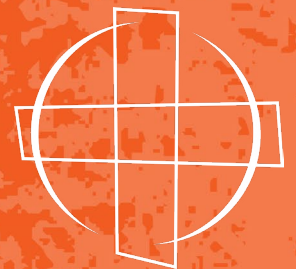


AUGUST
2022

Donald J. Wills
Senior Pastor

FOLLOW



ADULT CONNECT
CLASS CURRICULUM

The purpose of First Baptist Church of Fort Worth is to ***introduce*** people into a loving relationship with Jesus, ***instruct*** them in spiritual growth through God's Word, ***inspire*** them to serve for God's kingdom, and ***incorporate*** them in authentic worship to glorify God.

A Note From Our Pastor

Dear FBC family and friends,

Empires and brands are built on vying for your loyalty and commitment to what they offer. Whether it is apparel, food, transportation, tools, sports equipment, kitchenware, music groups or bands, well, you get the point; they all want you to want them. They will go to great lengths to get you to follow their brand and we do follow them! We want the best! We are quick to offer our thoughts on our favorite brands. Now, God is not a brand, but the Redeemer, who truly changes lives through our Savior Jesus Christ. He desires your loyalty and commitment to Him, to wear His brand faithfully. Are you as ready to share your thoughts about this life we call following Christ? Do you wear your faith on the outside? Can people see your brand? Peter put it this way in 1 Peter 3:15, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (KJV).

As a reminder, the layout of this Curriculum begins with a 7-day approach for both the teacher and the members to get the most from each study. We also acknowledge that teachers may have their own methods for preparing the lessons and we encourage them to prepare in the way that makes them most effective in presenting God's Word and the weekly lesson. We also encourage each teacher and member to use the suggested 7-day approach for their own personal study and encouragement.

In the study this month, we are challenged with the different aspects of following God. In the first three chapters of Exodus, we will look at the challenges the Israelites faced as God raised a leader in Moses to bring them out of Egypt. These topics are applicable to us today as we seek to follow God. May we determine that following God will stay at the front of our thoughts as we engage in conversation and wear Him faithfully.

-Blessings
Pastor Don



Suggested Plan for Using this Bible Study Guide Effectively

Introduce

Day 1: Read and meditate on the Scripture, asking God to guide you throughout the week as you study His Word and allowing Him to speak to you through the Spirit. Read the **INTRODUCE** portion of the lesson commentary.

Instruct

Day 2: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and read the **INSTRUCT** portion of the lesson commentary. Concentrate on memorizing the focal verse for that particular week.

Day 3: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and answer the focal questions in the **INSTRUCT** portion of the lesson commentary.

Inspire

Day 4: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and begin thinking about tangible ways you can incorporate the principles you learned in your daily life. Read the **INSPIRE** portion of the lesson commentary.

Incorporate

Day 5: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and apply the theological principle that you learned from this week in a tangible way. Use the **INCORPORATE** portion of the lesson commentary to guide you.

Day 6: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and in the journal section describe how God allowed you to apply this passage in a real and tangible way this week.

Day 7: Review the Scripture and share with others in your Connect Class on Sunday morning at 9:30am. Be ready to share your experience about how God allowed you to apply the lesson for that week.

Contents
August Lesson Plan

3



August 7, 2022

Follow God Not Culture

[Exodus 1:8-22](#)

17



August 14, 2022

Follow God Confidently

[Exodus 2:1-10](#)

29



August 21, 2022

Follow God Consistently

[Exodus 2:11-25](#)

43



August 28, 2022

Follow God's Call

[Exodus 3:1-10](#)

August 7, 2022



Follow God Not Culture

Exodus 1:8-22

Focal Verse:

“But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive.”

Exodus 1:17

back to
Table of
Contents

Introduce

Since graduating college in 2000, Rob Boss had faithfully and dutifully worked for the same nationally known corporation here in North Texas. He had an exemplary record, serving with integrity in every aspect. He was never once late for work despite our notoriously bad traffic. He never complained about his duties or pay, he always completed the tasks assigned to him on time and well, and he worked all the hours they asked of him. He treated everyone with dignity and respect regardless of how they may have treated him. In every way, he was a model employee! Upper management took notice of Rob. They recognized his value to the company and showed favor toward him, rewarding him handsomely for his hard work. As a result, he consistently rose through the rank and file of the company via promotion based upon his performance.

Rob worked diligently compelled by his relationship with Christ ([Eph 6:5-8](#)). He did not hide his faith in Christ from others, but boldly lived it and verbally communicated it when given the opportunity. Everyone in the company knew Rob followed Christ

because they could see it. They saw evidence in the way he lived. They also observed how he seemed content and blessed in the Lord despite whatever circumstances may have occurred. For a time, upper management tolerated Rob's outspoken faith in Christ because he added much value to the company. One day, however, a larger corporation



purchased the business and they merged. The new management no longer knew Rob Boss intimately nor did they respect his faith in Christ.

After the merger, the new management team wanted to change the culture of the company to reflect the moral values which seemed more modern and inclusive to them. Therefore, they sent a memo to all the employees outlining these new expectations. In these directives, employees received the option of specifying the pronoun by which they wished to be called irrespective of their actual biological gender. Consequently, all employees would show respect by calling them according

Introduce

to their preferred pronoun. If any employee refused, the company classified it as hate speech and harassment, resulting in sensitivity training and possibly termination. Despite the dictatorial memo, Rob continued to speak the truth in love and he refused to abide by the policy. The company responded swiftly, but hostilely. They immediately increased his workload while at the same time docking his pay and demoting him in rank. Although other individuals were afforded a “safe space” in which to work and express their views, Rob faced an onslaught of insults and threats. Many in the company threatened violence against him if he did not accept the mandate. Not only did he receive hateful e-mails and notes, but he often arrived to vandalism in his cubicle. Even though the previous company had benefited under Rob Boss’s work, the current company had no choice but to fire him for his beliefs that they intolerantly deemed intolerant!

Although fictional, Rob Boss’s experience reflects an all-too-real scenario for many believers today. We live in a nation that has not merely forgotten the Lord and the principles upon which we were founded, but they have rejected Him altogether. They stand adamantly opposed to the righteousness and holiness which Christ advocates. In light of such hostility and hatred, we must choose to continue following Christ. We cannot cave to culture! We must live righteously in Christ no matter what the culture demands or how much they may attempt to persecute us for our beliefs visibly demonstrated through our actions. Like the midwives who rejected Pharaoh’s order to kill newborn Hebrew males, we must choose to follow Christ when the culture pressures us to act wickedly against the principles of Scripture— no matter what it may cost us here on earth.

Key
Question

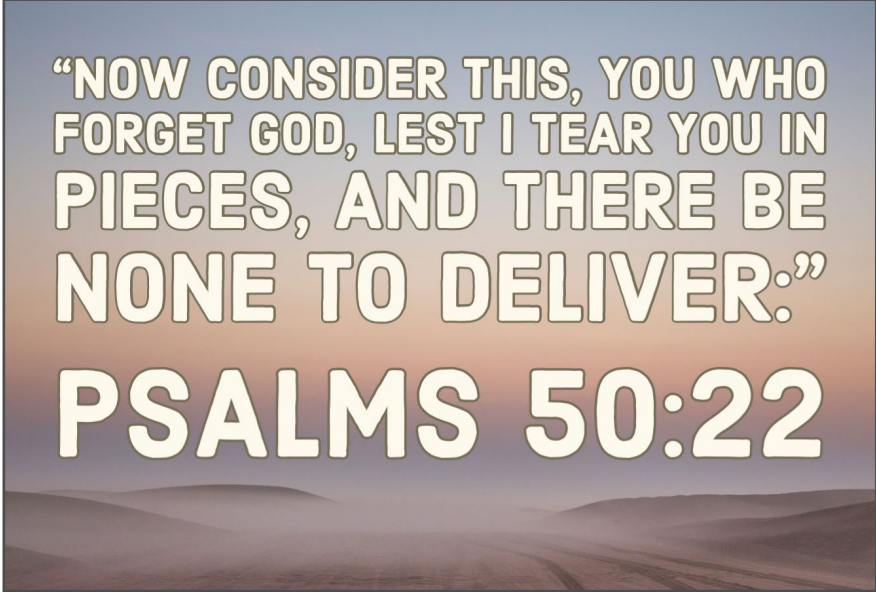
When have you faced opposition for your faith in Christ?

THE BURDENS IMPOSED BY CULTURE:

As the pages of Scripture turn from Genesis to Exodus, a new era in **Egypt** begins with the death of Joseph whom God had used to rescue the world from famine ([Exod 1:6](#)). Just as God had shown favor to Joseph, “the children of Israel” continued to prosper as they resided in the land of Goshen ([Exod 1:7](#)). Increasing in number and strength, they proved a theoretical threat to Pharaoh who surmised they might join in a revolt to overthrow the nation. Our study this week commences with a foreboding declaration that this **new king did not know Joseph** (v. 8). He and his people had a short-term memory. They had forgotten what God did through His servant when He interpreted the former Pharaoh’s dream and led the nation to prepare for an extensive drought and famine. Through Joseph, God ultimately delivered the nation—and the known world—from starvation and death.

Any nation which had been delivered from such a great calamity should have been grateful, but Egypt forgot! As time advanced and things returned to normal, they had forgotten what the Lord had done for them through His humble servant. Although

the text explicitly focuses on Joseph in verse 8, it was really the Lord whom **the king did not know**. Joseph always made clear who he represented. Thus, Pharaoh and all Egypt knew that Joseph served the Lord alone and spoke with authority on His behalf. When interpreting Pharaoh’s dream, for example, he adamantly interjected, “It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace” ([Gen 41:16](#)). Even though they may have forgotten Joseph as the spokesman and vessel, it was actually God whom they failed to **know**!



“NOW CONSIDER THIS, YOU WHO FORGET GOD, LEST I TEAR YOU IN PIECES, AND THERE BE NONE TO DELIVER:”

PSALMS 50:22

Often, our understanding of what it means to **know** something or someone centers around the cognitive aspect of knowledge. We **know** about them like we would

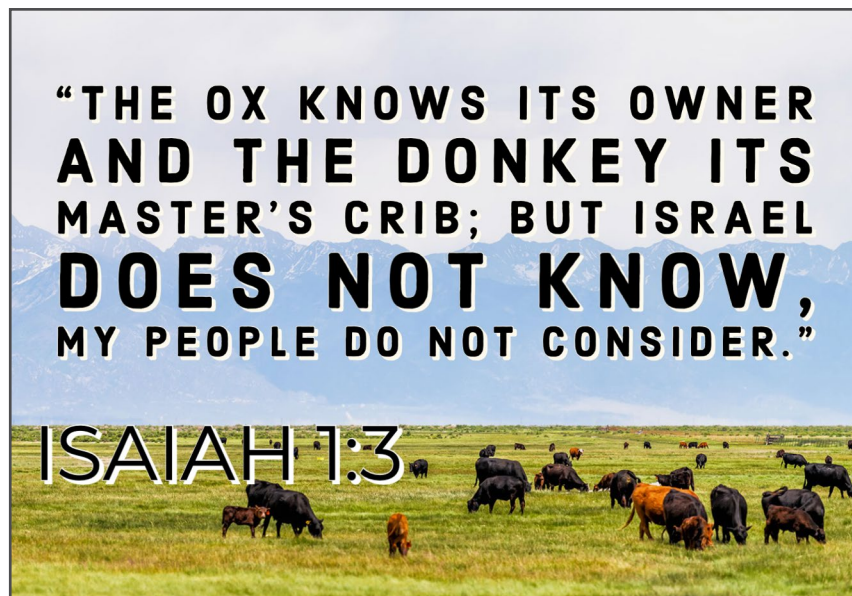
Instruct

historical information in the form of facts and figures; we **know** their background, activities, and accomplishments. Within the current context, however, to **know** also implies a relationship. Certainly, **the king** may not have had a cognitive knowledge of who Joseph was and what God led him to do, but even more he did not have a personal relationship with him! Neither **the king** nor the people had observed his character with their own eyes; they had not heard his testimony about the Lord with their own ears! Thus, they did not merely forget his achievements, but they **did not** even **know** them because they had no personal connection to him!

