh, so I honestly from my

4:29

perspective and talking to the staff, I think this was the best uh spread out in

4:34

a sense, if I can say it that way, distributed Easter attendance that we've ever had because our goal is always to

4:39

give people the best worship experience possible so that they have a place to park, a place to sit, and you made

4:45

sacrifices uh to make that happen. So, thank you for doing that. If you didn't

4:50

have a good experience, uh apologize for that. We created an email for you. Uh,

4:56

it's tell It to Jesus at Christchapelbc.org. Um, no spaces or

5:02

dashes. Obviously, capitalize the J and Jesus. Um, but no, I'm just kidding.

5:08

Certainly tell us if there's something that we could do better. We we do want to know, but you guys uh did a fantastic

5:14

job. So, um, we're we're continuing in that series and it's very it's been very

5:21

actionpacked. If you remember, uh, Moses is coming back from Midian. He's going back to Egypt to rally the Israelites

5:29

and say, "Hey, God has a plan and he's getting us out of here." That that's

5:34

what's going on. And so he goes and he goes to Pharaoh and he tells Pharaoh, "Let you know, hey, God has a plan. He

5:41

wants you to let us go so that we can make sacrifices to him, worship him."

5:46

And Pharaoh is not cooperating. And so Moses gets an earful from from Pharaoh.

5:53

And because uh Pharaoh is not cooperating, he makes the Israelites lives a lot harder. And so he gets an

5:59

earful from his own people, from the Israelites. And then Moses goes and as

6:04

we studied last week in Exodus chapter 6, that he goes and he gives God an earful where he's like, "God, do you

6:10

really know what you're doing here? Because this is really hard." And God makes all these promises. I will. I

6:16

will. I will. reassuring Moses that he has a plan for his people that he is

6:22

going to carry out. Very action-packed. And we're about to get into chapter 7,

6:27

which is are the plagues. Again, a lot of action. But in the midst of all this

6:33

action, there is this uh biblical sovereign pause. There's this there's this pause

6:40

at the end of Exodus 6. And this pause is a genealogy

6:47

of Moses and Aaron. And you go, man, this is an odd place to put it because

6:53

you would think that a genealogy would be put at the beginning of a book. I mean, we started off with the origin of

6:59

Moses, Moses's birth, and all of those things. Why didn't he put the genealogy there? Well, he's put it here for a few

7:08

reasons. I I think this is just Cody's speculation here, but first I think he put it there because he's trying to to

7:15

validate who he is. Uh remember Moses is coming back from Midian and he's been

7:21

gone for how long? Quiz? 40 years. 40 years he's been gone.

7:28

He he was in Midian and he comes back and in a sense the people are like um who are you? And so he's trying to tell

7:35

them this is who I am. Second reason why I think it's there is he's tracing the

7:40

Levitical priesthood. So th this is something that we're going to study a lot more in the fall of this upcoming

7:46

year because remember we're studying Exodus this entire year. So we'll study that more in the fall. But he's tracing the Levitical priesthood. But I think

7:53

that's important because as they're about to enter into this this great battle against the Egyptians and

7:59

specifically uh Pharaoh, I think he's reminding people that it's not a physical battle. It's a spiritual

8:05

battle. There's a spiritual battle that's going on in Exodus. But the other

8:10

reason why I think he's mentioning it here is because I think he's reminding himself of the spiritual heritage that

8:18

he has. I think he's tracing his own heritage back going, "Okay, there were

8:24

people of faith before me and he's gaining some strength not only from uh

8:30

his own people, his own ancestors faithfulness to God, but God's faithfulness to his ancestors as well.

8:38

This is providing strength for him before he enters this spiritual battle

8:43

to come with Pharaoh." So, we're going to do something very similar to what was going on here in Exodus. We're going to

8:50

pause today and we're going to pause and we're going to look at what does a

8:55

spiritual heritage do for us. Uh, and we're going to pause specifically on

9:00

this Mother's Day because moms, you're a huge part obviously of the spiritual

9:06

heritage of our fellowship. And so, what I want to do is I want to just highlight some things out of this genealogy. Don't

9:13

worry, as a Mother's Day gift, I'm not going to read the whole genealogy to you, but we're going to highlight some

9:19

things out of there and make some applications for you today so that you can draw some strength from your

9:25

spiritual heritage. So, we're going to start at the beginning in verse 14. But the first thing that I want you to see

9:31

is that a spiritual heritage is something we can reflect on.

9:38

A spiritual heritage is something we can reflect

9:45

on. Remember, this is right after Moses has basically been uh chewed out by his

9:52

own people. uh he he's just made all of his relatives lives a lot harder because

10:00

remember he's gone to Pharaoh let people go and he says hey we're going to make you make more bricks and get your own

10:07

straw we're not going to help you uh do your job and so his people are not happy

10:13

with him but then at the beginning of verse 14 it says these are the heads of

10:18

their father's houses now who is there

10:23

uh who are the two people that he's talking about here. This is Moses and Aaron. Remember, they're brothers. So,

10:31

this this is tracing back their heritage as well because they're going to uh partner this. Now, in this genealogy, it

10:39

goes it starts with Reuben and Simeon who were the eldest children of Jacob.

10:44

And Jacob's new name was changed to another pop quiz. Why not? See, we

10:49

didn't get to have fun with the pictures, so we'll just have fun with pop quizzes that I know you

10:55

love. What? What? Jacob's name was changed to Israel. That's right. So, it's tracing this this national history

11:03

back to um basically the the head of the nation. Now, obviously, we know that

11:09

that goes further back. In fact, Jacob's history goes all the way back to Abram.

11:16

And we've got a simplified version. This doesn't go all the the genealogy in in

11:21

Exodus doesn't go all this way back, but I I wanted to to show you this. So, you see Aaron and Moses there at the bottom.

11:28

Miriam had a role to play at the beginning of Exodus, if you'll remember that. So, played a huge role in saving

11:36

Moses's life. But if you trace it all the way back, it goes all the way back to Abraham. And when we talk about uh

11:43

the the patriarchs of the faith, you hear it all throughout the Old Testament, the God of Abraham, Isaac,

11:51

and Jacob. It it's this this tracing of a lineage of faithfulness, not only

11:58

their faithfulness to God again, but God's faithfulness to them. And so Moses

12:04

is tracing his lineage and he's setting it apart from the Egyptians, saying,

12:11

"You have been a people who have been set apart, who God has put his name on,

12:19

whom he's always been faithful to. He's reminding his people not just where

12:26

they've come from, but whom they've come from. They they have they have made it

12:33

through because of God's hand on their life. They they've made it through

12:38

because of his protection. They've made it through because of his faithfulness.

12:44

That's what he's reminding them of. And that's something that we need to

12:49

remember as well. That's why a spiritual heritage is something we can reflect on.

12:54

And we we should reflect on that because we should remember the people that have

13:00

carried the torch of faith in our past and who have passed it along to us to

13:06

provide us uh strength as well. Because just as God has been faithful in the

13:12

past, so he will be faithful in the future. I learned that from Doug Cecil.

13:17

That's one of his sayings. Just as God has been faithful in the past, so he will be faithful in the future. So Moses

13:25

is reflecting on God's faithfulness throughout the generations obviously up

13:31

until that point. And so here's a quick application for you. Um to find strength

13:38

for tomorrow, remember the faith of your

13:43

leaders. Remember the faith of your leaders.

13:49

Now, the reason why I I say leaders, I know for some of you that might throw you off uh just a bit, but the reason

13:56

why I say remember the faith of your leaders is because of what we're told in Hebrews 13 7 and 8. In Hebrews chapter

14:04

13 7 and 8, it says, "Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word

14:11

of God. Consider the outcome of the way of their way of life and imitate their

14:16

faith. Why can we do that? Because Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and

14:25

forever. The same Jesus that our leaders have worshiped and God has been faithful

14:32

to them. He's the same yesterday, today, and he will be forever. And so, just as

14:38

he was trusted then, he can be trusted today, and can be trusted tomorrow. And

14:43

that's one of the things that we reflect on. I love that. That's why I put leaders up in the application point is

14:49

because it says remember your leaders. Now, one of the things that I want to be

14:55

careful of, I'm not I'm not saying leaders to draw attention to me or any of our staff or elders or anything like

15:00

that because what we are trying to do is equip you specifically to be leaders in

15:07

your own homes. Disciplehip starts at home. And we want you to be the spiritual leaders

15:15

uh for your family. And if that hasn't happened in your family and you don't have those examples of spiritual leaders

15:22

in your home, I I'm sorry. I I wish it were different. But let me tell you,

15:27

there are a ton of spiritual mothers and fathers here in our fellowship. A a lot

15:33

that that I look up to as well. I I I've told our staff a hundred times, and if

15:40

you ask them, I hope they would remember this, but we we talk about all the time, we stand on the shoulders of

15:46

giants. We're not we're not doing something uh new or or flashy. We're

15:53

just trying to put ourselves in the way that God is going. We we stand on on the

15:58

shoulders of of giants. And so we consider the outcome of the faith of those who have come before us who have

16:05

set an example uh for us to follow. We consider how God has been faithful to

16:11

them to draw strength and say you know what just as he was faithful to them he will be faithful to us because Jesus

16:18

Christ is the same yesterday today and forever. A spiritual heritage is

16:23

something to reflect on but it's also something we can build on. A spiritual

16:29

heritage is something we can build on. You know, if you don't have I I'll

16:38

go back. If you don't have that spiritual heritage to reflect on in your home, I I I've been praying for you this

16:44

week. I hope this is the point that inspires and encourages you that you can begin building now.

16:52

that just because you haven't had that model for you in your home again doesn't mean that you don't have the support and

16:57

encouragement here in the family of God of this fellowship to begin to build

17:03

something new to begin to build something fresh because God is about building new things he's about redeeming

17:10

he's about starting a fresh uh thing in our lives and we see that this is built

17:15

though on personal obedience if you look at verses 26 and 27

17:21

7 after they trace the the the lineage there the the spiritual heritage it says

17:28

these are the Aaron and Moses to whom the Lord said so it's like hey all of their relatives this is the the Moses

17:35

and Aaron who have shown up on the scene this is the Moses and Aaron to whom the Lord said bring out the people

17:42

of Israel from the land of Egypt by their hosts and it was they who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt about bringing out

17:49

the people of Israel from Egypt. This Moses and this

17:56

Aaron. Um I this is certainly again obviously I identify them which I told

18:03

you was really the first purpose of this genealogy was verifying their identity

18:09

as the ones that God has chosen to lead his people out of Egypt. But what I I

18:15

love about this is um this is a very specific example of how Moses and Aaron

18:22

had to obey themselves to continue the spiritual heritage of Israel. I if if

18:30

they didn't obey, where would Israel be? I don't know. I don't know. Could

18:38

God have done amazing things? Obviously, yes. His strength is stronger. His

18:44

strength is strong enough and I'm sure he would have made a way just like he always has. But I'm thinking

18:50

specifically of Moses and Aaron here that there's very specific instructions.

