

Exodus: Journey of Revelation - Week 4

Sermon Date 10/9/2016

Special note for this week:

It is important for your group to view Pastor Craig's introduction video prior to your discussion this week. If you need to email the video to your group prior to your meeting, please do so.

QUICK REVIEW

- 1) Upon reviewing your notes from Sunday's teaching, was there anything that caught your attention?

The Goal

On Sunday Pastor Craig unpacked Exodus Chapter 19:3-9. The goal of this study is to help people understand that they are God's treasured possession. In our study this week we will unpack a few ideas regarding purpose. For example, do we know our purpose as believers in Christ? Do we know why we are here? Knowing why we are Christians will help us see opportunities to share Christ. Moreover, becoming familiar with our stories and how we became Christians can also be a catalyst for sharing Christ. People often think being a Christian is just about going to church. But, as we will see in the Apostle Paul's life, being a Christian begins with a moment in time and continues for a lifetime. Yet knowing how we became Christians may be a challenge for some of us because we may not remember it vividly. We will talk more about sharing our stories later in the study.

MY STORY

- 2) What areas are you currently serving in? Is there a ministry team that you sense God is prompting you to join?
- 3) What was your takeaway from last week's study?

DIGGING DEEPER

Exodus 19:3-9 (NLT):

³ Then Moses climbed the mountain to appear before God. The LORD called to him from the mountain and said, 'Give these instructions to the family of Jacob; announce it to the descendants of Israel: ⁴ 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians. You know how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵ Now if you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my own special treasure from among all the peoples on earth; for all the earth belongs to me. ⁶ And you will be my kingdom of priests, my holy nation.' This is the message you must give to the people of Israel.'

⁷ So Moses returned from the mountain and called together the elders of the people and told them everything the LORD had commanded him. ⁸ And all the people responded together,

'We will do everything the LORD has commanded.' So Moses brought the people's answer back to the LORD.

⁹ Then the LORD said to Moses, 'I will come to you in a thick cloud, Moses, so the people themselves can hear me when I speak with you. Then they will always trust you.'

Moses told the LORD what the people had said."

[Fun Fact About Eagles From *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*](#)

"God compared His delivering the people out of **Egypt**, across the Red (Reed) Sea, and to Sinai to His carrying them **on eagles' wings** (cf. Deut. 32:10–11). When young eagles are learning to fly, the mother eagle flies under them with her wings spread out to catch them."ⁱ

4) How do God's people become "[God's] kingdom of priests, [His] holy nation?"

[A Study Note from Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary](#)

During biblical times, priests were set apart from the people to oversee and reserve the knowledge and worship of God.ⁱ

This question also refers back to the principle that obedience is required for going deeper with God, which we discussed in Week 1.

5) How does the previous question apply to you?

Sometimes obedience can be a hard pill to swallow in our culture. However, the above passage from Exodus beautifully portrays God's great love, compassion, and tenderness for us. Thus He is worthy of our trust and obedience. Furthermore, when we are obedient to God we are loving Him. The following two passages further break down this idea.

Consider the next three passages.

1 John 4:19 (ESV):

"¹⁹We love because he first loved us."

Jesus said in John 14:15–17 (NLT):

"¹⁵If you love me, obey my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. ¹⁷He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you."

[A Study Note from Carol Stream in Tyndale House Publishers 2013 Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#)

"**14:15** Other manuscripts read *you will obey*; still others read *you should obey*."ⁱⁱ

Psalm 139:13–18 (NLT):

¹³You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother’s womb. ¹⁴Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. ¹⁵You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. ¹⁶You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. ¹⁷How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! ¹⁸I can’t even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand! And when I wake up, you are still with me!”

6) Considering the three previous passages, what should our motivation to obey God be? [It is because God loves us that we desire to obey Him. Our inclination should be to return His love for us in the form of love, honor, and obedience.](#)

7) How should knowing God’s love for us impact our purpose? Why is understanding the purpose of why we are Christians so important?

[In the following passages, we will unpack Apostle Paul's story. His story is significant for us because every time Paul is questioned as to why he is doing what he is doing, he points back to his conversion.](#)

Paul’s Conversion

Acts 9:1–9 (NLT):

“Meanwhile, Saul was uttering threats with every breath and was eager to kill the Lord’s followers. So he went to the high priest. ²He requested letters addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, asking for their cooperation in the arrest of any followers of the Way he found there. He wanted to bring them—both men and women—back to Jerusalem in chains.

³As he was approaching Damascus on this mission, a light from heaven suddenly shone down around him. ⁴He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?’

⁵‘Who are you, lord?’ Saul asked.

And the voice replied, ‘I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting! ⁶Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.’