When people look at you, what will they remember most? Which areas of your life bear the most resemblance to Christ that demonstrate a personal connection to Him?

Question
1

In Isaiah 1:3, God condemns Israel for a similar reason—except it wasn't Joseph whom the people **did not know**, but the Lord Himself! God laments, "The ox knows its owner



and the donkey its master's crib, but Israel does not know, My people do not consider." Ironically, the people would have claimed to have known God because in their minds they served Him. They performed all the prescribed religious rituals and attended all the ceremonial rites. But they only went through the motions. They did not have a relationship with

the Lord because they refused to serve Him alone. In reality, they **did not know** Him because they failed to realize that God examines the heart; He desires obedience more than meaningless sacrifice performed from a mere sense of duty.

We may live in a world that claims to be educated and enlightened. Some may even declare with their lips that they **know** God, but their actions betray them. They don't have a relationship with Him as evidenced by their refusal to follow His ways. They haven't just forgotten Him, but they have outrightly rejected Him as Lord! As a result of this rejection, society has no moral standard and no compass to guide them. People

participate in perverse actions and call them normal because they regard themselves as the guardians of the truth. They, not the Lord, determine what works best for them ([Judges 17:6](#)). When a society rejects God, it leads to moral decay and complete chaos. Culture then positions itself to oppose God at every turn even while it feigns love and acceptance for all!

Our society as a whole has come to this point. We face plagues not of frogs, darkness, or blood-red water, but we face man-made plagues of violence, hatred, rage, unforgiveness, self-centeredness, sexual perversion, destruction of the nuclear family as God created from the beginning, and so much more. The more culture pushes God away and refuses to have a relationship with Him through repentance in Christ the more these plagues will intensify and the greater the dysfunction we will see. What hope do we have? How should we respond to a cultural call for godlessness? As we will observe through the faithfulness of the midwives, we must stand fast on the promises of the Lord and always follow His pattern of righteousness no matter what the culture may say or how hard it may press against us to conform to its ways.

How difficult do you find it to stand for biblical truth in our world today?

Question
2

Seeing how God had continued to bless Israel frightened Pharaoh. Because he **did not know Joseph**, he feared that **the children of Israel** would continue to increase numerically and grow **mightier** than they (v. 9).

When **war** would inevitably come, he theoretically proposed that they would join Egypt's adversaries and **fight against** them, conquering and overthrowing them in their own **land** (v. 10). So, he appealed to his people in an emotionally-charged speech urging them to band together and **deal shrewdly with them** lest the nation lose its world-



Still from the Movie *The Ten Commandments*

Instruct

wide influence and dominance. Pharaoh's plan literally involved an attempt to work them to death. Appointing ruthless **taskmasters over them**, he had them construct two **supply cities: Pithom and Raamses** (v. 11).

The Egyptians treated Israel mercilessly, heaping upon them tremendous **burdens**. Yet, God continued to bless them and they increased in number which greatly exasperated them all the more (v. 12). Consequently, **the more** Israel **multiplied** in population **the more** the Egyptians **afflicted them**. They treated them more severely and more harshly, forcing them to serve rigorously in **all** things (v. 13). As a result, the Egyptians **made their lives bitter** and unbearable to the point of desperation and despair (v. 14). They mercilessly forced **the children of Israel** to build these two **cities brick by brick** as well as to work tirelessly **in the field**. Whatever the Egyptians did, they did it harshly in an attempt to break their spirit and work them literally to death.

What burdens does the culture attempt to impose upon us to pressure us to conform?

Question
3

Our society may not literally enslave us like Egypt with Israel, requiring burdensome manual labor, but it does place tremendous burden upon us to conform to its ways. Culture has a calculated, well-thought-out response to deal with those it labels as dissenters and it acts **shrewdly** against anyone who does not share its views! Therefore, the response of culture to such opposition is not merely a knee-jerk reaction, but a coordinated effort which stems from a ruthless plan—not just an emotional outburst as some may attempt to present it. Going against culture can become **bitter** and unbearable unless we look to the One who can give us strength to stand strong and overcome.

Culture attempts to force people to adopt its viewpoints through outright coercion. First, our culture attacks individuals through a verbal barrage of disparaging words designed to distract and deflect from the actual issue. These attacks, formally known as *ad hominem*, focus on the character of the person rather than the logicalness of the issue. People use these types of attacks to hurl insults and derogatory comments at others, insulting their intelligence, questioning their loyalties, or making them appear hypocritical, bigoted, or racist. These attacks are designed to ruin the character of the other person. Certainly, we ought to act with integrity and have impeccable character as behavior worthy of our status as God's children ([Eph 4:1](#)), but culture uses these

techniques to distract and silence people from speaking the truth in love.

If someone makes a personal attack trying to ruin our character, how should we re-focus on the issues to continue speaking the truth in love?

Question
4

Second, our culture not only tries to ruin our reputation, but it also tries to “cancel” us. We live in a “cancel culture” which seeks defamation, destruction, and retaliation rather than reconciliation, especially for people it does not consider holding its views in high regard! People pay a price for speaking out against sin—especially particular kinds of sin. Culture seeks to ostracize them. It attempts to blacklist them from everything. Some lose their jobs and cannot find work. Others may be banned from social media platforms for holding a view that contradicts the world’s. Still, others may be banished from social groups or even their own families. Society turns vicious, threatening their livelihood, their finances, their physical well-being, their families, and even their freedom! These people experience heckling, harassment, vandalism, and even physical violence by some groups who wish to intimidate.

Finally, the world places **burdens**

upon us in a more subtle way to conform through peer pressure. Peer pressure isn’t just something that happens to us as adolescents and teenagers. It is an ongoing battle that we fight throughout our lives regardless of our age! Culture pressures us incessantly. It inundates us with images and ideas in an attempt to desensitize us to sin. As a result, it implants within us the thought that we can indulge just a little; since everyone’s doing it, it must not be *that* bad. The more we engage the more normal it may even seem even though God has expressly forbidden it in His Word. Yet, Scripture warns us to exercise great caution to the subtle **burdens** and pressures of the world to cave to its passions. It repeatedly commands us to have self-control and examine things from God’s perspective rather than man’s ([Gal 5:22-25](#)).

“IF THE WORLD HATES YOU, YOU KNOW THAT IT HATED ME BEFORE IT HATED YOU.”

John 15:18

In what ways have you experienced peer pressure to conform to the ways of the world? How did you respond?

Question
5

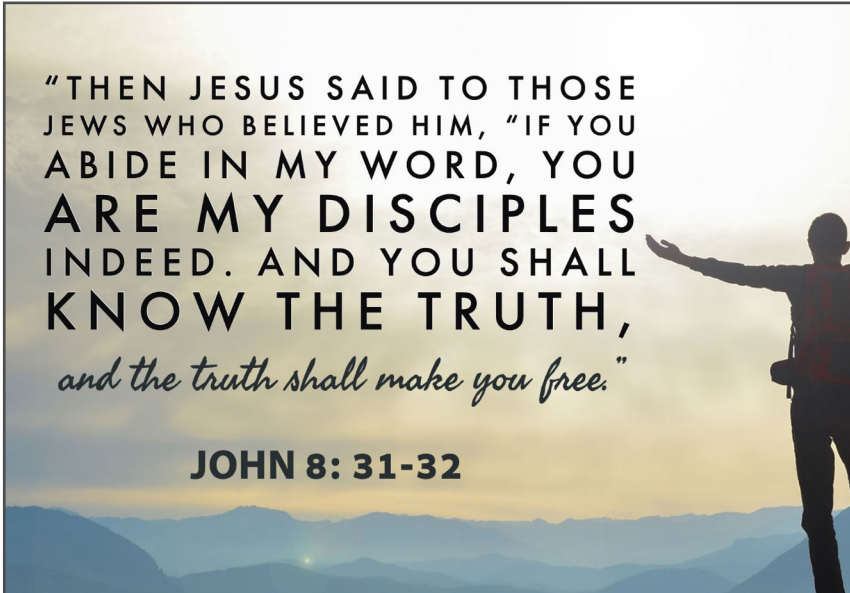
Exodus 1:15-19

THE BOLDNESS REQUIRED TO FOLLOW GOD:

When overworking them to the point of death failed to produce the desired results, Pharaoh ordered more drastic measures to be taken. Sending for two **Hebrew midwives** named **Siphrah** and **Puah**, perhaps the chief administrators of them all since they were listed here by name, he commanded them to **kill** any newly born male Hebrew while they may allow any female to **live** (vv. 15-16). At this point, Pharaoh and his people felt a sense of desperation; nothing they have done has stopped the expansion of the Hebrew people! Hence, in desperation, they resorted to murder as their last hope to impose their will upon Israel.

For those who have been around wounded animals, we know how violent and erratic they can become in their behavior. Feeling trapped, hopeless, and hurt, they will do whatever it takes to extricate themselves from the situation out of desperation and despair. Pharaoh and his people were no different. Our own culture is also no different. Without Christ, our culture has hopelessly backed itself into a corner and acts with desperation. It attempts to impose its will on others through violence and it seeks to justify its violence as fighting for a noble cause. But the end of its struggle is death! Therefore, they have nothing to lose so they act with reckless abandon. They live for the moment regardless of the consequences, participating in the things that feel good even though they lead to death.

The problem in our culture, like that in Egypt, is that these wayward individuals don't



"THEN JESUS SAID TO THOSE
JEWS WHO BELIEVED HIM, "IF YOU
ABIDE IN MY WORD, YOU
ARE MY DISCIPLES
INDEED. AND YOU SHALL
KNOW THE TRUTH,
and the truth shall make you free."

JOHN 8: 31-32

just practice these evil deeds themselves, but they demand others accept them and participate in them as well! Pharaoh, for example, didn't ask the Egyptians to execute these newborn babies, but he **commanded** the Hebrew **midwives** to perform the deed. In many ways, our own culture employs a mob mentality in a fit of desperation to silence the truth

and intimidate anyone who opposes its ideals and behavior. Mild temper tantrums have turned into riots, destroying property and costing lives when people perceive they have not gotten their way. A vocal, violent few terrorize others, championing the cause of “freedom” while ignoring the very principles of freedom themselves! Their hope lies in the coercion of others through fear and intimidation to push through their agenda.

In a “civilized” society, which most would identify us as, we should have no tolerance for any such kind of intimidation involving threats, violence, persecution, or destruction of property no matter what side of an issue on which we stand. Yet, we have seen an increase in violent rhetoric and threats as well as actual physical altercations against public officials, including first responders and even members of the Supreme Court.* We have also witnessed certain institutions, like police precincts and pregnancy centers which support life, vandalized and destroyed.** How do we deal with such physical and verbal intimidation from those who wish to spew hatred and impose their will at any cost?

In Reference



*Kevin Johnson, Josh Meyer, and John Fritze, [“Armed Man Arrested near Supreme Court Justice Kavanaugh’s Home; Made Threats Against the Justice,”](#) USA Today (June 8, 2022). **[Vincent Del Giudice, “Arson Fire Damages Christian Pregnancy Center in Colorado,”](#) Bloomberg (June 26, 2022).

What tactics have you personally observed in which our society attempts to coerce others to accept and even participate in its views and practices?

Question
6

The **midwives** did not follow the directives of Pharaoh. The text notes that they **feared God** and **did not do as the king of Egypt commanded, but they saved the male children** (v. 17). This angered Pharaoh so he summoned the women to question **why** they had disobeyed him (v. 18). The **midwives**, therefore, explained that the **Hebrew women give birth before** they arrived (v. 19). In this act of defiance, we learn a valuable principle when the dictates of man differ from the directives of the Lord, we must always follow God (Scripture) and not man. However, if man’s rules do not transgress or contradict God’s law, Scripture compels us to submit to the government ([Rom 13:1-4; 1 Peter 3:13-17](#)).

In-Depth Information



The word translated “**lively**” used to describe the Hebrew women during childbirth occurs only here in the entire Old Testament and, therefore, is somewhat difficult to translate. Douglas Stewart suggest it means “active” or “more involved” rather than describing physiological differences between Hebrews and Egyptians neither does it indicate that these two midwives deceived Pharaoh in an attempt to exonerate themselves in the role of sparing newborn male babies. To describe them as “more involved” would seem to indicate that the Hebrew women delivered the babies themselves without much assistance whereas the Egyptians would wait until their help arrived. See Douglas K. Stewart, *Exodus, New American Commentary, vol. 2* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2006), p. 80-81.