18:56

It's the ones those are the ones whom the Lord said to. He says this is what

19:01

I'm saying to you. I didn't say it to anybody else. I'm saying it to you. And yes, you are the ones that have to go

19:09

before Pharaoh and obey. very specific instructions that Moses and Aaron had to

19:15

take very specific next steps to obey not only for their sake but for

19:21

everyone's sake for they were they were building the legacy the spiritual

19:29

heritage by one step at a time through their own obedience with the Lord they had to listen to him and they had to

19:36

obey that's what was continuing that lineage that was continuing continuing

19:41

to build that spiritual heritage. And so an application for us uh today is this

19:48

to find strength for tomorrow. Run your race for others. Run your race for

19:58

others. I know that's not a super popular application where you're like, "What do

20:03

I get out of it?" Well, sometimes not a lot. I'll be

20:11

honest. But sometimes we we do things for other people. I mean, moms are a

20:17

great example. Moms do a ton of things for us that they don't necessarily get

20:22

any kickbacks from, but they do it for the sake of

20:28

others. And and this is a great application, too, because I don't I don't know about you,

20:35

but I'll I'll just be honest with you. Um, when it comes to spiritual

20:40

disciplines, I don't always want to. I just don't always want

20:48

to. I mean, do you are there ever things in your life that you don't want to do,

20:53

but you know you need to do them? This is a great example of

20:59

sometimes we do those things and we obey. Yes, for our own sake. Yes, for

21:05

your own sake and your own walk with Jesus. Because I believe God blesses your obedience. But I also believe that

21:11

your obedience has a ripple effect. That your obedience ripples into those around

21:18

you. And sometimes we can get very self-centered and go, "What do I get out of this God if I

21:24

obey?" And I'm sure Moses and Aaron might have been asking that same question as well. Well, what do I get if

21:30

I go go up here and do this? And he's like, "You know what? the there's 2 million people that are going to be

21:36

freed from slavery if you obey. I know you don't feel like it. I

21:42

know it doesn't feel good. But let's run our race for other people. In fact,

21:48

that's what we're admonished to do in Hebrews 12. in Hebrews 12:es 1 and 2. Um

21:55

this is right after the what is called the hall of faith where it lists some

22:00

heroes of the faith specifically in the Old Testament but uh you know similar to

22:06

the uh hall of fame that you would put people in. And so it's listing the Hebrews of faith. And then it says,

22:12

"Therefore, since we're surrounded by this great cloud of witnesses, people

22:17

that are watching on, people that are cheering us on, let us also lay aside every weight and sin, which so which

22:25

clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to

22:33

whom?" Sunday school answer. Jesus. Good. the founder and perfector of our

22:40

faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising

22:45

its shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. I I love how this um speaks to the

22:54

perspective when we talk about taking our next step and our finishing and running our race with God is that the

23:02

our eyes aren't on ourselves. Our eyes are on the great cloud of witnesses, but

23:07

specifically Jesus. Our eyes are on him. And so when we're called to take that

23:13

next step of obedience to build that spiritual heritage, we don't have our

23:19

eyes on ourselves, but we're running the race for Jesus. We have our eyes set on

23:25

him. Because guess what? When he went to the cross, guess who was on his mind? You and me. We were on his he was

23:35

obeying for others sake just like sometimes we are called to obey. We

23:40

don't feel like it. I guess what I don't think Jesus felt like going to the cross

23:46

either. But he ran his race with others in mind. And that's what we need to do.

23:54

We've got to run our race with others in mind even when we don't feel like it.

24:00

You know, when I think about running the race and I just talking about the the spiritual giants that we stand on the

24:06

shoulders of, I I imagine it as a relay race. You know, a relay race is, you

24:12

know, where they hand the baton to somebody else, you know, the next person to run the next lap or or segment of the

24:18

race. Um, when you when there's a relay race, I was never fast, so I didn't run

24:23

track, but I've watched it on television. But whomever you're going to

24:32

pass the baton to, they can't come back to you. The runner has to get to them.

24:40

There's a line. You have to get to them. They can't go

24:45

backwards. You can only go forwards. You've got to continue to take that next step to hand off the baton. So, let us

24:52

throw off the sin that so easily entangles us and let us fix our eyes on

24:59

him to continue to run the race to pass the baton to the next generation. Doing

25:05

it for the sake of others to build that spiritual heritage whether you've got it

25:10

in your past or not because Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. So

25:16

a spiritual heritage is something that we can uh reflect on. It's something we can build on. And then finally, a

25:23

spiritual heritage is something we can pass on. We can pass on. We can pass on. We

25:30

can give it just like that baton. We can pass it on uh to the next generation.

25:35

Now, now again, much harder than physical DNA. Much harder to pass on than those

25:43

physical traits. It takes an an intentionality uh to it because it's harder to pass on

25:49

belief than it is to pass on eye color, believe it or not. And there's not a

25:54

whole lot that that you can do except setting the example. Verses 28 to30. On

25:59

the day when the Lord spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, the Lord said to Moses, "I am the Lord. Tell Pharaoh,

26:06

king of Egypt, all that I said to you. But Moses said to the Lord, behold, I am of uncircumcised lips. How will Pharaoh

26:13

listen to me? You know what's interesting to me? I want to pull this out real fast because Moses continually

26:21

talks about himself, we've seen it before, as a man of uncircumcised lips. Ryan talked about this last week when he

26:27

was doing the first part of chapter 6. And another way to translate that is uh

26:33

clumsy of speech. and and Moses gave the same excuse uh back in uh I can't

26:39

remember what chapter it was but earlier where he talked about hey God I'm I'm a lousy speaker and so that's that's

26:45

sometimes how it's translated this uncircumcised lips but if you trace the concept of of of circumcision I'm not

26:53

going to go into that today but conceptually if you if you track that throughout the Old Testament and New

26:59

Testament essentially what it means is unholy unqualified ified not set

27:08

apart. And what Moses is saying here is God, I'm not qualified to do

27:14

this. I I I don't have eloquent speech. I don't have holy lips here that can

27:22

speak divine commandments to Pharaoh on your behalf. And God's like, it's about

27:29

me, not about your ability. It it it's not about whether you have uncertain.

27:35

It's just about taking the next step of obedience with him in faith. And see,

27:41

that's what we need to pass on. What we need to pass on is not our own ability,

27:47

but we need to pass on God's faithfulness. Stories of God's

27:53

faithfulness. You see, to find strength for tomorrow, retell the stories of

27:58

God's strength. retell the stories of God's strength. You know, when I think of this

28:05

account and when I think of of Moses, uh, one of the things that I I I think

28:11

of is what makes Moses relatable is not his

28:18

perfection. If Moses had gone, God, you picked the right person because I'm a

28:24

great speaker, Toast Masters. I mean like you know wonderful taking the

28:29

classes. He he doesn't say that because then we would go man I yeah mo Moses is

28:35

awesome. He's great. But Moses is always making himself very humble and very

28:41

relatable. I mean he was a murderer. He deserted his people. He

28:48

doubts God. He can't speak. And God continues to come back and say, "Yeah,

28:54

and I can use you." Yeah, I can use you. And those are the stories that we can retell to build

29:01

a spiritual heritage is not our own ability, but God's faithfulness to us.

29:07

That when we are weak, God is strong. That's relatable.

29:12

That's what the next generation needs to hear in the generation after that and the generation after that is not be like

29:19

your your mom or be like your grandmother because they were perfect. You are in so many ways. But

29:26

what's relatable is you know what they depended on God and God showed

29:34

up. God showed up. They were always talking to him. They were always praying to him. They were always dependent on

29:41

him and God showed up every time. They walked to them. They talked with them. That's a real relationship

29:48

that anybody can have. Those are the stories that we retell. Not about our

29:55

successes and our accolades, which are awesome, but God's victories. God came through. God won.

30:03

And we get to be a part of that story. That's the spiritual heritage that we

30:09

draw on. That's the spiritual heritage that we build and pass on so that other

30:15

people can find strength for generations to come. Those are the stories we want

30:21

to retell. And those are some of the stories that we are going to tell uh just as a a family, as a Christ Chapel

30:28

uh family. Now, so uh in just a moment, I'm going to pray for us, but then we're going to have what we call at Christ

30:33

Chapel open church. open church where you're going to get to tell us some stories of God's faithfulness to you

30:39

specifically through your relationship with the your mom and the example that you've seen her live as she's followed

30:46

Jesus faithfully. But let me pray for us. Uh God, we thank you for your word

30:54

that encourages us that shows us not just uh the faithfulness of saints of

31:01

the past, but specifically your faithfulness to saints of the past who

31:07

have depended upon you, who have trusted in you. Lord Jesus, thank you for the

31:14

spiritual heritage that you've built here at Christ Chapel. Thank you for the faithfulness of the saints who have gone

31:20

before us. Thank you that we stand on the shoulders of giants. Lord God, help

31:25

us to be faithful to carry the torch faithfully and pass the baton to the next generation that they might find

31:31

strength in you because your strength is stronger. We pray these things in Jesus

31:37

name. Amen.

Title: Unshakeable Truths in the Valley | God's Strength Is Stronger

Video: qllastULszc

0:00

Good morning, Christ Chapel. It's good

0:03

to be with you uh wherever you are. If

0:05

you're on the West Campus, South Campus,

0:07

Converge, online, or even at 5:00. So,

0:10

good to have you here. And if you have

0:13

your Bibles, open them up to Exodus

0:15

chapter 6. If you're using a Pew Bible,

0:17

one of those blue ones, it's going to be

0:19

page 48. Exodus is an easy book to find.

0:22

It's the second book of the Bible. So,

0:24

if you hit Revelation, you've gone too

0:25

far or you're holding your Bible upside

0:28

down.

