

Exodus: Journey of Revelation Week 3

Sermon Date 10/2/2016

QUICK REVIEW

- 1) Looking back at your notes from Sunday's teaching, was there anything that caught your attention?

The Goal

On Sunday, Pastor Craig unpacked Exodus chapter 18 and the idea of Moses being overwhelmed with the Israelite's needs. When Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, notices how Moses is listening to the Israelite's grievances from morning till night, he challenges Moses to change his leadership strategy. Pastor Craig connected this concept of delegation, introduced in Exodus, to service in the body of Christ. Where is God calling you to serve? The goal of this study is to help our group members understand that serving is essential for the success of our mission. Each person's talents, gifts, and abilities are not meant to be wasted, but are vital to the success of God's mission of redemption in our community.

The following is a recap from last week: Sometimes when we study themes from the Bible, we are given opportunities to be tested in these areas. Did anyone in your group believe that they were being attacked in the past week? Even if your group members have not recently felt attacked, there may have been times in their lives when they have felt that way. Please discuss the following questions together:

MY STORY

- 2) Did you experience any instances with people attacking you in the past week? If you did, did you apply any of the tools from last week's study? What were they? If you did not experience feeling attacked in the past week, how could the tools that we discussed inform your response? If there anything that you would do differently?
- 3) What was your takeaway from last week's life group?

DIGGING DEEPER

Exodus 18:13–26 (NLT)

¹³ The next day, Moses took his seat to hear the people's disputes against each other. They waited before him from morning till evening.

¹⁴ When Moses' father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he asked, "What are you really accomplishing here? Why are you trying to do all this alone while everyone stands around you from morning till evening?"

¹⁵ Moses replied, “Because the people come to me to get a ruling from God. ¹⁶ When a dispute arises, they come to me, and I am the one who settles the case between the quarreling parties. I inform the people of God’s decrees and give them his instructions.”

¹⁷ “This is not good!” Moses’ father-in-law exclaimed. ¹⁸ “You’re going to wear yourself out—and the people, too. This job is too heavy a burden for you to handle all by yourself. ¹⁹ Now listen to me, and let me give you a word of advice, and may God be with you. You should continue to be the people’s representative before God, bringing their disputes to him. ²⁰ Teach them God’s decrees, and give them his instructions. Show them how to conduct their lives. ²¹ But select from all the people some capable, honest men who fear God and hate bribes. Appoint them as leaders over groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten. ²² They should always be available to solve the people’s common disputes, but have them bring the major cases to you. Let the leaders decide the smaller matters themselves. They will help you carry the load, making the task easier for you. ²³ If you follow this advice, and if God commands you to do so, then you will be able to endure the pressures, and all these people will go home in peace.”

²⁴ Moses listened to his father-in-law’s advice and followed his suggestions. ²⁵ He chose capable men from all over Israel and appointed them as leaders over the people. He put them in charge of groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten. ²⁶ These men were always available to solve the people’s common disputes. They brought the major cases to Moses, but they took care of the smaller matters themselves.

- 4) What were the key elements of Jethro's plan to help Moses?
(See verses 21 and 22 to guide your discussion.)
- 5) Why do you think that Jethro’s plan would be appealing to both Moses and the Israelites?

From Exodus: An Introduction and Commentary

Verse 14 Why do you sit alone? The wise question of an old chieftain who has learned the great lesson of how to devolve authority. Like many a Christian leader, Moses was wearing himself out unnecessarily (verse 18) by trying to do everything single-handed. This is not always a mark of ambition: it is sometimes the mark of the over-conscientious and over-anxious. Moreover, it was wearing out the people (verse 18 again), an aspect usually overlooked.¹

Waiting for justice can be a painful process because it doesn't allow for closure to a person's pain or grief. Delayed justice can be emotionally hard on a person.

- 6) Who was impacted the most by Moses’ decision to share the burden of judging duties with other leaders? Why were they impacted the most?

Acts 2:36–47 (NLT)

³⁶ “So let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah!” ³⁷ Peter’s words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?” ³⁸ Peter replied, “Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the

forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away all who have been called by the Lord our God.”

⁴⁰ Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation!”

⁴¹ Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all. ⁴² All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer.

⁴³ A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. ⁴⁴ And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. ⁴⁵ They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need.

⁴⁶ They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity⁴⁷ all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

The early church needed people from all walks of life to step up and serve.

- 7) With the sudden explosion of growth in the early church, what did the church need to succeed?

People who were willing to serve and are capable to lead others.

Acts 5:42–6:7 (NLT)

⁴² And every day, in the Temple and from house to house, they continued to teach and preach this message: “Jesus is the Messiah.” But as the believers rapidly multiplied, there were rumblings of discontent. The Greek-speaking believers complained about the Hebrew-speaking believers, saying that their widows were being discriminated against in the daily distribution of food.

² So the Twelve called a meeting of all the believers. They said, “We apostles should spend our time teaching the word of God, not running a food program. ³ And so, brothers, select seven men who are well respected and are full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will give them this responsibility. ⁴ Then we apostles can spend our time in prayer and teaching the word.”

⁵ Everyone liked this idea, and they chose the following: Stephen (a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit), Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas of Antioch (an earlier convert to the Jewish faith). ⁶ These seven were presented to the apostles, who prayed for them as they laid their hands on them. ⁷ So God’s message continued to spread. The number of believers greatly increased in Jerusalem, and many of the Jewish priests were converted, too. ⁱⁱ

Here in Acts chapter six, we see strategies that the early church used to meet the needs of the people; the most significant being their practice of meeting in homes. In order for this to be effective, many early Christians needed to be willing to open their homes for fellowship, teaching, and prayer.

- 8) What are some of the ways the early church needed people to step up and serve?

- 9) Why was there grumbling going on among the people?
10) How did the apostles address the grumbling?

TAKING IT HOME

- 11) Where could you join the mission to serve the body of Christ? Is God calling you to serve in the body of Christ?
12) How much time can you give to serve; 30 minutes, an hour, 2 hours?
13) If you are not currently serving, what steps can you take to begin?

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

1 Corinthians 12:12–26 (NLT)

One Body with Many Parts

¹² The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. ¹³ Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit.

¹⁴ Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. ¹⁵ If the foot says, “I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,” that does not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear says, “I am not part of the body because I am not an eye,” would that make it any less a part of the body? ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything?

¹⁸ But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. ¹⁹ How strange a body would be if it had only one part! ²⁰ Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. ²¹ The eye can never say to the hand, “I don’t need you.” The head can’t say to the feet, “I don’t need you.”

²² In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. ²³ And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, ²⁴ while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. ²⁵ This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. ²⁶ If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.

- 14) How does this passage speak to you personally? How does it inform your role in the church?

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 (NLT)

⁹ Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. ¹⁰ If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.

¹¹ Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be

warm alone? ¹² A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.

15) Considering this passage from Ecclesiastes, how can God use others in your life to encourage you?

ⁱ Cole, R. A. (1973). *Exodus: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 2, pp. 147–148). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

ⁱⁱ Tyndale House Publishers. (2013). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Ex 16:1–8). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.