Scripture does not give us *carte blanche* to defy government orders just because we disagree with them. We must comply unless they violate God’s law. Even when they do, we don’t react violently, maliciously, or immorally; instead, we continue to do what is right in God’s sight and speak the truth in love. Still, when we defy the directives of man, we should expect to suffer their consequences for our righteous actions—whether financial penalty, persecution, or imprisonment. For example, refusing to pay out taxes because we disagree with how the government spends the money is not a reason to defy the mandate. In fact, it actually violates God’s law ([Matt 22:15-22](#)). On the other hand, encouraging, performing, or receiving an abortion, sanctioning a homosexual marriage, refusing to accept only biological genders determined at birth, and whatever other issues may arise must be weighed upon God’s Word. We cannot accept or practice these things even if man says it’s okay! We must follow God’s Word on these or any other moral issues in life!

When have you had to refuse to abide by a policy or practice that violated God’s Word? How did you speak out against it? How did it turn out?

Question
7

Exodus 1:20-22

THE BLESSING FOR FOLLOWING GOD:

Because the **midwives feared God** and obeyed His commands, we see the blessing

that followed. The text relates that God **dealt well with** them and the **people** continued to multiply in number and strength (v. 20). In addition, He also **provided households for the midwives**

themselves (v. 21). In other words, God not only afforded them protection from Pharaoh's wrath, but He also allowed their own families to flourish through childbearing. The Lord blessed them in every way! But this enraged Pharaoh who now **commanded his own people** to kill all Hebrew male newborns



by throwing them into the Nile **River** (v. 22). Even though Israel prospered and was tremendously blessed by the Lord, their persecution and affliction greatly intensified as well.

The fact that the intensity of their persecution increased at the same time Israel beheld God's favor leads us to make two important assertions about God's blessings. First, the blessings we receive may not always be immediate from our perspective, but we can know with assurance that God will reward faithful obedience. We may suffer for a time on earth and our "troubles" may increase substantially, but blessing can come in the hope of knowing the ultimate outcome is already assured. Our ultimate blessing or reward comes in the life that Christ gives which no one can take from us ([John 10:28](#); [Matt 10:28](#)).

Perhaps, the first letter of Peter captures this assurance best. Writing to a group of believers facing intense persecution, Peter reminds them that they can still rejoice in their salvation through Christ. He declares, "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials . . . you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls" ([1 Peter 1:6-9](#)). When we have a relationship with Christ, our blessing, no matter what happens to us here on earth, will come in eternal life spent with our heavenly Father. The **midwives** looked forward to that promise just as we do, so they did not fear the reprisal of Pharaoh and instead followed the directives of the Lord to do what was right!

The second principle we must learn about blessing is that it might not always be what

Instruct

the world would expect or how it would define a blessing. God did deliver the **midwives** from the wrath of Pharaoh in this case and He did reward them physically by giving them healthy families of their own. But He doesn't always choose to deliver us from trouble according to His divine plan and purpose. He will, however, always sustain us through these difficult times. Even within these difficult times, we will find unexpected blessings—whether through extraordinary peace and comfort, people placed in our path to offer encouragement, and, at times, even physical or material blessings as well. When trials come and persecution intensifies, we must continue to follow the Lord and do what is right according to His standard (Scripture). As we look to Him, let us watch closely how He will bless us in unexpected ways!

What unexpected blessings have you received from the Lord when you have followed Him rather than the culture?

Question
8

Inspire

We live in a culture that pressures us to conform to its ways—not only accepting practices contrary to God's Word, but also participating in them. As ungodly practices destroy the nuclear family as God designed it become more prevalent, so also do the laws and guidelines of our culture enforcing views contrary to Scripture. Speaking against sin, in some cases, can be classified as hate speech or even harassment. And we are already beginning to see evidence of this in court. It can lead to a whole host of penalties imposed by both secular governments formally and culture informally. When culture and Scripture disagree on an issue, we must always follow Scripture. We must align ourselves with God no matter what pressure the secular culture seeks to impose upon us!

Incorporate

How does society, whether through your work, community involvement, or interaction with others in general, specifically pressure you to conform?

What burdens or restrictions, particularly in your workplace, do they place upon you?
How do you deal with these burdens or restrictions?

How bold would you say that you are in standing up for the truth of Scripture in relation to the sin of culture? How can we be bold, yet not offensive in our actions?

August 14, 2022



Follow God Confidently

Exodus 2:1-10

Focal Verse:

"And when she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So, she had compassion on him, and said, 'This is one of the Hebrews' children.'"

Exodus 2:6

back to
Table of
Contents

Introduce

Around three-and-a-half years ago, members and guests alike filtered into room 100, finding their usual seats where they would fellowship until our traditional worship service—First Worship Tuesday—began. With approximately forty-five gathered, we sang hymns, prayed, and studied God’s Word together. By all accounts, it seemed like a typical service—well, perhaps, atypical since it had all gone smoothly with no technical hiccups. As I concluded with brief announcements before praying, our Worship Pastor at the time appeared with a request to make an announcement. One of our media personnel had enlisted his help to make a very special presentation he had created for a very special woman in the audience.

In a very basic outline formatted using our software for displaying the lyrics to hymns, sentences began scrawling across the large screen, essentially rejoicing that everyone had come and thanking them for their presence that day. But one woman received particular attention as the “announcement” continued playing. Although it genuinely thrilled this media team member to have so many in attendance that day, he was much more enamored by the presence of one woman for whom the announcement now revealed it was truly intended. With the suspense of a thrilling novel, it ended with a question for her: “Will you marry me?”



To some audible gasps among those in the audience, probably those just awakening from their slumber during my sermon, deafening silence followed. And the silence seemed to last an eternity causing many to grow restless with anticipation to see what would happen. Still, no response emanated from her lips as many began to clamor amongst themselves—all stunned by the events which had just transpired. Finally, I interjected, “We have to give her time to think and wait for her response.” At that point, she responded. If I recall correctly, her first words were “I’m going to shoot you” followed by “yes.”

Later, this media team member explained why he had asked the Worship Pastor to help

Introduce

execute his plan. He feared that I would say “no” and not allow him to use a worship service to make a proposal! I retorted, “You shouldn’t have worried about me saying ‘no.’ It was her saying ‘no’ which you should have been most worried about.” Knowing the reputation and character of these two individuals, I can assuredly attest that they prayed and sought the will of the Lord in this decision. At a time when both discerned God was leading them toward marriage, they followed His direction! Yet, at the same time, there was a brief moment where everyone waited in anticipation to see what would happen. Until the woman uttered a response, the outcome of the situation remained uncertain.

We have all been in a similar situation—perhaps not involving a marriage proposal—but regarding other monumental events in our lives. Through prayer and Scripture, we knew we were doing the right thing. We were in right standing with the Lord; we trusted Him and followed His plan for our lives, but we did not know exactly how things would turn out for us in a particular situation. We were confident of our salvation in Christ which results in eternal life, but the outcomes of certain temporal situations we faced were far less certain.

Moses’ family experienced such a time in their lives when he was a baby. They trusted God and defied Pharaoh, hiding Moses despite the order to execute male Hebrew babies. When they no longer could hide him, they constructed an “ark” and set it afloat in the Nile River where his sister Miriam watched and waited to see what would happen. In all, the family remained faithful. They continued to seek God and trust Him as they waited to see how He would respond. God doesn’t always say “yes” to our prayers nor does He always deliver us from trouble, but He always works to bring about His plan in our lives which is always best for us! Therefore, may we continue to trust Him obediently as we wait with anticipation to see how He will work through specific events in our lives to accomplish His will!

Key
Question

While waiting with anticipation for the Lord to act, what do you do?

Exodus 2:1-4

THE APPREHENSIVENESS IN WAITING:

After hearing about the heroics of the midwives who defied Pharaoh's orders and saved the lives of newborn Hebrew males, we now see the depths of a mother's love to save her baby boy at any cost. An unnamed **man**, who later genealogy identifies as Amram, from the tribe of **Levi took a wife** from among his kinsmen, whose name we learn is Jochebed ([Exod 6:20](#)). At this point in the narrative, details and names are truly unimportant because God is the One who acts to orchestrate and accomplish these events. Although the text does not mention God by name in any of our verses we will study this week, He alone propels the events forward using these individuals who act boldly and faithfully according to His plan. Even though God uses faithful human agents to carry out His will, He alone is the One who responsible for enabling them to undertake and accomplish what He has decreed.

How has God used you as His servant? How have you seen Him work through you to carry out His will?

Question
1

Upon the consummation of the marriage, **the woman conceived** and gave birth to a **son** (v. 2). The NKJV, along with many other modern translations, interprets the second half of this verse as: **When she saw that the child was beautiful**. The word **beautiful** comes from the Hebrew most often translated literally as "good." Therefore, some equate it with health; he was a "healthy" child.* But the best translation takes into account the entire Hebrew idiom which elsewhere refers to God's desire or love for His creation ([Gen 1:4](#)), Eve's desire for the fruit ([Gen 3:18](#)), and the "sons of God's" desire for the "daughters of men" ([Gen 6:2](#)). In light of this information, the entire phrase seems to mean "to care about" or love with the "desire to keep."** Thus, the woman's love and "desire to keep" **her son** compelled her to hide the baby for **three months**.

In Reference



*John I. Durham, *Exodus, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 3* (Waco: Word Books, 1987), p. 16. **Douglas K. Stewart, *Exodus, New American Commentary, vol. 2* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2006), p. 87-88.

This declaration, however, doesn't mean that Moses' mother loved him any more

Instruct

than other Hebrew women loved their children. On the contrary, it captures the unconditional love which any mother in the right frame of mind would have for her



children! Other Hebrew mothers and families likely took these same extraordinary measures to protect and save their sons too! Every child, whether unborn or born, is a gift from the Lord and a blessing to his or her family ([Psalm 127:3-5](#); [Prov 17:6](#)). When we regard children as a gift from the Lord and precious in His sight, we will have the right perspective about

life. We will love, nurture, provide, protect, train, and discipline our children because we recognize their worth and value. We will defend life—at any stage—no matter the cost!

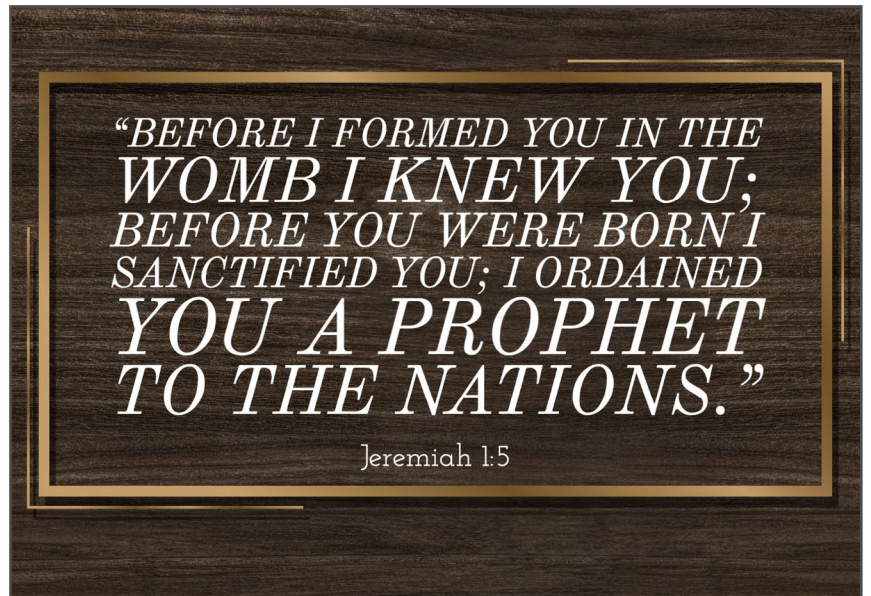
The reason I specified “in right frame of mind” in the previous paragraph is because our culture has a warped view of life, particularly what constitutes human life and when life actually begins. It refers to a baby developing in the womb as a “fetus” which is intentionally designed to remove his personhood and make him an impersonal “being” or object. After all, it becomes relatively easy for one to justify killing and disposing of only a group of cells or a mass of tissue than an actual human being! Unfortunately, such arguments can also become the basis for genocide, as happened in World War 2, which dehumanized particular races of people, labeling them as inferior. It becomes easier to kill when we don’t regard the objects we kill as people and fail to see their worth in the Lord!