0:29

Um, where Ben took us last week, Cody

0:32

mentioned he covered chapter 5. And just

0:35

to say that things were not going well

0:38

for the Israelites would be the

0:40

understatement of the century. Uh, you

0:42

know, they God had called Moses to go

0:46

back to a country that he had fled from

0:48

to confront the most powerful man in the

0:51

world. Pharaoh was a god among his

0:54

people and he held all the power and he

0:58

was he showed no mercy. And I would

1:01

imagine for Moses going to confront

1:04

Pharaoh would be like walking into the

1:06

lion's den, you know, alone, unarmed,

1:10

terrified, just facing his fears and

1:14

obeying God's orders and confronting

1:16

Pharaoh saying, "Let my people go." It

1:19

was a train wreck. It was a total train

1:21

wreck. I mean, the situation was bad

1:24

before. There was a heavy burden on the

1:26

Israelites and that was just added to,

1:29

you know, gather your own straw, make

1:32

the same number of bricks. What was a

1:34

heavy burden became unbearable. And I

1:36

would imagine at this point of the story

1:38

where we pick up, Moses must have felt

1:41

like the enemy was winning. Pharaoh, his

1:45

enemy, was winning. He if he could have

1:47

run away at that point, I'm sure he

1:49

would have done it at the drop of a hat.

1:52

And it's interesting because just like

1:53

Moses, you and I have an enemy. We have

1:57

an enemy that's a lot like Pharaoh. 2

1:59

Corinthians 4:4 says he's the god of

2:03

this world, uh, or the god of this age.

2:07

Talking about Satan. He's, uh, he's the

2:10

he has absolute authority over this

2:12

world. When I say this world, I don't

2:14

mean the world that God created, but a

2:17

world that in scripture often refers to

2:19

the the system that opposes God, that

2:23

enslaves and blinds countless many

2:25

people that that uh deceives people.

2:28

Satan's goal is to steal, kill, and

2:31

destroy. And I we have a common enemy.

2:34

But I don't know about you, but there

2:35

are seasons in my life. There are times

2:37

where I feel like he's winning with my

2:40

personal struggles against my own sin

2:43

struggles. I believe it or not, I do

2:45

struggle with sin. Yeah. Plenty. I mean,

2:48

laziness, lust, apathy, anger. I There

2:52

are times where I feel like I am

2:54

backsliding and I'm not doing so well.

2:56

And then I look at the circumstances and

2:58

the relationships around me, the closest

3:00

relationships. There are times where I

3:01

feel like no matter what I do to address

3:04

those things, to try to fix things, just

3:06

seems to make it worse. And if I could,

3:08

I would run away, but I can't. But I

3:11

just want to tap out. Have you ever been

3:13

there? Which is just so broken, so beat

3:16

down that you just want to shut down.

3:19

And we're this, if you're not there now,

3:23

I mean, you'll be there at some point. I

3:25

hope that nobody's there at this point,

3:27

but I'm a room this big. There's got to

3:30

be many people who just want to tap out

3:33

because the opposition is too much. But

3:37

what we get is we get to listen to what

3:40

God would say to people when they are in

3:42

those moments. I mean, if you wonder

3:43

what would God say to me when I'm in the

3:46

valley. Exodus 6 allows us to listen in

3:50

on what God says to Moses and what God

3:52

says through Moses to his people when

3:54

they are in their darkest hour. It's

3:57

easy enough to hear from God when you're

3:59

in the worshipful mountaintop

4:00

experiences, but in the valley, it's

4:02

like you get no signal, right? There's

4:05

no sense of God's presence. There's no

4:07

sense of his voice, his

4:09

empowerment. So, let's listen to what

4:12

God says to his people. And again, a

4:15

reminder, this is important. The

4:17

Israelites at this point of the story

4:19

must have felt like God failed them

4:21

because ever since this redeemer, this

4:23

deliverer Moses showed up, he he didn't

4:27

bring any kind of relief or rescue. It's

4:29

like he and he just made it worse. It's

4:31

like he lit a match near a gas leak. You

4:34

know, God's presence, God's involvement

4:36

seems to only make things worse at this

4:39

point. Church, was God failing

4:42

them? We know the church answer, right?

4:45

The answer is no. Absolutely not. But

4:47

just as a reminder, we know this now.

4:50

They did not know this at this point of

4:52

the story. But God is working his plan.

4:55

And he said all of this would happen

4:58

just like it's happening. Genesis 15:13,

5:01

for example, says, "Then the Lord said

5:03

to Abram, know for certain that your

5:06

offspring will be sojourers in a land

5:08

that is not theirs and will be servants

5:11

there, and they will be afflicted for

5:13

400 years.

5:15

God is not failing his people. He's

5:17

working out his plan. This is exactly

5:20

what he said is going to happen. So with

5:22

that in mind, look at Exodus

5:26

6:1. But the Lord said to Moses, "Now

5:31

you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh.

5:33

For with a strong hand he will send them

5:36

out, and with a strong hand he will

5:38

drive them out of his land."

5:41

So, in the moment of their deepest

5:43

discouragement, God steps in and says,

5:46

"Watch what I'm about to do. You've seen

5:49

the low point. You've seen the worst.

5:52

Now, brace yourself. Things are about to

5:54

change." This is a rock bottom moment.

5:57

And now we get the turning point. This

5:59

is the point of the movie where the, you

6:02

know, getting strong now Rocky song

6:05

starts playing. I can hear the music

6:06

swelling. This is an epic speech is what

6:09

follows starting in verse two. It's it's

6:12

God's rally cry. It's a timely message

6:15

for the Israelites, but it's a timeless

6:17

truth for you and I. This is always true

6:20

what we're about to hear. And keep this

6:21

in mind. This God who speaks is the same

6:25

God who spoke to Moses back in Exodus

6:27

chapter 3 at the burning bush. That

6:30

burning bush, it was a bush that burned

6:33

but didn't burn out. Right? God spoke

6:37

through the fire and then he walked his

6:39

people into the fire. So the burning

6:42

bush was more than a moment. It was a

6:44

message. God is present in the heat and

6:47

he will not let you be consumed. That's

6:50

exactly what the Israelites are just

6:51

about to find out in a unforgettable way

6:54

to say the least. So while they're in

6:56

the valley, they need encouragement. We

6:58

need the same encouragement. And we get

7:00

to hear that. And the main point of this

7:03

is right off the bat in verse two. So

7:05

look at verse two with me. God spoke to

7:08

Moses and said to him, "I am the

7:13

Lord." I am the Lord. It's the same

7:17

thing he said back in Exodus chapter 3.

7:19

He declares and gives his personal name,

7:22

Yahweh. In the Old Testament, to give

7:25

your name is to open yourself up to the

7:29

possibility of a

7:30

relationship. How many of you have ever

7:32

like worn your name tag? if you had a

7:34

name tag on and you go to Central Market

7:37

and they say, "There you go, Jerry." You

7:39

know, do I know you? No. Someone you you

7:44

allow someone to know your name, you've

7:45

invited them to know you on some level.

7:47

And this is even more profoundly true in

7:50

in biblical times because God has made

7:54

himself accessible to his people. And

7:57

the message Yahweh, his name means that

8:00

he is the faithful covenanteping God. So

8:03

you could sum up I am the Lord with this

8:07

these truths. The almighty all powerful

8:11

God has personally revealed himself to

8:13

his people and he has made himself

8:16

committed to his people. He is saying

8:18

all those things with four words. I am

8:21

the Lord. And he repeats it three times

8:23

in in a few verses. He says it in verses

8:25

2, 6, and 8. I am the Lord. So in other

8:29

words, you're in the valley, eyes on me.

8:33

You need to know me. You need to know

8:36

that I am bigger than your

8:38

circumstances. I am stronger than your

8:41

opposition. Our biggest need in the

8:44

valley is to know the one who's

8:46

driving. Our biggest need in the valley

8:48

is to know who is in control. That's the

8:51

heart of this message. I could dismiss

8:53

you now, but that would be physically

8:55

impossible for a pastor to dismiss you

8:57

early. That's the main point, right? Our

9:01

biggest need is to know the one who is

9:03

in control. You know, um, back in 2013,

9:08

I don't know if you've seen this, Pepsi

9:10

did an extended commercial. It was a

9:12

prank where they got Jeff Gordon, the

9:14

stock car racer, to put on a disguise

9:16

and he went and test drove like a

9:19

Mustang. I think it was a Mustang. And

9:21

you got this like uh car salesman, nice

9:24

man. He gets in the passenger seat and

9:27

like, you know, it's a stick shift and

9:29

he kind of stutters the car, you know,

9:31

let up on the clutch and he acts like he

9:33

doesn't know what he's doing. He drives

9:34

around for a while and the guy's being

9:35

really patient and then all of a sudden

9:37

a switch flips and he just floors it and

9:40

starts doing these maneuvers that are

9:43

just, you know, extremely dangerous, but

9:46

you know, he's in control. and he's

9:48

driving around and this the he has a

9:50

little hidden camera in a pipsy can, you

9:52

know, so he's you get to see the two of

9:54

them and this car salesman looks like

9:56

he's about to have a heart attack and

9:58

I'm actually surprised he didn't cuz it

9:59

looked like he could have. Sorry, but

10:02

it's true. And so I'm thinking that's

10:04

the biggest risk right here. He's

10:06

driving around and the guy is terrified.

10:09

But that terror over the course of that

10:11

test drive turns into anger and the guy

10:14

starts saying like, "Take us back. Take

10:16

us back. You're an idiot. I'm going to

10:18

kill you. I mean, the guy is losing it

10:20

and Jeff Gordon does this really cool

10:23

parking maneuver, you know, peels out

10:24

right into the spot. He gets out of the

10:27

car. They both get out of the car and

10:28

the guy, you can tell he's like just

10:29

happy to be on solid ground and he

10:32

starts to charge at Jeff Gordon and he

10:34

quickly takes off his his disguise,

10:37

points at the cameras and say, "It's

10:38

okay. I'm Jeff Gordon. You're on

10:40

camera." And and the car the salesman is

10:42

like he's a little dazed. Pepsi comes

10:44

up, says its slogan, and the last thing

10:47

comes back and the salesman says, "Want

10:49

to do it again?" So, if you know who's

10:54

driving, it changes your perspective on

10:56

everything. Right? In life, with its

10:59

twists and turns and when the ride's

11:01

getting really bumpy and it's difficult,

11:04

we need this

11:05

reminder. God's driving. We need to know

11:08

who is driving. God says, "You need to

11:11

know me." not thinks about

11:14

me. You and I, we need to know God

11:17

personally. We need to know God

11:19

profoundly. We don't need to know him

11:21

conceptually or casually or from a

11:24

distance. No one encounters the Lord and

11:27

remains unchanged or

11:30

unaffected. We need to know the Lord.

