

Exodus: Journey of Revelation - Week 2

Sermon Date 9/25/2016

QUICK REVIEW

- 1.) Take a moment to review your notes from Sunday's message. Are there any points that resonate with you?

THE GOAL

On Sunday, Pastor Craig unpacked the idea of how to follow God when people attack. In our groups this week, we will dive deeper into this thought by exploring the following key concepts: Jesus' teaching on turning the other cheek, discovering where God is clearly working, and identifying whether we are following our own or God's leading. (The leader's note in this study will further break down these ideas.)

MY STORY

- 1.) Looking back at the study from last week, was there ever a time when the past felt better than your current situation?
- 2.) Did you take any next steps this week with your chair time? If so, what did you do?

DIGGING DEEPER

Luke 6:27-36

²⁷ "But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you.

²⁸ Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you. ²⁹ If someone slaps you on one cheek, offer the other cheek also. If someone demands your coat, offer your shirt also. ³⁰ Give to anyone who asks; and when things are taken away from you, don't try to get them back. ³¹ Do to others as you would like them to do to you.

³² "If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them! ³³ And if you do good only to those who do good to you, why should you get credit? Even sinners do that much! ³⁴ And if you lend money only to those who can repay you, why should you get credit? Even sinners will lend to other sinners for a full return.

³⁵ "Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. ³⁶ You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate. ⁱ

Study Notes from *The Apologetics Study Bible*:

"These are not absolute commands but illustrations of loving one's enemies (v. 27) and dealing with others as one would desire to be dealt with (v. 31). They are stark and concrete examples of the general principles of non-retaliation, impartiality, generosity, and graciousness. The examples are radical and thus intended to shock the audience to consider the radical nature of Jesus' ethic; they were not intended to be applied unthinkingly."ⁱⁱ

- 3.) When applied literally, verses 29-30 appear to encourage us to allow others to take advantage of us. Do you agree? What do you think is Jesus' point in verses 29-30?
- 4.) With these verses in mind, how should I respond when people attack?

See verses 35- 36 to frame your discussion. Jesus commands us to love our enemies in verse 35, and sometimes the most loving thing that we could say to someone is no. Moreover, boundaries are a healthy and necessary part of our lives. How do you lovingly establish boundaries with your family members, friends, and co-workers?

Exodus 17:1-7

At the LORD's command, the whole community of Israel left the wilderness of Sin and moved from place to place. Eventually they camped at Rephidim, but there was no water there for the people to drink. ² So once more the people complained against Moses. "Give us water to drink!" they demanded.

"Quiet!" Moses replied. "Why are you complaining against me? And why are you testing the LORD?"

³ But tormented by thirst, they continued to argue with Moses. "Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Are you trying to kill us, our children, and our livestock with thirst?"

⁴ Then Moses cried out to the LORD, "What should I do with these people? They are ready to stone me!"

⁵ The LORD said to Moses, "Walk out in front of the people. Take your staff, the one you used when you struck the water of the Nile, and call some of the elders of Israel to join you. ⁶ I will stand before you on the rock at Mount Sinai. Strike the rock, and water will come gushing out. Then the people will be able to drink." So Moses struck the rock as he was told, and water gushed out as the elders looked on.

It is significant to note that the Israelites were complaining about Moses even though he was following the command of the Lord and not his own will. This is point two of the goal this week. Where is God clearly working? God commanded the Israelites to move and Moses obeyed. But the people complained against him and God, forgetting everything God had done for them and His promise to provide for them.

- 5.) Where did the command to move the community come from, and who did the community blame?
- 6.) What was Moses' response to the community?
- 7.) When we obey God, are we guaranteed an environment free from the attacks of others?

Below is the third point of our study. We need to discern who we are following. Are we following God's will or our own?

TAKING IT HOME

Sometimes we think we are following God, but in reality we are following our own will and decisions. This can be challenging because we are reaping the consequences of our own decisions. Let's be real for a moment. Pastor Craig said our actions may result in people attacking. Sometimes people attack because we did something to provoke them, and their responses are simply consequences of our poor choices. Furthermore, God never promised us a consequence-free life. Thus, being able to know who's will we are following is important. Below are some thoughts to help us determine whether it is God or ourselves who are leading our lives.

- 8.) What are some methods you use to determine if you are following God's will or your own?
- 9.) What is the most challenging part about not seeking justice or revenge for you?

The Apostle Paul teaches us in Romans 12:9-21 and Colossians 3:1-17 to:

Romans 12:9-21 (NLT)

⁹ Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. ¹⁰ Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. ¹¹ Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. ¹² Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. ¹³ When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality. ¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. ¹⁵ Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all! ¹⁷ Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. ¹⁸ Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the Lord. ²⁰ Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads." ²¹ Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.

Colossians 3:1-17 (NLT)

¹ Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. ² Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. ³ For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory. ⁵ So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater,

worshiping the things of this world. ⁶ Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming. ⁷ You used to do these things when your life was still part of this world. ⁸ But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. ⁹ Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds. ¹⁰ Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him. ¹¹ In this new life, it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free. Christ is all that matters, and he lives in all of us.

¹² Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. ¹³ Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.

¹⁶ Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

10.) What speaks to you in this passage from Romans or Colossians? How might you remember to apply these truths in your life?

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

11.) It is important to surround ourselves with others in this life so that when we feel attacked our friends can encourage us, pray with us, and remind us that the battle belongs to the Lord. Who do you surround yourself with in life? How do you keep your focus on the Lord during the battle or storm?

Read Exodus 17:9 and Numbers 31:3-4.

12.) Sometimes in life we get busy and forget to turn to God. We think that our problems are too small for Him, or believe that because we made our mess we are responsible for fixing it. When circumstances such as these arise, it is important to remember that we are invaluable to God and that He is aware of every detail of our lives. Furthermore, Jesus teaches us that God knows our needs before we even ask (Matt 6:8). So when we are in the midst of a storm and everything seems to be falling apart, that is the time for us to keep our focus on God because He cares for us. God cares for us so much that He sent His one and only Son to die on the cross for our sins so that we can be with Him forever and so that we can freely turn to Him with all of our needs. Do you ask God for help in every situation? During your chair time do you sense that there are any relationships, situations, or needs that God is prompting you to trust Him with?

Read: Psalm 56:9, James 5:16, Luke 12:6.

ⁱ Tyndale House Publishers. (2013). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Lk 6:27–36). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

ⁱⁱ Cabal, T., Brand, C. O., Clendenen, E. R., Copan, P., Moreland, J. P., & Powell, D. (2007). *The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith* (p. 1524). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.