If you have children, how would you describe their value or worth? How would you help the world to see the value or worth of even an unborn child?

Question
2

At no point, however, is a baby inside a mother’s womb merely a conglomeration of cells. He or she is a person ([Jer 1:5](#)). Within the DNA provided equally by the mother and father at conception, the baby has all his or her unique physical and personality

traits ([Psalm 139:13-14](#)). In fact, we often use DNA to solve crimes today because it is unique to that person! It identifies him as a specific person! Yet, certain individuals want to dehumanize babies in the womb in order to justify the choice of aborting the child. Most, not all, abortions center around those who refuse to take responsibility for their actions and want to avoid the consequences of their choices. In such a brief lesson, we cannot address every scenario or discuss all the scientific and logical arguments for supporting life from conception. Still, we can draw some basic conclusions which will help us have the right perspective.



We must take responsibility for our actions. As parents, we should love our children unconditionally—not see them as a burden, hindrance, or even a mistake or accident! Love should never be conditioned upon whether we “wanted” a child or not. It should be based upon the fact that we have a son or daughter created in our very image from our very genes! Having created us in His image ([Gen 1:27](#)), God loves us unconditionally and desires a relationship with us above anything, so also should we follow His example and love our children according to this same pattern! When we have the biblical understanding of the value of life and see it as God intended, we will love the unborn and born equally! We will strive to protect all life because the love of God resonates from within us as His children.

How does God show love to us as His children?
How should this translate into the way that we show love to our children?

Question
3

Because they recognized the value of life, Moses’ parents did everything they could to save their son from certain death at the hands of the Egyptians. As the baby grew, however, it became more difficult to **hide** him for obvious reasons (v. 3). Nonetheless, his parents still had a plan. They constructed a water-tight basket, literally **an ark**, sealed with tar in which they could hide their son. When the Egyptians made their rounds to check on the Hebrew families, they placed him in the basket and set it

Instruct

among the **reeds** on **the bank** of the Nile **River**. Then, his sister, whom we later know as Miriam, **stood afar off** so she could see **what would** happen to her baby brother (v. 4).

We've all been in Miriam's position at some point in our lives. We have acted in faith and then we had to wait. The results didn't immediately come. As we waited, thoughts and questions began to flood our minds: Did I do the right thing? Am I going in the right direction? Did I do what was best? How long will it take? What if such and such happens? Then what? With all these questions, we work ourselves into a frenzy, becoming paralyzed by apprehension and worry. We become dominated by anxiety and fear which consumes our every thought and controls all our actions instead of being driven by hope in Christ which compels us to act confidently in faith.

God, through Scripture, gives us reason to wait patiently, yet expectantly, upon His timing to see what He will do. He will act at the right time according to what is best for us based on His will. Still, it was out of Miriam's hands. She had no control over the situation and could not control the outcome. She could only watch and wait. However, Miriam had to be ready to respond when God acted. She had to be sensitive to God's timing and prepared to act faithfully which we will observe in the next section. Whenever we wait for the Lord to respond, we must follow this same pattern, acting immediately and wisely according to His divine will when He moves.

At what times in your life have you had to wait upon the Lord to respond? How did you keep yourself focused so you could act immediately when He responded?

Question
4

When we lose focus and don't look to the Lord for guidance, we will become filled with apprehension and anxiety instead of anticipation. For example, pregnancy should be a time of anticipation, hope, and joy—not dread. Like marriage, it is a life altering event. If we have erred in our judgment or failed to seek the Lord, it can then become a time of great consternation. Even though cultural morality has severely shifted in recent years, having a child out of wedlock still brings both stigma and challenges. Many still worry about what their families will think. They also wonder how they will cope, being able to provide and care for the child in a single-parent home. For teenagers or college students, thoughts of dropping out of school and being unable to finish their education flood their minds.

Similar thoughts can also cross the minds of married individuals who have an unexpected pregnancy. Some will question how it will affect the trajectory of their career. Others will ponder how it will hinder their social life and the activities in which they currently engage. Some will approach it from a more practical point of view in contemplating how they can afford to have a child financially at the stage of life in which they currently find themselves. As a result, the fear of the unknown dictates their response rather than trust in the Lord!



For whatever reason a person may fear or even have simply become so calloused they don't want their unborn child, abortion should never be the answer! If we have sinned and committed acts outside of marriage that have produced a child, repentance is first in order and then Christ will guide us to do what is right. God stands ready to forgive, restore, and enable us to make wise choices hereafter if we turn to Him. Even if a pregnancy is unexpected within marriage, we should not look inwardly at what we ourselves can do, but we must trust the Lord to provide and seek His wisdom. And this goes for any situation in which we find ourselves—not just pregnancy. We must face challenges in life with faith in Christ rather than fear of the unknown. When in right standing with the Lord, we must remember that He will provide; He will show us what's best and guide us day by day, giving us what we need.

When has being afraid of the unknown influenced your thinking and actions? At what times have you acted in faith, trusting God for direction?

Question
5

Because the text focuses on the value of life, we have used abortion primarily as the example. But the principles we learn from this text apply to any situation in which we must wait for the Lord to respond. Although not explicitly drawn from this current text, we can list two other principles from Scripture which will help us to wait expectantly and act wisely as did Miriam. First, we must continually pray and seek the mind of Christ ([1 Thess 5:17](#); [Rom 8:26-30](#); [Jas 1:5](#)), having a plan ready to act based upon His

Instruct

Word ([Prov 29:18](#)). Second, we must keep doing what we know to be right—that which is prescribed in Scripture as holy and righteous. Therefore, we must live consistently and act with integrity ([Matt 25:14-30](#); [1 Thess 5:22](#)). While waiting for the Lord, we don't wait passively, but actively. We should constantly prepare ourselves to respond when He leads as we continue to do in what we know to be His will until He moves us in a specific direction.

How do you wait actively for the Lord to respond and give you specific direction?

Question
6

Exodus 2:5-6

THE ADVOCACY NEEDED:

Pharaoh's **daughter**, likely one among his many, **came down** to **the river to bathe** that day after Moses' parents had hidden him in **the reeds** (v. 5). As **her maidens**



walked along the bank, she noticed a basket **among the reeds**, so she sent one of them to investigate and retrieve it. Opening it, **she saw** the baby who had begun crying (v. 6). Realizing it was **one of the Hebrews' children**, Pharaoh's **daughter had compassion** and rescued him. As Miriam looked on from **afar**, God acted in a miraculous way to save the one whom He had chosen to deliver

Israel.

Although **Pharaoh's daughter** most likely did not have a relationship with the Lord and served the false gods of her nation, we can learn something from her response. She responded with **compassion**. Like her, we too should respond with **compassion** rather than condemnation. Jesus commands us to exercise mercy ([Luke 6:36](#)) and to avoid being judgmental ([Matt 7:1](#)). After all, He Himself did not come to condemn the world, but that He might save it through His sacrifice ([John 3:17-18](#)). We must be advocates for biblical truth. We must never condone sin or compromise the truth of Scripture. We must stand unwaveringly on God's Word, showing **compassion** (mercy)

and love to the world around us.

How has God called upon you to show compassion to others?

Question
7

As believers, our **compassion** has a purpose; it reflects Christ and points others into a relationship with Him. The world's **compassion**, on the other hand, focuses primarily on pity and emotion; it only offers a temporary reprieve to a problem. Consequently, we must be advocates for Christ who compassionately preach the truth in love to show others the best way to live! **Compassion**, therefore, requires us to act. It compels us to do something for the sake of the gospel. Certainly, we must defend the truth verbally, but we must also minister and serve in tangible ways in the community to show the love of Christ. Christ's love was demonstrated to us in a tangible way ([Rom 5:8](#))!

The oft quoted saying by Theodore Roosevelt proves true in this instance. Roosevelt once said, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." In broad terms, we can identify two ways in which we can show **compassion** with the purpose of leading others to Christ or reminding them of their relationship with Him. First, listen to them before offering wisdom from Scripture. If it is not a matter of sin, empathize with them, but work with them to find a biblical solution to their situation. If it is a matter of sin, do not condone their sin nor rush to condemn them, but show them in Scripture their fault so the Spirit can convict and restore them (or save them if an unbeliever).

Second, assist them physically when possible. As God leads, giving opportunities and resources, we can feed, house, clothe, and assist others ([Matt 25:34-40](#)). When assisting them physically, we must not make them dependent upon us, but train them to care for themselves! Yet, the most important part of exercising **compassion** through social ministries is to do so in the name of Christ. In other words, we must participate in social ministry to have a platform for sharing the gospel. What good does it do if we provide food, clothing, or material goods and do nothing to introduce them to Christ who can change them spiritually for eternity?

When you act compassionately toward others, how do you make certain you share the gospel with them?

Question
8

Exodus 2:7-10

THE ASSISTANCE OFFERED:

Watching from a distance to see what would transpire, Miriam now seized the opportunity to offer assistance. God had given her the opportunity, so in obedience she took it. Approaching Pharaoh's daughter, Miriam asks a rather poignant, yet



loaded, question: Would you like for me to find a **nurse from among the Hebrew women** so she could **nurse the child for you** (v. 7)? At the invitation, **Pharaoh's daughter** responded affirmatively, so Miriam returned with their very own **mother** to **nurse** the infant (v. 8)! Through divine intervention, **Pharaoh's daughter** agrees to Miriam's plan who had

since returned with their very own mother. So, she commanded Jochebed to **take the baby and nurse him**—even agreeing to pay her **wages** (v. 9). When the child **grew** old enough, Jochebed **brought him to Pharaoh's daughter** to live as her **son** in the palace where she promptly named him **Moses** because she had drawn **him from the water** (v. 10).

If Miriam had not been watching and ready with a response, things could have turned out much differently. Too often, however, we can be caught off guard and unprepared. We react to the circumstances around us rather than respond with purposeful intention with a biblical plan. We need to be prepared to respond to any situation at any moment with wisdom and reason. We can only do this if we are in right standing with the Lord, seeking Him through prayer, Scripture, and fellowship with other believers. In the end, we must trust the Lord and listen to the leadership of His Spirit so that we act with precision and purpose according to His perfect timing.

How do you prepare yourself in the Lord for the unexpected?

Question
9

Inspire

Perhaps, one could describe life as a series of events where we hurry up only to wait. It is imperative, however, that we act faithfully according to God's Word, but that we also patiently wait upon Him to respond instead of charging ahead. This time of waiting can bring about frustration and apprehension if we don't remain focused on the Lord. We must realize that He will act with precise and perfect timing! Therefore, we can wait with confidence and great anticipation to see what He will do. While we wait, we must continue to seek Him in everything, to do what is right according to Scripture, and be ready to respond when He gives us the directive. May we always follow God confidently while we wait, knowing the victory has been won and the outcome is certain no matter the temporary situations we may face in life.

Incorporate

What are the things that make you most apprehensive? How do they affect how you respond to the Lord and His will?

When have you needed advocacy and compassion? What did God teach you during this time?

In what ways should we be an advocate for the Lord in our world?

August 21, 2022



*Follow God
Consistently*
Exodus 2:11-25

Focal Verse:

“So he looked this way and that way, and when he saw no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.”

back to
Table of
Contents

Exodus 2:12

Introduce

Through sheer determination and hard work along with an uncanny business acumen, J. D. Rockefeller built one of the greatest corporations from the ground up and became one of the wealthiest individuals the world has ever seen. Before the government broke up Standard Oil Company and Trust in 1911 through anti-trust litigation, Rockefeller was widely known for his innovation and foresight to make shrewd business dealings which garnered the company tremendous profit. He was often despised for these very same reasons. Ironically, the anti-trust lawsuits designed to tear apart Standard Oil, keeping his power and wealth in check, actually made him an even wealthier and more powerful man! Nevertheless, Rockefeller surrounded himself with like-minded, capable people who could make similar wise business decisions—such as Edward T. Bedford who was a close friend as well as a business partner.