11:33

And to know God in the valley is to know

11:36

three things about him. And that's what

11:38

God reveals in the verses to follow. He

11:40

reveals three unshakable truths for us

11:42

that we need in the valley. And the

11:44

first one is this. God has been present

11:47

in your confusion and

11:50

pain. God has been present in your

11:53

confusion and pain. Verses 3-5 say, I

11:58

well, he says in verse two, I am the

11:59

Lord. Verse three, I appeared to Abram,

12:02

to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as

12:05

God Almighty. But by my name, the Lord,

12:08

I did not make myself known to them. I

12:11

also established my covenant with them

12:12

to give them the land of Canaan, the

12:15

land in which they lived as sojourners.

12:17

Moreover, I have heard the groaning of

12:20

the people of Israel whom the Egyptians

12:22

hold as slaves, and I have remembered my

12:25

covenant. So, all these are past tense

12:28

reminders like God declares his name and

12:31

then reminds Moses of his covenant with

12:33

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He says,

12:35

notice the verbs, I appeared to your

12:38

fathers. I knew them. I was their God.

12:42

Right? He also says, I established my

12:45

covenant with them. I had a plan. I

12:48

still have a plan. I love verse 5. It's

12:50

beautiful. It says two of two of them.

12:53

Says,

12:54

"Moreover, I have heard the groaning of

12:57

my people and I have remembered my

12:59

covenant. I have heard and I have

13:02

remembered."

13:04

God has always been there tuned in,

13:07

listening,

13:09

caring, his care and his compassion, his

13:12

focused attention. It's comforting. It's

13:15

healing to know that you know when we

13:18

need healing, we will search for a

13:21

doctor and it's natural to think the

13:24

best doctors out there have the latest

13:26

and greatest knowledge. And sure that's

13:28

true to an extent, but there's a lot of

13:30

a lot of studies show that the the best

13:33

doctors listen really well. I mean, I

13:36

think real healing will start when a

13:38

doctor stops, looks you in the eye,

13:40

says, "All right, tell me what's going

13:42

on." And they listen and they take notes

13:44

and they ask clarifying questions. For

13:46

one, they typically get a better

13:47

diagnosis, more more accurate. But the

13:50

person, the patient feels cared for.

13:53

They feel their dignity is lifted up.

13:55

And also for the doctor, they get sued

13:58

less when they listen well and they

14:01

report lower burnout. I actually looked

14:04

this stuff up. Um I'm not here to talk

14:06

to doctors necessarily, but even just

14:08

points to the fact that God listens. He

14:11

He cares about us. He hears our groans.

14:14

Oh, I'll do another. Guys, if you're

14:17

married and your wife your wife tells

14:20

you about something difficult that

14:21

happened or a worry or a concern, this

14:24

is free unsolicited advice. All right.

14:28

Um, put your phone

14:31

down, look her in the eye, and listen,

14:35

right? Your goal is not to fix the

14:37

problem right away to tell her what to

14:39

do. I mean, maybe not yet. At least

14:41

don't go there. Just your goal is not

14:44

just to listen. It's to actively care

14:47

about what she's saying and then show

14:50

that you care by the way you're

14:52

listening. And as I'm saying this, I'm

14:54

digging my own hole cuz my wife, she'll

14:57

be at the next service, but she's going

14:58

to hear me say this and hold myself

15:00

accountable cuz I'm not great at that.

15:03

But I do know that when we listen and

15:06

actually care, there's something healing

15:09

that happens just in the listening,

15:11

right? Uh Romans 15 uh I think it's

15:15

verse 12, no 12:15 says, "Rejoice with

15:18

those who rejoice and weep with those

15:19

who weep." A good friend listens and

15:22

cares and connects in that way. God does

15:25

that for us. Israel's suffering did not

15:28

go unheard. Their cries didn't echo into

15:30

emptiness. Over those years, their

15:32

groans reached God's ears, landed on his

15:35

heart. He didn't tune them out. He tuned

15:38

in with covenant love. And it's true for

15:40

us, too. I love what David writes in

15:42

Psalm 56:8. He says, "You have kept

15:46

count of my tossings. Put my tears in

15:48

your bottle. Are they not in your book?"

15:51

I I picture God standing by David's

15:54

bedside watching him toss and turn with

15:57

anxiety like a parent who's anxious over

16:00

their their kid like, "Oh, my boy, he's

16:03

worried." And you know, putting my tears

16:06

in your bottle. It's such an intimate

16:08

picture. God cares for us. His heart

16:12

swells for love with love for his

16:13

people. He remembers us and it's not a

16:16

passive remembrance. His remembrance is

16:19

the init ignites his rescue. So

16:22

application for us, trust his presence,

16:26

not your

16:27

perspective. Trust in his presence, not

16:30

your

16:31

perspective. In the valley, it's easy to

16:34

dwell on what's going

16:36

wrong. Excuse me. But we have to choose

16:39

to look back and remember when you're

16:42

discouraged. Trace God's faithfulness in

16:44

your story. But if you don't see it in

16:45

your own story, trace it in scripture.

16:48

Keep a record. Keep a journal. A prayer

16:50

journal is great because you can mark

16:51

the answered prayers. And I would say

16:53

most importantly, give thanks for what

16:56

he's done. It changes your perspective

16:59

to see his faithfulness because he has

17:02

come through for you in the past. He'll

17:04

do it again. He has been present in your

17:07

circumstances, in your confusion and

17:10

your pain. So, he's been faithful, but

17:12

this ne these next verses take us to the

17:14

future. Verses 6 through8 show us that

17:17

God has made promises he'll never

17:19

break. So, as I read these three verses,

17:22

pay attention to the I will statements.

17:24

There's seven I will promises that he

17:28

makes. Verse six, say therefore to the

17:31

people of Israel, I am the Lord, and I

17:34

will bring you out from under the

17:36

burdens of the Egyptians, and I will

17:38

deliver you from slavery to them, and I

17:40

will redeem you with an outstretched

17:42

arm, and with great acts of judgment. I

17:45

will take you to be my people, and I

17:47

will be your God, and you shall know

17:49

that I am the Lord your God, who has

17:51

brought you out from under the burdens

17:53

of the Egyptians. I will bring you into

17:55

the land that I swore to give Abraham,

17:58

to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it

18:01

to you for a possession. I am the

18:04

Lord. So when God makes a promise,

18:09

consider it done. God is not filling

18:12

time. He's not giving us some empty

18:14

motivational speech. This is a blueprint

18:16

about of what's about to happen. In the

18:19

book of Exodus, you could trace these

18:21

promises and see them fulfilled. one

18:24

after another in the book of Exodus. The

18:26

last two actually stretch into the book

18:28

of Joshua, but there's a chart on your

18:31

handout there that just shows what those

18:32

promises are. And um he fulfills every

18:36

single one of them. Yeah, but you might

18:38

be

18:40

asking how can they how could the

18:42

Israelites know that God was going to

18:44

fulfill his promises? I mean, what if

18:46

they dropped the ball? What can could

18:48

they mess it up?

18:50

No, these are not contracts. They are

18:54

promises. God is a promise maker. He's a

18:58

promisekeeper. Doesn't break promises.

19:00

These I wills flow out of God's

19:03

character and they're anchored in his

19:05

covenant. He has not failed them and he

19:07

will not fail them. Same is just as true

19:09

for us in the valley. Cling to God's

19:13

promises, not your predictions.

19:17

When we're tempted, when you and I, when

19:19

we're tempted to measure God's

19:21

goodness by our

19:24

circumstances, remember, God is driving.

19:28

He's in control. I'm not a good

19:30

predictor of what's going to happen. I

19:32

would imagine if I were on the sidelines

19:34

watching David approached Goliath, and

19:37

if I were a betting man, I guarantee

19:39

you, I would have gone home broke,

19:42

right? I I would have not have predicted

19:45

the walls of Jericho to fall down

19:47

because some people marched around it

19:49

seven times and then

19:50

yelled. I would not have predicted the

19:53

resurrection on Sunday

19:55

morning. We We don't know how to factor

19:57

in the presence of a living God who

19:59

keeps his promises. We cling to his

20:02

promises, not to our predictions. And if

20:04

you do cling to his promises, I can

20:06

guarantee you they will give you hope,

20:09

joy, peace, life. They will liberate

20:12

you. They will empower you. They'll

20:14

guide you. They'll give you

20:15

wisdom. But in order to cling to his

20:18

promises, you have to know his

20:20

promises. Folks, I don't look forward to

20:23

saying this, but God has not promised to

20:27

fix your

20:28

marriage. God has not promised to bring

20:31

you a

20:32

spouse. God has not promised to give you

20:35

a a child.

20:37

But he does promise, "Delight yourself

20:41

in the Lord and he will give you the

20:42

desires of your heart." Psalm

20:46

37:4. You won't find a verse where God

20:48

promises to cure a particular diagnosis.

20:51

But he does promise you a resurrected

20:54

body. Actually, John 16:33, Jesus

20:57

promises that we will experience trouble

21:00

in this life. But he then also promises

21:03

to give us peace.

21:05

He's not promised you freedom from the

21:08

sins that you wrestle with. But he does

21:10

promise you to clothe you with his

21:12

righteousness and to give you his holy

21:13

spirit and empower you to fight those

21:16

sins. He promises his presence. I will

21:19

never leave you nor forsake you. He

21:21

promises to give us rest in Matthew 11.

21:24

You know, come to me all you who are

21:25

weary and heavy laden and I will give

21:27

you rest.

21:29

He promises to never turn away anybody

21:31

who comes to him in John 63

21:34

6:37. He promises to complete what he

21:37

started in Philippians 1:6. I could do

21:39

this all day.

21:41

Honestly, the corresponding promises in

21:44

the chart uh on your notes. Those are

21:47

some places just to get started. But

21:49

there are so many promises we can cling

21:51

to. My encouragement is to saturate

21:54

yourself in God's word so that you so

21:56

when when doubt and when difficulty

21:58

creep in, you've got something solid to

22:00

stand

22:01

on. Speak those promises out loud.

22:05

Preach them to yourself when you're not

22:06

prone to remember them. Cling to God's

22:09

promises. So God has been present in

22:12

your confusion and pain. He has made

22:14

promises he'll never break. And the

22:16

third thing we learn is that in the

22:18

valley we have to remember that God is

22:20

with you now. Remember God is with you

22:24

now. Verses 9

22:27

through13 Moses spoke thus to the people

22:29

of Israel. So he brought those promises

22:32

to the people of Israel. But they did

22:34

not listen to Moses because of their

22:37

broken spirit and harsh slavery. So the

22:40

Lord said to Moses, "Go in, tell

22:42

Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to let the

22:44

people of Israel go out of his land."