⁷The men with Saul stood speechless, for they heard the sound of someone’s voice but saw no one! ⁸Saul picked himself up off the ground, but when he opened his eyes he was blind. So his companions led him by the hand to Damascus. ⁹He remained there blind for three days and did not eat or drink.”

Notes from the Faith Life Study Bible

“9:5 Who are you, Lord?” Saul’s question, as well as Jesus’ response with the words “I am” (*egō eimi* in Greek), may be an allusion to Moses’ encounter with Yahweh in the burning bush (Exod 3:14). Like Moses, Saul is here being called by Yahweh to rescue a people (in Saul’s case, the Gentiles).”ⁱⁱⁱ

- 8) What do you think Paul meant when he said, "Who are you, Lord?"
- 9) What did Paul’s actions say about the state of his heart?
- 10) What are the four elements of Paul's conversion? Who was he with? Where was he? When was the conversion? Lastly, what did he say and what did he want Jesus to do?

In the following two passages, we see Paul in some sort of trial. In each of these trials, he uses his own story as his defense. He also utilizes his conversion story to share Christ with others, and it is the only conversion story seen multiple times in the New Testament. Thus, Paul understands that no one can argue with his experience with Christ. They could call him crazy, but they could not argue his account. Similarly, no one can argue with our stories. They are our own accounts of what Christ has done in our lives, and our stories are powerful testaments to the saving and transforming power of Christ. That is why it is so important for us to know our own story.

Paul sharing his story with a crowd in Jerusalem:

Acts 22:6–12 (NLT):

⁶As I was on the road, approaching Damascus about noon, a very bright light from heaven suddenly shone down around me. ⁷I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’

⁸‘Who are you, lord?’ I asked.

And the voice replied, ‘I am Jesus the Nazarene, the one you are persecuting.’ ⁹The people with me saw the light but didn’t understand the voice speaking to me.

¹⁰I asked, ‘What should I do, Lord?’

And the Lord told me, ‘Get up and go into Damascus, and there you will be told everything you are to do.’

¹¹I was blinded by the intense light and had to be led by the hand to Damascus by my companions. ¹²A man named Ananias lived there. He was a godly man, deeply devoted to the law, and well regarded by all the Jews of Damascus.”

Paul's defense before King Agrippa:

Acts 26:12–20 (NLT):

¹²One day I was on such a mission to Damascus, armed with the authority and commission of the leading priests. ¹³About noon, Your Majesty, as I was on the road, a light from heaven

brighter than the sun shone down on me and my companions. ¹⁴ We all fell down, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is useless for you to fight against my will.’

¹⁵ ‘Who are you, lord?’ I asked.

And the Lord replied, ‘I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting. ¹⁶ Now get to your feet! For I have appeared to you to appoint you as my servant and witness. Tell people that you have seen me, and tell them what I will show you in the future. ¹⁷ And I will rescue you from both your own people and the Gentiles. Yes, I am sending you to the Gentiles ¹⁸ to open their eyes, so they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Then they will receive forgiveness for their sins and be given a place among God’s people, who are set apart by faith in me.’

¹⁹ And so, King Agrippa, I obeyed that vision from heaven. ²⁰ I preached first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that all must repent of their sins and turn to God—and prove they have changed by the good things they do.”

11) In the previous two passages, what are the four elements Paul recounts for his accusers? What is the pattern he shares?

12) Why is Paul's story so significant?

TAKING IT HOME

Here at Bayside of Citrus Heights we talk a lot about doing life with Christ at our side. Some of us have been walking with Christ a long time; for others of us, our journeys have just begun. Still, some of us have yet to surrender our lives to Christ. If the last category is you, what is stopping you from doing it today? Regardless of where we are on our journeys with Christ, our stories are powerful testimonies of the goodness of God.

13) How did you become a follower of Christ?

Who were you with?

Where were you at?

When was it?

What did you say to Jesus, or what did you want Him to do for you?

14) Who will you share your story with this week?

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

15. Israel is a holy nation to God. Moses had to relay that to them. They had a “slave mentality” due to their 400 years in Egypt as slaves. 1 Peter 2:9 says we are “a chosen people . . . royal priests”, and He challenges us to share the goodness of God with others. Spend some time thinking about your own life—are you a light to those around you? Do others see God’s goodness by how you live? Does God’s light show in how you love others, how you handle your anger, in your acts of compassion, or simply in how you listen to others?

Who are the people God is putting on your heart to share His story with?

1 Peter 2:9 “But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God’s very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” (NLT)

ⁱ Hannah, John D. 1985, *Exodus- The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, eds. P. 138. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

ⁱⁱ Tyndale House Publishers 2013, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

ⁱⁱⁱ Barry, John D., Douglas Mangum, Derek R. Brown, et al. 2012, 2016. *Faithlife Study Bible*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.