In his advancing years of life, Bedford recalled how Rockefeller once dealt with a chief officer of the Standard Oil Company who made a poor decision which ended up costing the corporation two million dollars.* One would naturally expect any CEO or president of such a prestigious corporation to go ballistic over such a devastating loss. Those under his command would have likely drawn his ire and at the very least a tongue lashing from their boss. Fearing such a reprisal, all the other executives who had heard what had happened began avoiding Rockefeller at all costs lest they become the recipients of his indignation too.

The only person to face Rockefeller was none other than Edward T. Bedford who refused to cancel his scheduled appointment. Bedford recollects entering Rockefeller's office where he expected to hear a long tirade against the man who had cost the company two million dollars. As he opened the door, he saw Rockefeller busy scribbling notes on a piece of paper. Being completely engrossed in this endeavor, it took a while for him to notice Bedford had arrived. Finally, breaking away from his work and looking up to address Bedford, Rockefeller simply began, "I suppose you've heard about our loss." But what he did next surprised Bedford and greatly impacted him forever.

Rockefeller continued, "I've been thinking it over and before I ask the man in to discuss the matter, I've been making some notes." Producing the paper on which he had just

Introduce

been writing, he handed it to Bedford. At the top of the page, a heading read “Points in Favor” followed by a list of good things which this officer had done for Standard Oil. Rockefeller had listed all his achievements, including three good decisions whereby the company had profited many more times over than the poor decision which had just cost two million dollars.

Rather than react in anger, Rockefeller acted with grace and reason, realizing the officer still had more he could contribute. He was not done using him yet! Bedford reminisces, “I never forgot that lesson. In later years, whenever I was tempted to rip into anyone, I forced myself first to sit down and thoughtfully compile a long a list of his good points as I possibly could.” This allowed him to act reasonably with a controlled temper rather than brashly in a fit of rage—often saving him from making undue mistakes himself! Moses, in a fit of rage, made a grievous mistake in his own life. It didn’t cost money, but it cost the life of an Egyptian guard. Moses thought that no one had seen what he had done, but his fellow countrymen did and it became known unto Pharaoh. So, Moses was forced to flee the country. More important, however, God saw and knew what Moses had done. Yet, we can learn a valuable lesson from his experience. Although there will still be consequences for the mistakes that we make, God stands ready to forgive us when we repent, acting with grace and mercy.

God doesn’t act wrathfully or vindictively against us when we err. We only become recipients of His wrath when we ourselves choose to remain in our sins rather than receive His forgiveness! When we turn from our wicked ways and surrender completely to Him, however, He will still use us in His plan. Therefore, we should strive to live consistently by following the pattern He has given us in His Word. If He can use Moses, He can also use us no matter what we have done when we have been made in right standing through the blood of Christ! God’s not finished with us yet!

Key
Question

How has God used you despite your mistakes when you have repented?

In Reference



S.v. “How John D. Rockefeller Controlled His Temper,” in *The Personal Management Journal of the Veterans Administration*, vol. 180 (February 1965), p. 19.

Exodus 2:11-12

THE CAUSE OF INDIGNATION:

The text skips ahead several years where we now find Moses **grown** (v. 11). Although no age is given other than to say time had passed from infancy to adulthood, we do see that Moses has likely become aware of his background and heritage in the intervening years. Whether having heard the story from his adoptive mother, his birth family during his mother's charge to nurse him which could have been as long as three years, or perhaps even from



both, Moses notices the plight of his people. As he went out among them, he saw **their burdens**.

One day, he observed **one of his** fellow countrymen being beaten by **an Egyptian**. This incensed him to the point of rage where he could no longer control his temper and restrain himself. Before he sprang into action, however, he **looked** around to see if anyone could see them (v. 12). This simple act of looking indicates that Moses paused, albeit briefly, to think about the consequences for his actions; in a way, this was premediated murder and certainly not manslaughter. He didn't just fly into a fit of blind rage and begin pummeling the **Egyptian** with his fists, killing him accidentally. Moses thought about it before he acted. He knew that what he was planning to do was wrong or he wouldn't have stopped to look over his shoulder to see if anyone else were around!

So, when he felt **no one** else could see, Moses **killed the Egyptian** and buried his body **in the sand**. In the brief moment Moses paused to think, he should have pondered the other options at his disposal before killing **the Egyptian**. But he reacted in anger, allowing his emotions to determine his response rather than following logic and reason. As the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, Moses most likely had some influence over daily affairs in the country as well as the actions of her citizens. Even

Instruct

though his appeal to Pharaoh would have probably fallen upon deaf ears because he would have wanted to continue his policy of population control through severe treatment of the children of Israel, Moses could have likely stopped, if only temporarily, this incident through a simple command forbidding it. Despite being a Hebrew by birth, he was still a member of the royal household who would at least have some clout.

What things anger you? Describe the differences between the times you responded inappropriately like Moses and when you responded appropriately resolving the issue wisely.

Question
1

Nonetheless, we shouldn't celebrate Moses as some type of hero crusading against injustice by taking matters into his own hands; he wasn't celebrated as such by his people which we will learn in the next section. He acted sinfully in murdering this **Egyptian**. Although the Bible nowhere in this text explicitly condemns his actions or labels them as sin, it doesn't have to. Moses' own actions betray him and the response of the people, including Pharaoh, acknowledge his sinful intent! Through his own trepidation and fear of the consequences by looking over his shoulder, he himself knows what he has done constitutes evil and sin. Despite recognizing his people's plight and wanting to do something to reverse it, Moses went about it in the wrong way!

Anger dominates our world today. People are motivated and driven by anger. It has

BUT NOW YOU YOURSELVES
ARE TO PUT OFF ALL THESE:
ANGER, WRATH, MALICE,
BLASPHEMY, FILTHY LANGUAGE
OUT OF YOUR MOUTH.

Colossians 3:8

led to a spate of violence and fomented hatred whereby people can no longer work out their differences in a civilized manner. Both the Old and New Testaments warn us against the folly of acting out of anger. [Proverbs 29:22](#), for instance, points out, "An angry man stirs up strife, and a furious man abounds in transgression." Uncontrolled anger and rage never

produce anything good! And when we allow it to consume our thoughts and control

our actions, it results in sin ([Eph 4:26](#)). Therefore, James 1:20 also reminds us, “For the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.” Anger and wrath only exacerbate the problem; they can do nothing to resolve or change the circumstances.

What is the effect of anger on our culture?
What “change” has it produced? How would you
relate that change to James 1:20?

Question
2

Moses’ angry outburst in **killing the Egyptian** did not improve or change the circumstances for Israel. It, in fact, made it worse, causing him also to flee the country because of the sinful deed which he had committed. We will all experience anger at times whether justified because of injustice, iniquity, or a lack of integrity in others or unjustified because we don’t get our way and have acted sinfully ourselves. How we deal with our anger is important. We must deal with it in a way that practices forgiveness, promotes reconciliation, and produces lasting transformation. Harsh verbal attacks, rioting, destruction, and violence never produce change. Only responding with the righteousness of Christ can!

When we do become angry, how should we deal with it and how should we respond? We must first determine the root or cause of our anger to see if it stems from our own sinful actions. If we have become angry because we didn’t get our way or didn’t get what we wanted, we must repent. Much of our anger probably comes from our own selfishness and self-centeredness. We live in a world that focuses on the individual. However, we should view the world not in terms of getting *our way*, but accomplishing *His will*. God’s desires should be our desires (see [Psalm 40:8](#); [Prov 3:5-8](#); [Matt 6:33](#); [John 15:7](#)). If not, we stand in err and we ourselves need to change.

In a way, however, Moses had a “legitimate” reason to be angry over the unjust treatment and exploitation of his fellow countrymen. He wasn’t technically selfish in his outlook. He cared for his people and had a passion to see them treated humanely. On the other hand, Moses could have acted selfishly and ignored the burdens of his people, continuing

So then, my
beloved brethren,
let every man
be swift to hear,
slow to speak,
slow to wrath;

James 1:19

Instruct

to live favorably in the lap of luxury. But his anger compelled him to act. He just chose to act in the wrong way which led to sin rather than an amicable solution. When he paused to see if anyone else were watching, Moses should have used that time to calm down and think through the alternative options. By stepping away from the incident, it gives us ample time to seek the Lord through prayer and Scripture to ascertain what is the right (and righteous) response. Yet, Moses chose to act impetuously, thinking he would get away with it in the end.

When you become angry, what Scriptures come to mind which help you cope?

Question
3

In fact, Scripture bids us to take the time to calm down and think before we speak or act. [James 1:19](#) urges us to “let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.” This command can be difficult to follow because our culture has trained us to respond immediately to any stimuli! We let our displeasure be known on the freeway which leads to road rage. When something goes awry during a business transaction at a store or restaurant, we hurl insults and insist our demands be met, ruining our reputation. We respond immediately to arguments in the home with hurtful words and sometimes ill-intentioned actions which lead to dysfunctional relationships. We respond to frustration at work by sabotage and getting even, rather than examining how we relate to the company or other employees in a way to effect change. We share our thoughts online, unfiltered and uncensored; we aren’t concerned with the words we choose and the attitude we portray. We simply say what’s on our minds and excuse it ignorantly as “being real” without thinking of the consequences. None of this leads to biblical transformation—only destruction and dysfunction. As the Bible warns, we must exercise caution and good judgment when we speak and how we act when dealing with our anger and frustration as the truth. If not, it will compound the problem rather than resolve it! We must have a predetermined plan in place to know what we will do when we become angry so that we don’t respond immediately in a way that makes things worse. After having sought the Lord through prayer and

When you become angry, what steps do you take to ensure you don’t act sinfully whether doing or saying something you shouldn’t?

Question
4

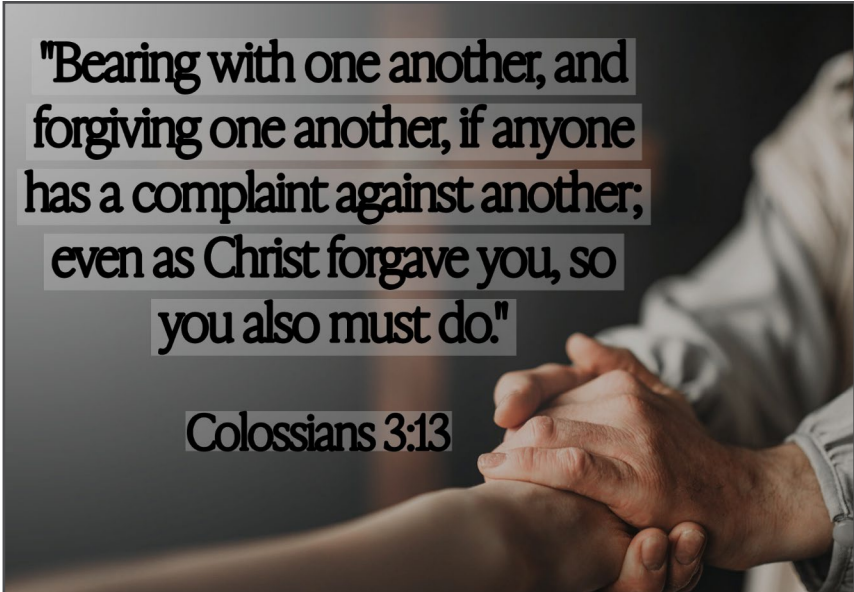
Scripture, we should then seek counsel from other mature believers if we are still having trouble resolving our anger in a biblical way. We cannot let it build inside us without effectively dealing with it or we will explode with rage as Moses did. Seeking godly counsel benefits us in three ways. First, it provides accountability which can help us keep focused on Christ and Scripture ([Jas 5:16](#)). Second, it provides us with another perspective that will help us to think about other biblical options for resolving the issue which we may have overlooked ([1 Thess 5:11](#); [2 Tim 3:16](#); [Heb 10:24](#)). Third, it gives us someone who will listen and with whom we can share so that we don't keep the anger bottled up inside of us. We will have someone who can empathize with us, but at the same time to point us back to Christ ([Heb 12:1-2](#)).

Who has given you godly counsel in the past on how to deal with anger and frustration?

Question
5

Because we live in a sinful and fallen world, things will constantly happen that will cause us consternation and anger until Christ returns and establishes His new, perfect kingdom. Until then, we must deal with anger by turning the issue over to the Lord.