22:46

But Moses said to the Lord, "Behold, the

22:49

people of Israel have not listened to

22:50

me. How then shall Pharaoh listen to me,

22:53

for I'm a man of uncircumcised

22:55

lips?" But the Lord spoke to Moses and

22:58

Aaron and gave them a charge about the

23:01

people of Israel and about Pharaoh, king

23:03

of Egypt, to bring the people of Israel,

23:05

out of the land of Egypt. So you have

23:08

God with his

23:10

promises brought to the people, but they

23:13

would not listen. They struggled to

23:15

believe. They verses 9 and 12 show both

23:19

Israel couldn't listen and Moses

23:22

couldn't either. I think verse 9 is

23:24

remarkable. It's sad, but it's tender.

23:27

It's realistic. Moses relays these

23:29

promises, but they did not listen. And

23:31

it why? It's because of their broken

23:35

spirit and their harsh slavery. God

23:38

says, "I will. I will. I will." And they

23:41

say, "I can't believe you. I can't

23:44

believe that. Maybe it's too dangerous.

23:47

It's too painful. Maybe you've been

23:50

there." That doesn't change the fact

23:53

that God makes these promises. He

23:56

reaffirms his call in verses 10 and 11.

23:59

Then Moses, he doubts as well. He says,

24:01

"Why would this god among men, Pharaoh,

24:03

listen to a man of uncircumcised lips?"

24:06

How many of you have said that phrase

24:08

this week? A man of uncircumcised lips.

24:11

What does that mean? The NLT says, "I'm

24:15

a man of clumsy lips." All right. So, if

24:17

you're a bad speaker, just say, "I'm a

24:19

man of uncircumcised lips, please."

24:21

Because that's what it means. I'm a Why

24:23

would he listen to me? I'm a bad

24:24

speaker. Okay. Um, so that's Moses like

24:28

he he's insecure and he ris resists

24:31

God's command, but God lovingly presses

24:34

forward because God's mission does not

24:36

depend on human

24:38

ability. God's mission does not depend

24:41

on human ability. I mean, Pharaoh was a

24:43

strong and mighty enemy, but God is

24:47

stronger. I mean, on their own, what

24:50

could Moses and Israel do in the

24:52

situation? Like absolutely nothing.

24:56

And God says, "Good. It's all the better

24:59

view for you to watch what I'm about to

25:01

do." Folks, our weakness, our inability

25:05

is not a hindrance to God's plan, to

25:08

God's working. It's a prerequisite.

25:11

Our weakness, our inability is not a

25:13

hindrance to God's working. It's a

25:16

prerequisite. So, church, rest in his

25:19

power, not in your performance.

25:23

Rest in his power, not in your

25:25

performance. Don't rest in your

25:26

righteousness. Don't rest in your

25:29

resources, your

25:31

worthiness, your

25:33

wisdom. Rest in him. That's why Jesus

25:35

says in one of my favorite verses, 2

25:37

Corinthians 12:9, "My grace is

25:39

sufficient for you, for my strength is

25:41

made perfect, my power is made perfect

25:43

in

25:44

weakness." Such a favorite verse of mine

25:46

that I misquote

25:48

it. Yeah. My grace is sufficient for

25:50

you, for my power is made perfect in

25:52

weakness. When everything seems

25:54

uncertain, hold on to this. God is with

25:56

you. He's with you now. Not later, not

26:00

when things get better. He's with you

26:02

right now. Don't interpret what feels

26:04

like God's silence as his absence.

26:06

Because just because you feel like he's

26:09

not with you in a moment doesn't mean

26:11

he's gone. In the same way, like Israel

26:13

in slavery, sometimes God's rescue is

26:16

already in motion, even when we can't

26:19

see it. And church, we have more reason

26:21

to believe this than Israel did. Because

26:24

the ultimate I will of God wasn't just

26:26

spoken. It was

26:28

embodied. Jesus, when he came, God

26:31

didn't just say through Jesus, I will

26:33

rescue. He came and did it. When Jesus

26:37

hung on the cross, he shouted, "It is

26:38

finished." and he sealed every single

26:40

one of God's promises with his

26:43

blood. So when you're

26:45

discouraged, when we're discouraged, we

26:47

need to know him. He's faithful. He's

26:50

our maker. He's our defender. He's our

26:52

redeemer. He's our friend. If you're in

26:54

Christ, God is your father. His

26:57

faithfulness does not waver no matter

26:59

the circumstances. The same God who

27:01

spoke through the fire still speaks and

27:05

he's with you when you're in the fire.

27:07

He refuses to abandon you. No matter how

27:10

dark a valley becomes. Israel was never

27:12

alone. You're never

27:14

alone. I mean, God never promised we

27:17

wouldn't feel the heat, but he did

27:19

promise never to leave us. He's a God

27:22

also who never wastes our pain. He uses

27:25

every single one of our groans as part

27:28

of his rescue. Where there's pain in

27:31

Christ, there's unimaginable eternal

27:34

gain.

27:36

Maybe today you feel like your prayers

27:39

don't rise above the ceiling. And I just

27:42

want to say, hear

27:44

me. This is the same God. He hears you.

27:49

He hears your groans. He heard the

27:51

groans of his people Egypt and he hears

27:53

your groaning. Keep crying out to him.

27:56

He has not changed. And if you are here

28:00

today and you don't know this God,

28:02

please don't walk away.

28:04

He has already moved heaven and earth to

28:07

come for you. He's given his son for

28:10

you. Will you trust him? Would you pray

28:12

with

28:15

me? Lord, um some of us are in the

28:19

valley now and and we desperately need

28:21

to know these truths. Would you help us

28:25

to just make the habit of refreshing

28:28

ourselves with these reminders that

28:31

you've been with us in our confusion and

28:32

pain, that you never break your

28:34

promises, and that you are with us now.

28:37

And frankly, we all need that message

28:39

because when we're not in the valley,

28:41

life is comfortable. We're prone to

28:43

forget that we need you. And when we

28:45

forget, we will soon find ourselves back

28:46

in the valley.

28:48

So wherever we are, mountaintop, valley,

28:50

or in between, teach us to know you, to

28:53

remember you, and to love you. And thank

28:55

you, Lord, that you perfectly know,

28:57

remember, and love us. I pray to you in

28:59

Jesus name. Amen.

Title: When Faithfulness Doesn’t Produce Results | God's Strength Is Stronger

Video: 1RYR9vuhbYQ

0:00

How you doing, Christ Chapel? Good. Love that you're here. Love that you're worshiping with us. Um,

0:06

especially welcome to those of you who are watching at the five o'clock right now. You guys know how to do it, man.

0:12

All the elbow room you get over there. Uh, praise God for that. Uh, we are going to get after it today. We're in

0:18

Exodus chapter 5. We're covering an entire chapter. It is rich. Uh, it is a

0:25

crucial passage. Uh it is uh deep with theology. Uh I'm going to warn you, it's

0:31

also uh pretty uh discouraging and disappointing. And yet in that uh I I

0:36

hope it will also be really worshipful. So uh we got an entire chapter so we can't mess around. We got to get after it. Uh we're page 48. If you've got

0:44

those blue Bibles, page 48. Uh let me just set up uh before we jump into it

0:51

kind of where where we were to get to this place. Um, we've been walking through Exodus. Uh, let me remind you

0:57

how we got here. Uh, Moses had been called by God to go and be the messenger, the instrument of God to set

1:03

God's people free. Uh, to tell them to go into Pharaoh himself and tell him,

1:09

"Hey, it's time to let these slaves go." Um, he wrestles with that. Moses wrestles with that for a while. God

1:15

reminds him time and time again, "Hey, I'm the one who's going to do the work. You just go be obedient." Moses finally

1:20

returns to Egypt. Uh, step one is gathering all the Hebrew leaders to let them know, hey guys, God has spoken. He

1:28

sent me and I'm here to to be God's instrument to set you free. Uh, and so

1:33

Cody walked us through that passage at the end of chapter 4 last week if uh if you were here, if you remember. And it

1:39

really Cody described it's just like a pep talk to the Israelites. I mean, it is him showing up uh they've been

1:45

enslaved for 430 years and now Moses is on the scene and he says, "Hey guys, it's time God's going to release you."

1:51

There's some doubt obviously, but really they start to believe. The Israelites start to believe, wait, this is this is

1:58

maybe really going to happen. It's u Cody referred to it as it's a halftime speech, right? It's that moment. I mean,

2:04

if it was a Rocky movie, it would be right at the crescendo of the the montage and people are getting hyped and

2:09

people are starting to believe and here we go and and this is going to be it. And all of this talk about Moses and

2:15

Aaron going into Pharaoh and telling them that here it is. It's time and everyone's excited and they're believing

2:20

and they go to the palace. They show up. It's a huge step. We've talked about it

2:25

for four chapters. Now, he finally shows up. Moses and Aaron put their big boy

2:31

pants on, walk into the most powerful human in the world. And here's what

2:36

happens in verse one. Just look at verse one with me. Afterward, Moses and Aaron went and said

2:44

to Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, let my people go that they

2:50

may hold a feast to me in the wilderness." There it is. They did it,

2:57

right? They they did it. Let my people go. And even the uh the release of the Jews in the seemingly temporary way for

3:03

this feast, that was actually explicitly what God had told him to say in Exodus 3. Obviously, God had a bigger plan for

3:10

the for the finality of of them being set free forever. But but this was a this was a very obedient step. Moses is

3:17

faithful. The beginning of chapter 5, verse one, he's faithful. He does what he's supposed to do.

3:23

Courageous. Steps out and he's faithful. Moses is faithful in bringing God's

3:30

request to Pharaoh. And that's a huge thing. If we've been tracking with Moses, I mean, this was a guy who was

3:35

arguing with the Lord from the miraculous burning bush saying, "You got the wrong guy." And now finally, he

3:41

walks into the palace uh after 430 years of captivity and and drops the thus says

3:48

the Lord line on Pharaoh. Now, let's see Pharaoh's response in verse two. Just

3:53

verse two, here's his response. But Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice and

4:00

let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and moreover, I will not let Israel

4:08

go. Not good, guys. Not good. Wait, maybe Pharaoh just

4:13

isn't understanding, right? Maybe he's not understanding the ask. Maybe he's not understanding who um is is really

4:19

behind the ask. That's probably it. Moses should explain, maybe make it more clear to Pharaoh. Uh, hey, look, this is

4:25

really what you need to do. Let me let me You must not understand. Uh, look with me verses 3 through9. this next

4:31

chunk here, look what happens. Then he said, talking about Moses, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let

4:38

us go a three-day journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest he fall upon us with

4:45

pestilence or with a sword." But the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people away

4:52

from their work? Get back to your burdens." And Pharaoh said, "Behold, the

4:57

people of the land are now many, and you make them rest from their burdens." The

5:02

same day Pharaoh commanded the task masters of the people and their foremen.

5:07

You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks as in the past. Let them go and gather straw for themselves,

5:14

but the number of bricks that they made in the past, you shall impose on them. You shall by no means reduce it, for

5:22

they are idle. Therefore they cry, let us go and offer sacrifices to our God.

5:28

Let heavier work be laid on the men that they may labor at it and pay no regard

5:34

for lying words. This just went from bad to worse.

5:41

Um just went from the frying pan to the fire. The amount of wind that gets sucked out of their sails between

5:48

literally chapter 5 verse one and chapter 5 verse two is palpable because

5:54

Pharaoh didn't just say no here in chapter 5. He then actively ramps up the

6:00

persecution. Uh he he actively ramps up the the trial and the difficulty and the

6:05

trouble for the Hebrew people. uh bricks at the time were made of a specific type of clay and then they would add straw

6:12

into the clay as they were making them to absorb the absorb the moisture and so that those bricks then could be heated

6:18

and they would dry and they would become these solid durable bricks. So you've got to have straw, right? It's the one

6:24

of one of the two main ingredients in making these bricks. And apparently up to this point the Egyptians would

6:30

provide the straw for the Jews who were making the bricks. They would go, they would gather the straw and they would

6:35

bring it to them and then the the Jews would make the bricks. But now the Jews have to go get their own straw while

6:40

also finding time to do actually the same amount of work on the bricks. So

6:46

they're expected to meet the same quota. Um as if they only had one job, but now

6:51

they have two jobs. Their jobs have now gone from bad to really impossible. Uh is what happens here. Look at verses uh

6:58

the next four or five verses 10-4. So the task masters and the foremen of

7:04

the people went out and said to the people, "Thus says Pharaoh, I will not give you straw. Go and get your straw

7:10

yourselves wherever you can find it, but your work will not be reduced in the least." So the people were scattered

7:16

throughout the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. The task masters were urgent, saying, "Complete your work,

7:23

your daily task each day." and and when there was straw uh and and the foremen

7:29

of the people of Israel whom the Pharaoh's task masters had set over them were beaten and were asked, "Why have

7:37

you not done all your tasks of making bricks today and yesterday as in the

7:43

past?" Don't miss this.

7:49

Moses Moses did what he was supposed to do. Moses was

7:54

faithful. Courageously faithful. Went out on a limb. God called him to do this

8:00

radical obedient thing. And Moses did it. He's faithful. He put God's request

8:07

before Pharaoh. Pharaoh was obstinate and vengeful in response to that

8:12

request. I mean, he is not only obstinate in in a complete rejection of

8:18

this request, but Pharaoh, who we've already been told God will harden his

8:23

heart. This Pharaoh is now vengeful. I I'm going to take out anger and

8:29

bitterness on this Israelite people. Let's look at how it trickles down to

8:34

the Israelites even more. Like I said, we're making it all the way through this this chapter, and

8:39

then we're going to camp out on how how this applies to us. Verse 15. Then the foremen of the people

8:47

of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh, "Why do you treat your servants like this? No straw is given to your servant.

8:54

Yet they say to us, make bricks, and behold, your servants are beaten. But

9:00

the fault is in your own people." But he said, "You are idol. You are idol. That

9:06

is why you say, let us go and sacrifice to the Lord. Go now and work. No straw

9:12

will be given you, but you must still deliver the same number of bricks. The foremen of the people of Israel saw that

9:18

they were in trouble when they said, "You shall by no means reduce your number of bricks, your daily task each

9:26

day." Moses takes this obedient step of faith. Pharaoh responds negatively. And

9:33

so the result of that obedient step of faith was that the Israelites are thrown

9:38

into these just disastrous circumstances. Verse 15 through 21 we

9:44

just uh looked at that it shows us they are

9:50

confused. The Israelites are confused and they are discouraged in light of

9:55

this treatment. Right? So, as we replay this story in our heads, we see, okay, that there's not just a discouragement

10:02

sweeping through uh this people group, there's a confusion, right? They're going to the Pharaoh not just with their

10:08

grievances. They're going to Pharaoh and his leadership uh with questions. What's

10:13

what's going on? We've we have been in this role for generations and and now all of a sudden

10:20

the game is changing and why are you doubling down on this treatment? Uh there's a confusion there. And Moses is

10:26

telling them here, he's letting them know the root of this new cruelty, the

10:32

root of this new cruelty is Moses, right? He he's sharing with him, he's showing his hand that his cruel response

10:38

is a direct tie to Moses's ask to go and sacrifice to the Lord in verse 17. And

10:45

so Pharaoh's letting them know before that they're like, "Okay, what's going on? Moses here." But now Pharaoh's acting weird. They go to him. They go to

10:51

the source and they're like, "Oh, he is mad about what Moses put before him. 430

10:58

years of slavery. Now, this is a new low." Uh, it's because Moses angered Pharaoh. Look at the last part of

11:05

chapter 5. These just these two verses in 20 and 21. So, these Israelites, these four men

11:11

specifically, these leaders, they meet Moses and Aaron who were waiting for them as they came out

11:17

from Pharaoh. And they said to them, "The Lord look on you and judge because

11:24

you have made us stink in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants and have put a

11:29

sword in their hand to kill us."

11:34

the Hebrew people, which are the people that Moses left the wilderness to save.

11:41

The people that Moses and Aaron care so much about to make the sacrifices they

11:47

did and are to be a part of saving these people. They are

11:52

irate. They are irate with Mo. They We hope God judges you. We hope God condemns you. You've ruined our lives.

12:00

You This is the nail in our coffin. You have made us look horrible. Literally, you have made us stink in sight of of

12:07

Pharaoh and his leadership. Functionally, you Moses have sealed our fate. These are the people

12:14

that Moses was here to save and they come out in a mob. I rate God judge

12:23

you. If if you're Moses, how are you feeling? Right? I How are you feeling if

12:28

you're Moses? Disappointed, of course, right? but a disappointment that leads it has to lead to a disillusionment. I'm

12:35

sure which we'll see here in a second. He did what he was supposed to do. You'd think if he does what he's supposed to

12:41

do, then God's going to keep his end of the bargain. That's the place Moses is at.

12:46

Disappointment, disillusionment. What What's God even doing? Leading to what we see in these last two verses. Moses

12:53

was dejected. He was shut down, dejected. We're going to see he's angry.

12:58

He's dejected in spite in spite of doing what was faithful. In spite of his faithfulness, he's dejected. Look at

13:05

these last two verses in uh our chapter today. Then Moses turned to the Lord and

13:13

said, "Oh Lord, why have you done evil to this people? Why did you ever send

13:20

me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he's done evil to the

13:25

people, and you have not delivered your people at

13:31

all. This is where the story ends in chapter 5. Uh it's where it stops for

13:38

today. There's no cute bow tied at the end of the story. Uh there's no

13:43

redeeming verse or rainbow that shows up as a reminder and a promise. It's just

13:49

Moses venting to the Lord these incredibly heavy accusatory feelings to

13:55

the Lord God Almighty about his doubt in God, about his doubt in God's plan,

14:02

about just a total defeat that we see in verse 23 that Moses is sitting in. He's

14:08

sitting in. And and this chapter ends really leaving leaving everyone sitting

14:13

in the tension of this unknown, hurtful, deject dejecting moment uh in

14:21

life and in faith. And that is real life. That's

14:28

real life, right? That is something that we um we can relate to and we can connect with. I got to do a quick

14:34

sidebar because I I actually love that God's word uh is so rich and deep and

14:42

will deal with hard depth and transitions and the relatability of God's word. Um man, ancient scripture

14:50

still rings so true, but but the but how it relates to us. This is something that

14:56

as I got to study it this week, I just I I felt this way before. I have felt this level of disappointment or disgust or

15:04

doubt in a way. And I I love that inspired by the Holy Spirit, God's word doesn't tiptoe around the tension we

15:11

face in life. And so, just a sidebar, right? It's not a uh it's not a Happy Days episode, right? If you know Happy

15:17

Days, the 11:00 traditional crowd, that illustration is going to crush, but some of you guys might not get it. The Hive

15:24

gets it. You guys get it. Uh, right. Happy Days is this sitcom in the 70s and

15:30

every episode, right? There's some tension, but every episode is a cute bow and that was just the formula for sitcoms for however long, right? And and

15:38

everything just ties up well and it's all good and everything's resolved and there's no tension and yet that's not

15:43

real life. That's not real life. And I love, just a sidebar, I love that God's

15:48

word is unafraid. It walks through this is the tension that we experience. a a a

15:55

grown man, a prophet of God, yelling back to God, "Why did you even send me? You've done

16:02

nothing. That raw feeling, fear, doubt, frustration, honestly,

16:10

anger, that's something that we all sit in. Uh the Bible's honest with interactions of hard stuff, and that

16:17

should encourage you um because it doesn't leave us there. And there is freedom if you if you stick with me

16:22

through this. uh the tensions, the um the discouraging moments uh are something that's common to all of

16:28

mankind, right? For you, maybe it's aspects of your life that haven't

16:34

turned out the way you thought they were going to turn out. Things that you thought, okay, by

16:39

now I should have this or I should have been able maybe you were headed in a certain way in life and all of a sudden

16:44

you got um you got served a curveball and now you don't. Maybe it's health.

16:50

Maybe it's relationships in your life. Maybe it's kids or grandkids and you think, "I've I've done I thought

16:57

everything right, and yet things feel so broken, experience

17:03

loss. We experience grief in all kinds of ways. That's way more than just grief. It's disappointment of God. Where

17:11

are you? Why did you allow this? Why didn't you keep your end of the bargain?" And and you might uh you might

17:17

have nine out of 10 things. One of the powerful things about this kind of discouragement and disappointment is

17:22

nine out of 10 things in your life might be going great. You praise God for so many sweet things in your life, but

17:28

there might just be that one thing that every time your head goes there and your heart goes there or you go there and are

17:34

reminded it's just this cloud. It's a cloud that just sucks all the wind out of your sail. Um, what can God teach us

17:42

from this chapter of scripture about how to navigate that? I just want to answer one primary question.