We ourselves do not have the authority to judge or condemn, ultimately resolving the problem for good. Only God has that authority. One day, he will judge all—if not here while on earth at the judgment seat in heaven in the last days. At that point, justice will be served. As we await God's judgment, we must rely upon Him for direction. He will guide



"Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do."

Colossians 3:13

us how and when to respond if we turn the situation over to Him. He will always lead us to respond in the right way with righteousness. This means that we must stand ready to forgive others rather than live in anger; we must attempt to point others to a relationship with Christ through that forgiveness or restoration into right standing with Him ([Gal 6:1](#)).

Exodus 2:13-15

THE COST OF INDISCRETION:

Although Moses had perceived that he and **the Egyptian** were alone, the Hebrew receiving the beating was likely still there. Perhaps, Moses assumed the Hebrew would be so grateful for what he had done that he would tell no one! When he **went out the next day**, he saw **two Hebrew men fighting** (v. 13). With noble intentions, he tried to intervene by asking the one he perceived as the instigator, “**Why are you two fighting?**” To which the instigator defiantly and sarcastically responded, “**Who made you a prince and judge over us? Will you kill me** like you did **the Egyptian**” (v. 14)? At this, Moses became greatly afraid because what he had thought he had done secretly had become widely known! **When Pharaoh heard** about it, **he sought to kill Moses** (v. 15). So, **Moses fled** in a panic from the only land he had ever known to **the land of Midian** on the Sinai Peninsula.

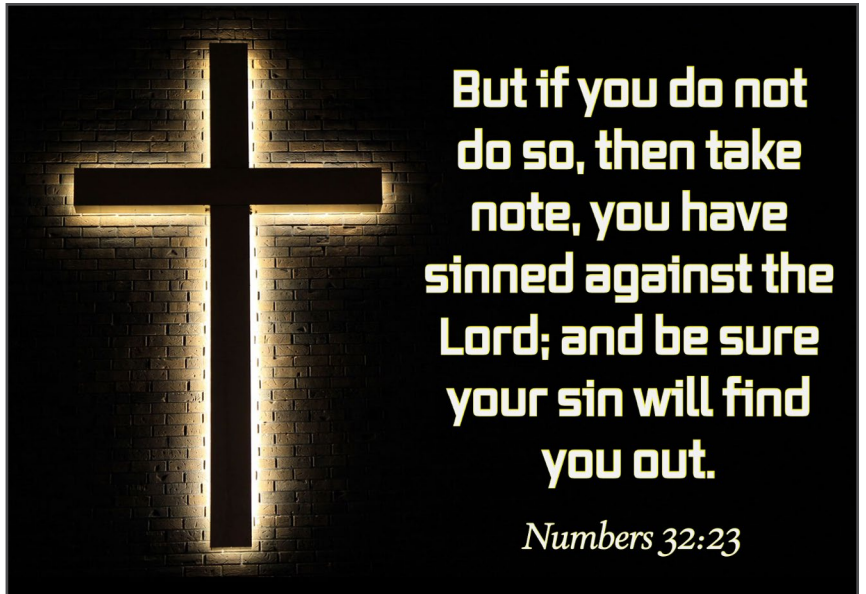
Acting in haste making one bad decision cost Moses tremendously. Through Moses’ one bad decision, we can learn four principles about the cost of our momentary indiscretion. First, no matter how well we think we have covered our tracks, we cannot hide our sin. The truth will always surface! Scripture warns us, “Be sure your sins will find you out” ([Num 32:23](#)). Whether man sees or not, God sees and His eyes penetrate to the very depths of our heart ([1 Sam 16:7](#)). Therefore, when we make choices, we must make sure that they reflect the character of God and glorify Him. Although we should always test what we do against Scripture, we can also live by this axiom: If we don’t want others to know about it, we shouldn’t do it because they will usually find out.

When have you done something wrong that others have found out about?

Question
6

Second, the choices we make have an influence on the way others view us. In other words, they impact our reputation greatly. Moses could have plausibly thought that coming to the aid of his fellow countrymen would have made him a hero in their eyes. Yet, his foolish actions only served to make the divide greater. The saw him not as a deliverer whom God would use to rescue them, but as a dictator and tyrant who used brute force to impose his will. Not only did it harm his reputation among the

Hebrew people, but it also sowed discord with Pharaoh and the royal court. His adoptive father could no longer trust him to make the right decision. In the same way, momentary indiscretion on our part also harms our reputation and testimony. It sows seeds of distrust in our relationships, but even more important it reflects poorly upon our heavenly Father because as His children we should bear His holy character.



But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the Lord; and be sure your sin will find you out.

Numbers 32:23

Third, culture tends to view sin as “impersonal” as if our choices only affect us and not others, but, as Moses proves, our sinful choices do affect others. Moses’ sin literally affected **the Egyptian**; he died as a result. Whether directly or indirectly, our choices affect others. As a follower of Christ, our sin affects the whole body. We may think no one else knows; we may believe we’ve gotten away with it. But it has a profound impact upon the overall spiritual growth of the church. For this reason, Paul compares it to leaven. He says, “A little leaven (i.e., sin) leavens the whole lump” ([Gal 5:9](#)). It affects everyone!

Finally, the consequences for our sin remain even though we may receive forgiveness and the Lord may still use us to accomplish His divine plan. God still worked through Moses despite his lapse in judgment. Yet, it didn’t change the fact that Moses had to flee from the only land he had ever known where his physical and adopted families resided to a foreign land. God’s forgiveness didn’t change the human consequences in which Pharaoh **sought to kill him** for this dastardly deed. In the same way, we may receive forgiveness for our sins and God may not hold them against us, but the consequences of our choices remain here on earth. God can still use us to accomplish His will, but it doesn’t change the consequences of the choices we’ve made.

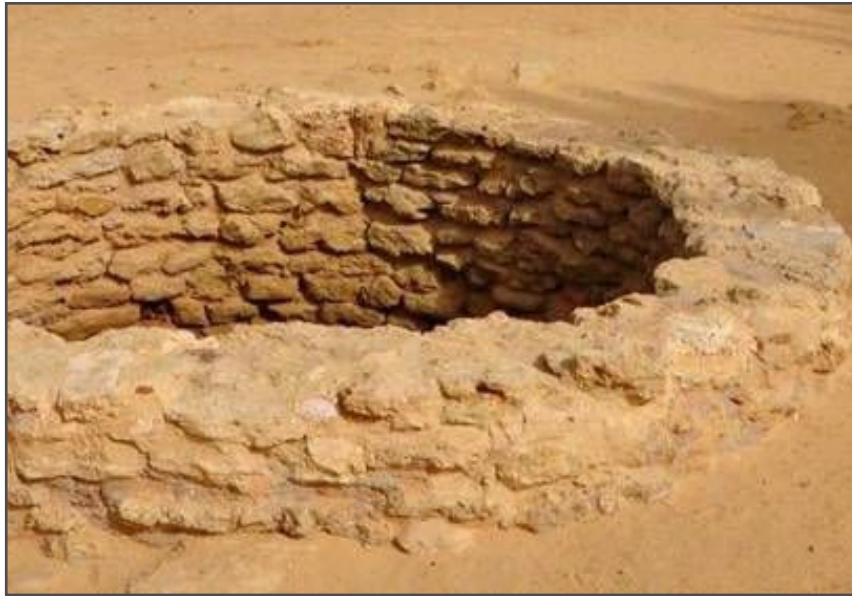
What are some of the consequences of the choices that we make that remain despite God’s forgiveness?

Question
7

Exodus 2:16-22

THE COMPASSION INITIATED:

Arriving in Midian, Moses sat by a well where **the priest of Midian's seven daughters**



had come to get **water** for **their father's flocks** (v. 16). However, some other **shepherds** also **came** and forced the **daughters** to relinquish their spot probably so that they might water their own flocks. But this time Moses intervened in the right way. He chivalrously **stood up** to defend them and **helped them** water **their flocks** (v. 17). Moses acted

compassionately with the right motives which was now received with appreciation and gratitude instead of outrage.

Upon his daughters' return, **their father**, Reuel, was shocked to see them **so soon** (v. 18). So, he inquired how they had finished so quickly. They reported that **an Egyptian** had **delivered** them from the unscrupulous and selfish **shepherds** who seemed to have routinely driven them away from **the well**; they continued to note that **this man** even **helped them** to **draw water** for their **flocks** (v. 19). Presumably, they recognized Moses as **an Egyptian** from his attire or perhaps his command of the Egyptian language as the trade language of the day. Nevertheless, Reuel chastises his **daughters** for leaving Moses at **the well** instead of inviting him into their home to **eat** as would be normal protocol for hospitality of the day.

Again, we are not told how much time, if any had passed, but only receive a summary of what transpired. The text succinctly reports that Moses **was content to live with** Reuel who even **gave** him one of his **daughters, Zipporah**, in marriage (v. 21).

Together they had **a son** whom they named **Gershom** which literally means "stranger there" since Moses was a foreigner in that land.

What a different outcome Moses' actions have this time! He acted with compassion, but he did so righteously. Although the text does not specifically tell us the actions

he took to “deliver” the women, we can clearly see the difference in the outcome of the situation. His actions ended in deliverance rather than death! They led to reward instead of rebuke! Others ought to see such a clear distinction in us too. Our actions ought to be done with the right motives and for the right reasons of pointing people to Christ who can deliver them.

How has God used you to intercede for others?
How did you use the opportunity to point others to deliverance found only in Him?

Question
8

Exodus 2:23-25

THE COVENANT WITH ISRAEL INVOKED:

God wasn't yet done using Moses even though he committed a heinous sin in killing the Egyptian. Just as the Lord worked through Moses to deliver these women from these ignominious **shepherds**, so now He would use him to deliver Israel from **bondage** in Egypt. While Moses lived in Midian, Pharaoh **died**, but this did not stop their brutal exploitation of Israel (v. 23). In **their bondage**, they **groaned** and God **heard** their **cry**. Then, He **remembered** the **covenant** He had made with their forefathers (v. 24).



Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments

Deuteronomy 7:9

To say that God “**remembered**” doesn't imply that He had forgotten until now. When he came to Abraham years ago to initiate the **covenant**, God told him that his descendants would sojourn 400 years in a foreign land ([Gen 15:13-16](#)). The reference to remembrance, therefore, is simply God's call to action. He is ready to move in fulfillment of His promises. Thus, He looks upon the **children of Israel** and acknowledges that He is about to deliver them through His divinely appointed servant, Moses (v. 25). Despite Moses' sin and all his faults, God still used him to accomplish His plan. And He wants to use us too if only we would make ourselves available to Him and heed His call—which we will examine next week.

As humans, we tend to focus on the failures, foibles, and mistakes we and other people make. We may even write ourselves or others off, thinking that God cannot use us because we have made too many poor decisions. God, however, looks not at our failures and mistakes, especially when we have confessed them and He has forgiven us. On the contrary, He looks at our availability and what He can accomplish through us. After all, He is the One who works in us to complete the good work which He Himself has begun ([Phil 1:6](#)). Instead of making a list of all our achievements and good qualities like Rockefeller did with his executive, let's make a list of all God's achievements in our lives and focus on what He has done. When we remember His faithfulness to His promises and focus on what He has accomplished in us, it will spur us to trust Him in every area and make ourselves available so that He might continue to work through us to accomplish His will.

Incorporate

Why is it so important for us to see the impact of our choices (and sin) upon others? In what ways does our individual indiscretions impact the growth and spiritual development of the entire church?

When you have made a mistake in the past, how has God corrected you and used it to transform your character so that He might use you in His plan?

As you look back over your life, what are things you have seen God do through you? How does this spur you to remain faithful and available to Him so that He might accomplish His will in you?