17:48

uh through the rest of our time. And that really is what do we do with those feelings of being overwhelmed, those

17:54

disappointments that seem to defeat us, those discouraging uh moments, those clouds that just don't seem to lift. Um

18:02

biblically, what do we do? I'm going to take three observations from the text to kind of answer that question and and

18:08

look at it. Uh first, I want to point out this. climax of this situation, right? Where

18:14

it goes really from bad to worse has got to be verses 15 through 19, right?

18:20

Because Moses has already seen earlier in the chapter, he's already encountered Pharaoh. He's already gotten bad news.

18:25

That was obviously, I'm sure, a punch in the gut. But here in verse 15- 19, now it's the persecuted Hebrews who are

18:32

getting the bad news. And they're hearing that Pharaoh is d Pharaoh is doubling down on his punishment. And

18:39

they're finding out that really it's Moses's fault. They're realizing that, right? This has got to be the peak of

18:45

that disappointment. They're in there hearing Moses is responsible for this.

18:50

This is the worst thing that's happened to us in captivity so far. And where is

18:56

Moses? Is he hiding? Nope. He is waiting

19:01

just outside. I think that's an important observation we can't miss in the text.

19:06

Verse 20. Remember it says they met Moses and Aaron. So after this interaction in verse 19 with Pharaoh,

19:12

then it says verse 20, they met Moses and Aaron who were waiting for them as they came out for Pharaoh. Look, Moses

19:19

is not the perfect example in this story, right? He's not our spotless example, but God has definitely been

19:24

doing something in his heart and in his in his mind, his faith changing patterns in his life. Moses is waiting for the

19:31

mob that he know he already knows they're going to get bad news. He's already heard it. He's now waiting for

19:37

them to come out. Remember 40 years earlier? 40 years earlier, Moses killed

19:42

an Egyptian. He buried him. People found out. He tries to break up a fight with some Hebrews the next day. And and when

19:49

they turn and mock him a little bit, when he gets the first sense that wait,

19:55

they're not for me and they're against me and they're not happy with me, Moses

20:00

books it. He folds and he skips town and he goes into the wilderness to hide and

20:06

cower for 40 years. Moses runs 40 years ago. Now here he is being the source of

20:13

disappointment and fear and persecution for an entire people group. Here it is.

20:20

He he it's his fault. And he doesn't run. He's waiting outside for the

20:25

Israelites to come and fume. He stands there and he faces this wave of these

20:30

people. we care about that are just more than disappointed. They're

20:36

defeated. How do we navigate hard circumstances biblically? What What do we do when those hard circumstances hit

20:43

us? When when we run into that disappointment that's that's so much deeper and hurtful and we realize this

20:49

isn't going to be good. How what do we do? We persevere.

20:55

We stand our ground. We persevere. We don't run. When disappointment becomes defeating in our life, we persevere and

21:01

we faithfully face our disappointments with integrity. Right? Throughout the old and

21:09

new testament, we see that we see Jesus, right? The perfect model, our perfect

21:14

savior stand when he has the power to run and flee and solve the circumstantial issues. Um, and that was

21:23

circumstances he certainly didn't deserve. So, we persevere. That's step one. Step one for for this is we've got

21:29

to stand in that at times. Uh 1 Thessalonians chapter 3, Paul tells his

21:35

disciples in Thessalonica, uh which was a church that was experiencing a ton of persecution. He tells them in chapter

21:40

3-4, "Let no one be moved by these afflictions." He knows they're being persecuted. He says, "No one be moved by

21:47

these afflictions, for you yourself know that we are destined for this. For when

21:52

we were with you, we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction just as it has come to pass

21:58

and just as you know God's word tells us not to be surprised uh when those hard afflictions

22:05

come. It also tells us to not be moved, to not run, to not flee. And so often that's our instinct, right? We we run

22:12

when facing discomfort, sadness, hurt, we're distraught, right? We we

22:17

instinctively want to run to our own wilderness to escape uh to escape what's

22:22

uncomfortable and all of that running can look all sorts of ways. But often times it's coping mechanisms in our

22:29

life, right? It's it's these things that we we go to to take our mind or our head or our heart uh off of what's hard,

22:36

right? And those coping mechanisms, those things that numb us, those things that we use to run and avoid stress and

22:43

discomfort, uh, and block out some of that brokenness, uh, that pain and discomfort, that that's what we want to

22:49

avoid. But that is really like an indicator light on a on a dash. When we experience that kind of pain and

22:56

discomfort, it it's it's telling us something. Um, I uh I was um had the

23:02

privilege of getting to uh help lead a mission trip this past spring break. And so we were in a foreign country and I

23:07

was mainly in charge of driving a van all day. And I'm driving a van that we had rented that had uh about 300,000

23:13

miles on it, guys. I was pretty excited about that, pretty proud of it. Uh we only blew out a tire and lost a wheel

23:19

once, uh which was impressive. But I remember about halfway through the week,

23:24

uh, I remember looking down and seeing, no joke, a a sliver of duct tape over the, um, the the dashboard. I remember

23:32

think, "Oh, that's weird." And I looked at a different angle and I saw all kinds of indicator lights on the dash. And so

23:39

whoever the rental guy or the mechanic was, instead of like, oh, we should figure out the source of these, you

23:45

know, warning lights, we should just cover them with duct tape so we don't see the indicator. That was their

23:51

solution. Uh, which was fine, I guess, for me. We got we got through it. But we

23:58

do that. We we do that. We run. We cope. We we feel the weight of hard

24:06

circumstances in our life. and church, it's uncomfortable and and nobody likes

24:11

to sit in that pain and that grief. And so there's all kinds of ways that um we

24:18

do the same. Instead of facing disappointment and discomfort, we just we just cover it up. We cover up those

24:24

feelings um so we can't see them. We can't experiencing experiencing them. And uh many of us certainly have go-to

24:31

patterns, right, to escape that that we know are not God-honoring, right? There are go-to ways that we cope from hard

24:38

things that we know are not God-honoring. We know it's sin. And so often in the Christian life, hear this.

24:44

So often in the Christian life, these hard circumstances that come that that's not sin necessarily, right? Those are

24:50

just the hard waves or the stress or the the griefs of life, the disappointments in life, those things aren't sin. But

24:56

what happens is often times it makes a way for sin to creep in, right? And we justify it. uh and and we will run to it

25:03

and we'll compare, well, it's not as bad as this person or that person. Um but

25:08

it's still just as dangerous. And then sometimes those coping mechanisms, they're not sin at all, right? But we

25:14

still use them in a way that doesn't lead to healing and wholeness. They're good things that God's designed, but we we take them and they become idols. They

25:20

become ways that we can just duct tape over the hard uncomfortable things. I mean things like entertainment, right,

25:26

that that God has designed for us and creativity, but then all of a sudden we just find ourselves binge watching or

25:31

scrolling to to check out from stress. Uh success and achievement can be a good I mean it is a good thing, right? To

25:38

work hard and to achieve for the glory of God, but to work hard and to achieve to be able to numb something inside of

25:44

us that's hurting. Um materialism is that uh relationships that our God has

25:50

designed as a good designer. He's designed them. But then we can make them these codependent idols in our life

25:57

where we need this person in a codependent unhealthy way that's not God's design of of serving each other in

26:02

a healthy way. Um another way that uh we we run the opposite of how we preserve

26:08

is we shift blame, right? Or we'll make ourselves the victim. When things happen, we'll focus on the other person.

26:14

and this is someone else's fault. Um we might be quick to to shift blame because

26:20

um because it's just more comfortable than facing it. Um but also sometimes it really is completely valid, right? You

26:27

might have experienced some things and it really isn't your fault. You really were a victim and somebody in your life

26:32

took advantage of you uh uh was was in um your life in a way that was hurtful

26:39

and damaging and that might be still the case. But then when you keep your focus

26:45

on that person and the blame on that person, when that becomes the focus and the source of your hurt, it leaves you

26:51

no room for healing, right? It leaves you no room for healing, just more bitterness. And so even their sin

26:57

against you now all of a sudden becomes your responsibility. There are so many ways we numb, right? So many ways that we do

27:03

that stressful, discouraging situations. Here's my question. When you feel disappointment in your life creep

27:09

up, right? that stress, that discouragement rise, what do you reach for? What is that? And and I would

27:15

really encourage you real practically. I I want to land real practically with these three steps. Ask the Lord, God,

27:20

show me what I run to. Show me what I run to whenever I'm trying to hide the

27:25

hard thing that you might be doing in my heart or just the hard thing that I don't want to look at. I don't want to face this. I don't I don't want to deal

27:32

with this. So, where is it that we run? And we hold on to that discouragement. And we don't just hold on to it. We then

27:38

second step, we turn to the Lord, right? And so we're we're we see Moses do that. We see all throughout scripture, which

27:44

we'll talk about here in a second. Turn to the Lord and turn to the Lord with your honest

27:50

doubts, frustrations, your hurt. Some of the deepest time of prayer

27:57

for me has been the times when I've been confused or frustrated or in doubt. And

28:02

rather than letting that isolate me from the only one who's got the answers, we're certainly encouraged and

28:09

challenged. Bring those bring that hurt. Bring that frustration. Moses does that. I mean, Moses does that and he comes in

28:15

hot. He says, "You've never delivered your people. Why'd you send me? What are you doing here?" And so if you

28:20

accomplish step one, right, and you identify these hard feelings in your life when those waves hit you in those

28:27

seasons, and then you assess, you know, what's stirring up inside you, but then you don't take it to the Lord, right?

28:34

Oh, yeah. This is this thing I struggle with, but then you skip that step of actually then identifying and then

28:39

bringing it to the Lord, confessing, God, this is what I'm struggling. This is where I'm at. This is how I feel. This is what I'm thinking and doubting

28:45

and believing. And if you don't take it to the Lord, then all you've done is you've just set up a self-help pathway,

28:52

right? I'll just I'll fix this in my own strength, my own self. I've identified it and now you've just put yourself on a

28:59

self-help pathway, which is a dead end. It might take 10 years to figure out it's a dead end, but it's a dead end.