August 28, 2022



Follow God's Call

Exodus 3:1-10

Focal Verse:

"Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

Exodus 3:10

back to
Table of
Contents

Introduce

After graduating high school, I had already charted the course for my future and had everything planned out. I would attend Campbellsville University—a small liberal arts college in Central Kentucky affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention. While there, I intended to double major in political science and English for the purpose of attending law school in hopes of one day becoming a lawyer. For my first two years, I would take general education courses to get these requirements out of the way. I would pay for



my education through a combination of work study, scholarships, and small loans. Everything went as I had planned until the Spring semester of my sophomore year. Each year, our campus hosted a week-long Spring revival. During my sophomore year, Henry Blackaby, the author of *Experiencing God*, accepted the invitation to speak to promote his newest work titled *God's Invitation: A Challenge to College Students*. Although I attended every evening, one particular night stood out amongst the rest. As Dr. Blackaby opened Scripture, he spoke on Jesus' reinstatement of Peter in John 21. There, Jesus asks Peter how much he truly loves Him before charging him with feeding the sheep. Dr. Blackaby's message centered on how God still loves us and uses us despite our past failures if we would only make ourselves available to Him. Technically, the subject matter of the message did not have much to do with me in the sense of being reinstated to be used by the Lord. Yet, that night, God clearly used that message to speak to me. His message was so clear that it were almost as if He had spoken audibly to me face to face. As if it had happened yesterday and not twenty-four years ago, I remember starkly what the Lord said. Even though Dr. Blackaby continued to speak, I recall how God asserted, "I've given you the gift of teaching. Use it for my glory." The Lord continued, "I've not called you to practice law, but to teach." At that point, my eyes fell to the text in [John 21](#) in which Jesus told Peter, "Feed My sheep." Practicing law is a noble profession and believers can use it to glorify Christ just as they can use any career to accomplish that goal. God calls some as lawyers, accountants,

Introduce

doctors, first responders, public educators, cashiers, delivery personnel, and the like. But He had not specifically called me down the path to law. He had a different plan to use me and as a sophomore in college He had chosen that week-long campus revival on that particular night when Dr. Blackaby spoke on John 21 to reveal it to me! Having taught as an adjunct professor for eight years and served on staff now nearly a decade here, I can look back and see how God prepared and used me. I know with confidence that I heard God speak that night! For nearly seven years, I have had the opportunity to use my God-given gift to write this curriculum after God had revealed my talent for writing logically and thoroughly while sitting on that pew in Campbellsville Baptist Church and hearing Him call me to a life of teaching and communicating His Word. Moses had a similar experience when God called him. On Mount Sinai while shepherding, he discovered a burning bush ablaze, but which was not consumed. Through that spectacle, God reminded Moses of His holiness before issuing a specific call on his life. There, God called Moses to deliver the children of Israel from bondage in Egypt because He had heard their cries of exasperation. He would guide Moses every step of the way and give him exactly what to say. Moses would be God's ambassador and spokesman to the very country and the successor of the Pharaoh from whom he had fled because of murder. Although God may not speak to us through a burning bush with an audible voice, it is still as significant as Moses' call because it is the Creator who has spoken to us. Therefore, let us follow His call on our lives whatever it may be and wherever it may lead.

Key
Question

To what has God called you?

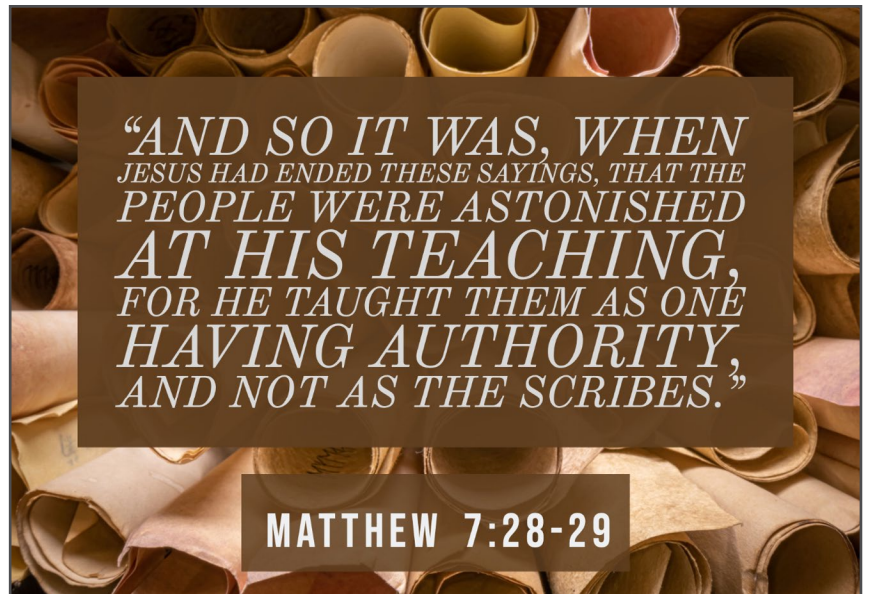
Exodus 3:1-4

GOD'S CALL FROM THE BUSH:

Having taken up residence in Midian after his harrowing escape from Egypt because of his indiscretion, Moses settled down and lived a relatively normal and uneventful life. But this was about to change because God would reveal Himself to His servant in a dramatic way. As part of his familial duties, he tended **the flock of his father-in-law** which **led** him far from home to a place described as **the back of the desert**. At that time, shepherding was a semi-nomadic lifestyle because they were sometimes required to travel great distances to find suitable ground on which to graze their **flock** in the dry, arid region of the Sinai Desert. After traveling such a great distance, Moses arrived at Mount **Horeb**—nicknamed the **mountain of God**, which we also know as Mount Sinai, because here God would later descend to give the children of Israel the Ten Commandments.

There on the **mountain** Moses encountered an unusual and intriguing **sight** that drew him closer to investigate (v. 2).

The text explains this miraculous spectacle as **the Angel of the Lord** appearing **to him** through the **flame from** this **bush**. Much discussion exists about the identity of **the Angel of the Lord** in this passage: Is he a heavenly being or the Lord Himself? Such a discussion can easily distract us from the most important aspect of



the announcement. However God chooses to speak or reveal Himself, the message still comes directly from Him; therefore, it is always true and authoritative.

Although the term translated **angel** can refer to a heavenly being as we typically use it, it actually means “messenger” or “herald.” In His sovereignty, God can choose any way to deliver His message that He wants. He can speak it Himself or He can send others in His stead—whether a heavenly being (**angel**) or a human (prophet, apostle). In all cases, the origin and authoritativeness of the message remain the same! Therefore, let’s

not quibble about the identity of the **angel**, but focus on how the message came from the Lord Himself! Moses received a message directly from God through this burning **bush** on that **mountain**.

In what ways has God specifically spoken to you or called you through His written Word?

Question
1

Such a spectacle caught Moses' attention so much that he changed course to **see why the bush did not burn** up (v. 3). When Moses redirected his course to approach the **bush**, God called him by name (v. 4), to which Moses immediately replied, "**Here am I!**" As human beings, but particularly in our culture, we look for the big events or grandiose signs from the Lord. We want to have a "burning **bush**" moment like Moses did. Yet, while we are looking for these big and spectacular signs, we often overlook the subtle ones. We can't afford to miss the subtle messages that God has for us just like we can't take the big ones for granted either! We must pay close attention at all times, making ourselves available to hear from Him and serve Him whenever He calls. May we too answer like Moses and Isaiah, "**Here am I!**" (see [Isa 6:8](#)).

Yet, we must recognize that God doesn't always speak in such a magnificent fashion



as He did with Moses here at **Horeb**. Nowhere else does Scripture record God speaking to anyone through a burning **bush**! This was something so striking and so grand that it would have gotten anyone's attention. But it doesn't matter how God speaks, whether through an amazing **sight** like this **bush** or a still, small

voice. The fact that it is God who speaks makes it special. Therefore, we must tune our ears and align our hearts with His so that we might hear what He has to say to us whether big or small!

The prophet Elijah learned this lesson first-hand. God instructed him to "go out,

and stand on the mountain” ([1 Kings 19:11](#)). As the Lord “passed by,” a mighty wind pummeled the mountain followed by an earthquake and fire—all magnificent displays of God’s might. But the Lord was not in any of these dazzling displays. Instead, He spoke “after the fire in a still small voice” ([1 Kings 19:12](#)). We need to stand ready at all times to hear God speak. God may use a dramatic event to get our attention, but He may also use the little things in life. Don’t discount them! He may use a passage in Scripture we have read a hundred times to give us insight and direction. He could use a simple word of encouragement from a mature believer. He may speak through a situation in our everyday routines. We just have to make sure that we pay attention; we must stop and listen when He speaks in whatever way He may choose.

What small things in life has God chosen through which to speak to you?

Question
2

In the same way we exercise care not to miss the subtle ways in which God may speak to us, we must also take great care to discern whether the message is truly from God. As cyber crimes have risen in the last two decades, we have seen an increase in scams through e-mails and texts phishing for our data and to steal our identities. The e-mails and texts may look so real that they seem legitimate. Only minute details can alert us to the fraud, but we must pay close attention and intentionally look for them. Recently, I received a text that purported to be from the local bank where I have a personal account and the church has a business account. The text stated that fraudulent activity had been detected on the “account,” but it did not specify whether it was my personal one or the church one which served as the first indication something was amiss. In addition, the text had several misspelled words which a professional institution would not have done. Lastly, upon checking the phone number, it did not match any of the local or national numbers for the bank. It obviously led to a scammer!

So, I called the number I knew reached the local bank to speak with a representative there. In the course of the conversation, I learned it was indeed a fraudulent text. Had I not paid attention to the minor details, I could have fallen for the scam. The messages which people often claim to receive from the Lord may look and sound authentic, but when tested, they are found deceptive ([1 John 4:1](#)). Frequently, these messages stem from a person’s own desires rather than the desire of the Lord. To ascertain whether the Lord has spoken to us, we need to ensure the message matches Scripture. If it deviates in any way from Scripture, we have a fraudulent or false message. We must

Instruct

pay attention to the details found in Scripture which is the truth that reflects God's holy character by which we must judge everything.

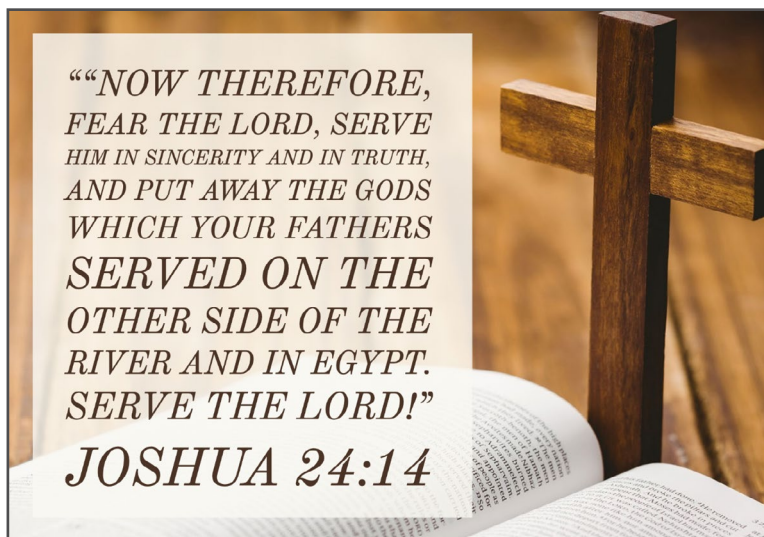
When have you heard someone claim to have a message from God, but it conflicted with Scripture? How did you respond?

Question
3

Exodus 3:5-6

MOSES' CONSECRATION BEFORE THE LORD:

As Moses approached the **bush**, God bid him not to come any closer (v. 5). He



commanded Moses to remove his **sandals** because **the place** where he stood was **holy ground**. Then, God identified Himself specifically as **the God of his father** and forefathers—**Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob** (v. 6). At this revelation, Moses became **afraid to look upon** the Lord, so **he hid his face**. When Moses realized that it was God who spoke, He reacted with awe and

reverence. To approach the Lord, we must be in right standing in our fellowship with Him which means that we follow in obedience the pattern He has set through His holy character that we find recorded in Scripture.

Taking off one's **sandals** at that time was a sign of reverence and respect, especially in the presence of one's superiors. Later, in [Exodus 19:10-11](#), God instructs the people to "wash their clothes and let them be ready for the third day" when He would descend upon Mount Sinai in their presence. Removing one's **sandals** and washing one's clothes serve as outward reminders of the inner transformation and cleansing brought about by the Lord. Because God's holiness and righteousness far outweigh our own, like Moses, we must prepare ourselves spiritually to meet with Him. This isn't something we should do just on special occasions, but daily, because His Holy Spirit lives within us if we have a relationship with His Son.

Too many times, we treat God like our physical houses. We only clean thoroughly when we know we will have guests. Otherwise, we put off cleaning because we come

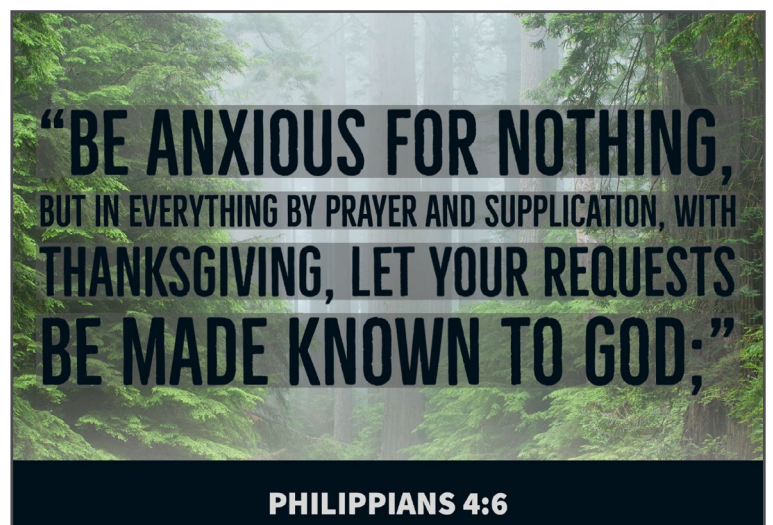
home from work tired, with other chores awaiting us. We may not have a sink full of dirty dishes or laundry strewn about everywhere, but we likely have clutter where we have just tossed things, intending to put them away later. Only the “threat” of someone visiting us inspire us to clean and make sure everything is in order! For us as believers, it may not be what we consider blatant sins from which we must be cleansed, but all the clutter of life—the little things that distract us. In either case, we must always be spiritually prepared and in right standing with the Lord ready to hear from Him when He speaks.

How would you evaluate your spiritual preparation and readiness to hear from the Lord?

Question
4

To prepare spiritually, we must confess our sins and seek forgiveness ([1 John 1:9](#)). When we have confessed any sin, we must strive to live consistently; we must walk in obedience, practicing righteousness. We cannot profess to be in right standing with the Lord and worship Him only on Sundays, living like the world the rest of the week. We need to serve Him in sincerity and truth at all times ([Josh 24:14](#)). Like a soldier in battle, we must remain at the ready to hear from the Lord.

Not only must we prepare spiritually, but we must also approach the Lord reverently seeking His direction and will. For instance, Moses drew near to **the bush** simply to investigate the **sight**. He wanted to gather information. Although he did answer when God called, Moses mostly listened, especially after the Lord identified Himself! Many attempt to approach God with a list of demands as if they are in control. They really don't want to hear from the Lord; they only want to have an audience with Him so they can make their requests known. If He doesn't respond in the way they want, they show contempt for Him. They blame Him for their circumstances or criticize Him for His response. At other times, people try to bargain with the Lord. They contend, “If you'll do X for me, then I will do Y for you.” Although God wants us to make our requests known unto Him ([Phil 4:6](#)), He wants us to take the time to listen; He wants us to trust Him which we should bear out in our lives by



Instruct

following His direction—not demanding He responds in the way we see fit.

In your prayers when you communicate with the Lord, how do you show reverence? How do you balance your requests with listening to direction from the Lord?

Question
5

Exodus 3:7-10

GOD'S COMMAND FOR MOSES TO LEAD:

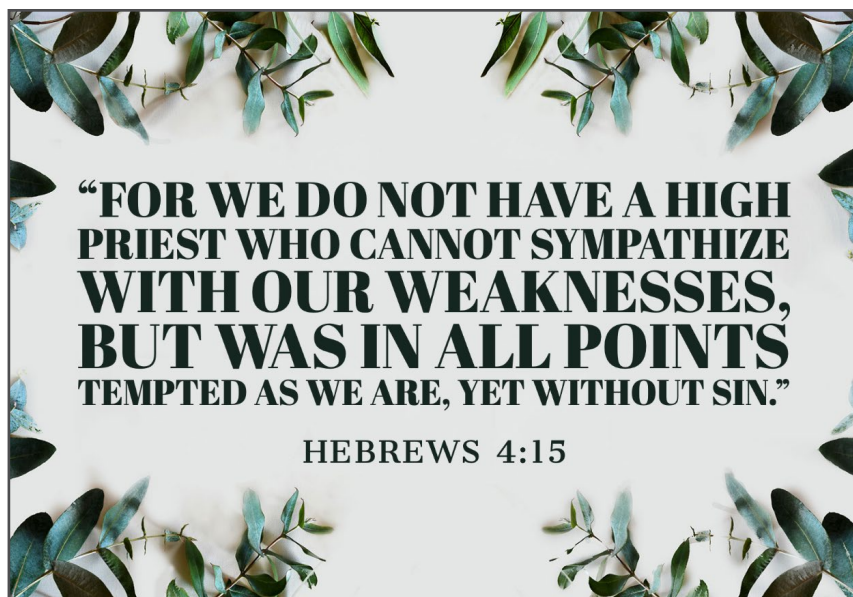
Next, the Lord reveals the purpose for appearing unto Moses. He acknowledges that He has **surely seen the oppression of His people in Egypt** and has **heard their cries** because of the severe treatment by their **taskmasters** (v. 7). Therefore, He has **come to deliver** them from **the Egyptians** (v. 8). He will guide them to a bountiful land that flows **with milk and honey**, overthrowing the inhabitants that currently reside there. God now reminds Moses of the plight of his fellow countrymen which he has also seen first-hand. Almost as if God extends His index finger to point at the situation, He exclaims, “**Behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have seen the oppression**” (v. 9). He wants Moses to look at the situation in order to see the task to which He has called Him. He wants Moses to see things from His perspective and hear His plan for deliverance. At last, God announces His plan to **send Moses to Pharaoh** so **that** he might lead **the children of Israel out of Egypt** (v. 10).

In the previous verses, we learned how God consecrated or prepared Moses to meet with Him. Consecration, or sanctification as we call it in the New Testament, has a two-fold purpose. As we have already seen, God makes us holy when we turn from our sins and trust in Him. Only through Christ can we be made holy and in right standing. Because God has made us holy in His Son, He sets us apart, or consecrates, us for a specific purpose. Thus, God makes us holy because He wants to incorporate us into His plan and work through us to accomplish it. Here, in this context, after God alerts Moses to his need for holiness, He cites the specific purpose for which He has called him: to **bring the people out of Egypt**.

How has God prepared you for what He has called you (based on your answer to the question at the end of “Introduce”)?

Question
6

Through God's benevolence in delivering Israel, we can learn three principles about His character and how He chooses to incorporate us into His divine plan. First, God knows our plight. He isn't some absentee landlord or a CEO sitting in a boardroom who doesn't know what's happening or what His creation is facing. He knows intimately! We serve a God who can empathize with us because He Himself knows what we are going through. When we feel isolated and alone thinking that no one has ever gone through trouble like us



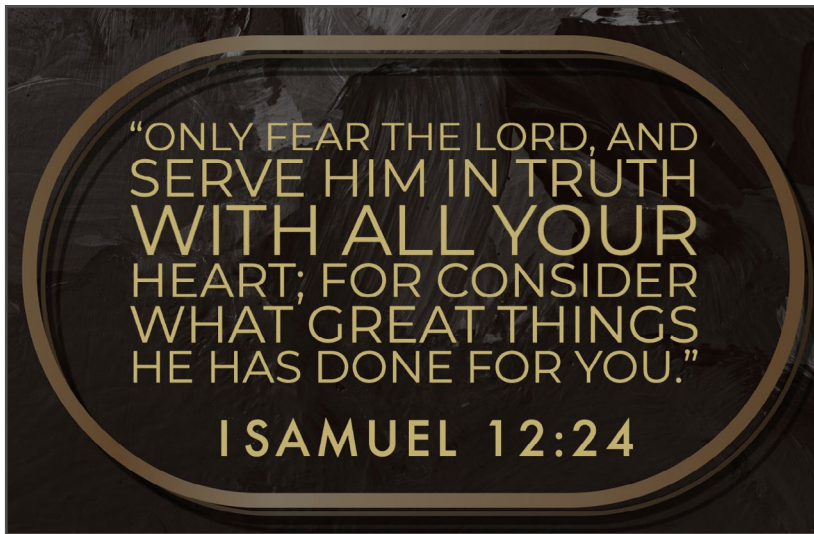
or no one can know how we feel, we must remember God knows. He knows because He sent His Son who experienced every kind of trial and trouble known to us to an even greater degree. God sees and hears everything! He knows what we need and He has sent a Deliverer to help us overcome.

Too often, we become engrossed in our problems, believing they are unique to us; this leads to a spirit of self-pity and self-loathing. With such an attitude, we can't see beyond our current circumstances to know that God has a plan that He will work in and through us if we make ourselves available to Him. Whether temptation or trouble, we need to turn our problems over to the Lord. He will hear our earnest cry and plea. He will answer. We must trust whatever answer He may give! We must trust that He will do what's best. When we trust Him, it will reduce our anxiety and strength our resolve to endure, allowing the Lord to engraft us and use us in His plan.

When going through difficult times, how does realizing God knows (and sees) help you to cope? What advice could you give to others?

Question
7

Second, we must recognize that God is the source of Israel's deliverance. Notice in verse 8 that God clearly declares, "I have come down to deliver them." Some people mistakenly identify Moses as the deliverer, but God only used him as the human liaison, spokesman, and leader. God Himself is the actual deliverer! In our service of the Lord, we must have the right perspective about our role. We are joining God in His work; God is not joining us. Frequently, people reverse this and they elevate their desires



and preferences over that of the Lord because they want to do it their way. They embark on their journey without specifically seeking the Lord and then ask Him to bless what they have already started or done. Only God's way works 100% of the time. In a society skewed toward individualism and independence, we must remember that we serve the

Lord; He doesn't serve us!

Finally, God calls Moses to look and see the need around him: **behold** or notice (v. 9). Moses should be aware of the needs around him, but he must rely on God for the solution. He shouldn't take matters into his own hand. That didn't work out too well for him in Egypt as we saw in [Exodus chapter 2!](#) Moses couldn't affect the kind of enormous change needed in Egypt; only God could. Moses thought he had resolved one issue secretly, but it indeed compounded the problem because he didn't wait upon the Lord and acted sinfully. We must always remember that it is God who works in us to accomplish His will; we don't do it through our own strength. Like God desires of Moses, we should also be aware of the needs around us and the opportunities to serve. But we must follow God's plan for resolving them. When we see a need, God has allowed us to notice it. We must see it from His perspective and we must follow His guidance in meeting it. Quite often, we rush ahead of the Lord like Moses did and we find ourselves creating a bigger problem. Instead, may we ready ourselves to hear from the Lord when He calls. May we seek an amicable resolution to the problems which He has allowed us to see, understanding that He wants to use us in His plan to solve them. He wants us to be His hands and feet here on earth so that others might see Him at work and come to know Him through the life-changing power of His Son. God is the deliverer, but He has asked us to participate in bringing people to Him!

God has called every one of us to participate in His work. We may not have a “dramatic” experience like Moses and we may all have different roles, but we serve the same God for the same purpose: to lead others to deliverance in Him. Whether we are a lawyer, banker, vice president in a company, small business owner, service industry employee, on staff as a full-time minister, or retired, God wants us to join Him in His work. He wants us to listen to His call and look around us for the needs where we can serve. For ultimately our purpose as His followers is to live righteously in a way that reflects His character while waiting for opportunities around us to minister to others on His behalf. We glorify Him when we serve in the way in which He has called us to introduce people into a relationship with Him or to encourage the saints, equipping them to serve together in His body—the church.

Incorporate

How do you prepare yourself to hear the Lord speak? How do you keep yourself ready to receive a word from Him at any time?

How would you evaluate your availability to the Lord? How is this reflected in your schedule? How is it reflected when God gives you an unexpected opportunity, but you are too busy?

What needs or problems has God allowed you to notice? How does He want to or how has He used you to meet those needs? How did you ensure that you followed His plan for meeting them?

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