29:06

When we don't take our hurts and our doubts, we are set ourselves up as the source for our solutions. And the

29:13

problem with that is throughout Christian history, throughout the Old and New Testament, we are not the source for healing and

29:19

restoration. Let me say that again. Despite the multi-billion dollar self-help

29:25

industry that will preach to you all day long, you just have it within yourself

29:31

and and fix yourself. And these seven steps and these despite that um you are

29:39

not your source to heal your brokenness. Jesus is all of scripture has pointed to

29:46

that. All of scripture has pointed to that. Old Testament, New Testament point for our need for a savior outside

29:51

ourselves and then the access we have to that savior, Jesus Christ, by grace through

29:58

faith. Don't miss this, too. A mob of people are are coming. There's so many observations here. Such a rich chapter.

30:05

They're coming. They're angry. It would seem so natural to argue back, but he doesn't, right? He doesn't pick a fight

30:10

with him. He doesn't say, "No, no, let me explain." No, you've got to understand. They come at him angry. And

30:16

what does he do? He's he he doesn't fight flesh and blood. He knows it's a spiritual battle. And he takes it to the

30:23

Lord. He takes it to the Lord. Um, and when the heat is turned up, so often it's easier to turn against each other

30:30

rather than turning to the Lord. But Moses turns to the Lord here. How about you? How do you solve that frustration

30:35

in your life? Ask the Lord, what what are your instincts? What are your go-tos? So, we might walk when we hit

30:42

those waves, we might walk in a way that reflects him because real life is going to produce hard things, church. Um, we

30:50

don't just avoid him. We persevere. Um, and be as honest as we can as we come to

30:55

the Lord because the enemy would love to tell us, "Oh, no, you can't you can't do that. That's irreverent to be able to

31:02

bring those those that those fears, those frustrations. That's irreverent." Well, it is. It is irreverent. Um, I'm

31:10

not going to pretend it's not irreverent. Um, but God is holy. God is

31:16

unquestionably holy. And so, yeah, our doubts and our frustration and God, you didn't do this. Yeah, that is wrong. But

31:23

he is strong enough to handle our frustrations and our doubts in our moments of weakness. He is strong enough

31:29

to do that. Those discouragements that leave you wanting to give up in light of of his grace, they will turn to hope as

31:36

you bring into him. loss that you can't make sense of, the hurt in your life that you don't

31:42

have a solution for, he is strong enough to handle that. God's strength is

31:47

stronger than your mess, but also his strength is also stronger than our frustrations and our doubts and our

31:53

bitterness and our discouragement. 1 Peter 5:7, it tells us, it tells us, cast all

32:00

your anxieties on him because why? Because he cares for you. So, we bring

32:06

those messy things to a God who, yeah, doesn't deserve them, but he's strong enough. And he tells us, "Bring bring

32:12

that junk. I care for you, and let me sort that through with you. Let me speak truth into those lives." Do we believe

32:19

he cares for us? Because how we answer the question of if we say, "Yeah, I do

32:24

believe he cares for us." Then then I think the next question, kind of my final question is, "Well,

32:29

then what do you think he cares for us should look like?" If we have a God we

32:34

can bring our mess to. And Moses had a relationship with God in a in a unique

32:40

and intimate way. The Lord speaking to him in miraculous ways. If we believe

32:45

he's for us, what do we expect from this God who cares for me? What do I expect?

32:52

Um because here's the thing. I believe how you answer that question. What I expect from this God who cares for me.

32:58

How I answer that will lead either to frustration and disappointment or it will lead to peace and joy. Here's why.

33:05

The source the source of all our disappointments are driven by the scope

33:10

of our unmet expectations. Let me say that again. The source of our

33:16

disappointments, right? How frustrated we are. Why is this not why is why is my kid not behaving the way I should? Why

33:22

is this financial thing not come through? Why am I not respected the way why is this relationship still so hard?

33:27

The source of those discouragements and disappointments is directly tied to the

33:32

scope of unmet expectations in my life that I either consciously or

33:38

unconsciously don't even know they're producing discouragement and specifically what I think I expect from

33:44

God directly ties to my faith and frustration with him. And when we look at Exodus 5, the Hebrew people, I mean,

33:51

they've been a slave for 430 years. Many had grown comfortable with the slavery. We'll actually see that later in Exodus

33:57

that they're like, "Honestly, it wasn't that bad because they become comfortable with it." But now all of a sudden, they've got hope and they've got these

34:02

expectations and wait, God's going to do this new thing and okay, well, it looks like those expectations are going south.

34:09

That's when all of a sudden they were just wishing they they were wishing Moses would have never been born at that point. I mean, that's when that's when

34:14

dismay happened. Moses was content with Pharaoh enslaving the Jews until God gave him a call and a hope that he was

34:21

going to be a part of changing something. Moses is dejected, but he stood his ground. He He stood his

34:26

ground. He did what was faithful. He brought his frustration to the Lord. But what did Moses do wrong in this in this

34:32

chapter? Moses hadn't been listening to the Lord. He hadn't been listening to the Lord well enough because uh what he

34:40

actually aligned his expectations to wasn't what God told him was going to happen. God had totally and clearly

34:47

communicated his expectations. God had told him multiple times in the previous chapters, you're going to ask Pharaoh

34:53

and he's going to tell you no. And Moses wasn't paying attention. Moses didn't

34:58

have God's word sealed, right? He was not remembering the expectations and the

35:04

promises of God. And so when he didn't get the expectations of the results that wait, I thought this was going to be the

35:10

result. He didn't get it on his timeline. His expectations weren't met. And now the sky is falling. And now he's

35:17

discouraged. Now he's angry at God. And now he's why' you ever send me because he wasn't really tuned in to the words

35:23

of God. Which is church that that is why we have to be so close to God's word

35:31

because the story goes on, right? Spoiler alert, God's going to do some really cool stuff in the next few

35:38

chapters. It just wasn't on Moses's timeline. And so maybe you've

35:43

experienced some hard stuff and and you say, "Okay, I'm going to stand. I'm not going to run from it. I'm just going to medicate and cope and numb. I'm going to

35:50

take some of that valid frustration to the Lord. But then also, you might need to realign your expectations to what's

35:57

promised to a follower of Jesus. And I say that compassionately, and I say that from a really personal place that's

36:03

constantly have to be back in God's word on a daily basis to say, God, will you realign my expectations to what I signed

36:11

up for in following you? What does Jesus promise us if we follow him? What can I

36:16

expect? Well, 2 Timothy chapter 3 says, "Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be

36:22

persecuted." So, I can expect persecution. There's also all kinds of incredibly beautiful things that I can

36:29

expect. One of them is Romans 8:1, that there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ

36:36

Jesus. that if if I if you have put your faith in Christ Jesus, not if you go to

36:42

church, not if you claim Christianity as your denomination of choice, if you are

36:48

in Christ Jesus, you said, "Not my life, but yours. I need you surrender and dependence to a God who openly and

36:55

graciously says, "My grace is sufficient for you through Christ and Christ alone." That faith surrender that

37:02

happens in Christ. Now, I get his grace. I get his grace. I get his

37:09

salvation. I get a relationship, an intimacy with him as a father. We see in

37:15

Romans 8, right in in the middle of Romans 8, that we can call him aba, father, that we're sons and daughters,

37:20

we're heirs, we're co-airs with Christ. And then the very last verse, the very last verse of Romans 8, um just as

37:27

another example of what we get, what we should expect. Um Paul says in 8:38,

37:33

"For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,

37:39

nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus

37:47

our Lord." What do I expect? What do I get for following

37:54

Jesus? I get Jesus. I get Jesus. And he is worth it.

38:02

He He's worth it. He is the end goal. And somewhere along the way in Christianity and somewhere along the way

38:09

in my heart that tends to wander, I've turned Jesus at times and we have turned Jesus at times into a means to an end. I

38:16

live a good Christian life. Right? Jesus, I'm following you so that my kids

38:22

won't be total scoundrels. Right? I'm following you, Jesus, and you should

38:27

give me a good marriage, right? I I'm I'm following you. I'm being moral so my

38:34

life turns out better, right? And there's so many principles and things

38:39

that are so often true about following the Lord. There's so much wisdom and worldly practical advice to that. But at

38:47

the end of the day, if those things don't turn out the way you wanted them to, but God, I'm faithful, so my

38:53

marriage shouldn't be this hard. I'm faithful, so my my work shouldn't just

38:59

constantly be moving the goalpost on me. I'm faithful. I should shouldn't deal with the frustration that I deal with.

39:05

Um Jesus is not a means to an end for a good Christian life. Jesus is the means

39:12

and he is the ends. He is the ends. I don't follow Jesus so I can get

39:18

more blessing. We follow Jesus so we get more Jesus. That's enough. And that's worth

39:24

it. And the depth of that we want to spend the rest of our life from this side until if you're in Christ, you get

39:30

to stand face to face and see him. We get to experience and walk with that

39:35

savior. This God who doesn't condemn us. this this savior who's given us his

39:41

spirit that produces fruit in our life, he's the prize. And if and when we

39:47

suffer, um it doesn't compare, it doesn't compare to the prize we get for knowing

39:54

Jesus personally. So here's my final exhortation, right? Final exertation is we just see Moses walk through the hard

40:01

things in life and the circumstances of unmet expectations and all of the dejection and defeat that comes with it.

40:10

circumstances. You might be sitting in them that you don't understand and they're hard and they weigh on

40:17

you. And we pray, God, would you resolve these circumstances? Would you bring

40:22

healing for this diagnosis? Would you provide in this way? God, would you open a door here? Would you heal this

40:27

relationship? We don't throw circumstances in our life out. We say, "God, help me be a good steward of them.

40:34

And Lord, move miraculously because you can." in all of these circumstances in our life. But in the midst of that,

40:41

moment to moment, breath to breath, God, give me more of you in this. Give me

40:46

more of Jesus in this. And if you're hearing this and for the first time you say, I've never experienced that kind of

40:53

surrender. It's always been this worldview. Christianity is the thing that I do to get the thing at the end of

40:59

life or throughout life. No, it's now more Jesus. And that buoys us. And if that's

41:06

you and you've never put your faith in Jesus, then today, today, what are you

41:12

chasing? What are you continuing to look for that has not it has not satisfied up

41:17

to this point? Today, hit Jesus. And if you've heard

41:24

this a million times and you've asked for more Jesus a million times, then

41:29

today would we say, Lord, would you give us more and more? I I want us to take a

41:34

few minutes to end this time uh with a time of prayer to allow you guys to

41:40

spend time with a God who cares. And so um I'm going to close us in prayer and then um the campus pastors in the

41:47

various venues will will get up and they'll lead. But let me close in prayer and then let's let's meet with them.

41:52

Father, thank you. Thank you for how you love us and who you are. Lord, would you do what only you could do? God, would we

41:59

meet with you honestly and genuinely for your glory in the name of Jesus.