



EX DUS

v o l u m e I

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week one

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Exodus 1-2

Bottom Line: When faced with difficult situations, we can be faithful to God, knowing that He is always faithful to us.

What's something you've done that you thought would be hard but turned out much easier/more fun than you thought it would?

We've all been in that situation. We've made a commitment or agreed to do something that we just *knew* was not going to be exciting or fun. For some reason or another we were not looking forward to engaging in what we said we would, but once we did we found that it wasn't as unpleasant as we thought.

Sometimes we live our Christian life this way. We've made a commitment to follow Jesus but we're not too excited about what exactly that may require us to do (or not do).

What are some aspects of the Christian life that may not be as appealing as others?

There's no need to be super-spiritual about this. Sometimes reading our Bible's doesn't appeal to us. Sometimes prayer is hard and somewhat boring. Sometimes we'd rather eat ice cream and watch Netflix than spend our afternoon serving in our community or at church. Every day we have to make decisions about how we will spend our time. Will we spend it doing something constructive and helpful? Or will we spend it doing something selfish and meaningless? Most of the situations we find ourselves in have an answer that is much easier said than done, but sometimes there are some decisions that are *hard* to make.

Read Exodus 1:15-22. What is the hard decision that the midwives had to make?

The Hebrew midwives were forced to choose between obeying God, or obeying Pharaoh. Try and put yourself in the position of these women. You're a Hebrew, an Israelite, a member of the nation that God has promised to bless and favor. But for the last 400 years your people have been enslaved by the Egyptians. Your whole life has been one of imprisonment and harsh treatment. God doesn't *appear* (this is an important word, here) to be keeping His end of the promise. The King, who has made your life miserable and can make it even worse for you, gives you a command to do something that violates your faith. You're now tasked with choosing to side with God, who by all appearances seems to be distant, or Pharaoh, who has repeatedly proven himself a powerful and mighty enemy. What do you do?

Has there ever been a time in your life where you were faced with choosing between obeying God or someone/something else? What did you choose and how did it turn out?

The Hebrew midwives decided that obeying God was more important than obeying Pharaoh. And the result of their obedience was that "God gave them families" (v. 21). It is important to understand that the blessing of a large family was not random. It was actually God fulfilling a promise that He had already made. God had previously made a promise to Abraham in Genesis 15:13-14 that although his descendants (who are Israel) would be in captivity for a while, they

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would increase in number and God would return them to the Promised Land. We see God's faithfulness to His promise to Israel alluded to in the fact that "the more they were oppressed [by Egypt], the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad" (Exodus 1:12). Perhaps it was this sign of God's faithfulness that the midwives took notice of and caused them to oppose Pharaoh and side with the Lord.

How has God shown His faithfulness to you in the past? What about the present?

The midwives' obedience was rooted in a belief that God would be faithful to do what He said He would do. He promised to multiply Israel, so the midwives understood that killing their children would actually cause them to be working against God. No matter how powerful Pharaoh seemed, the midwives had a greater reverence and fear for the Lord. The midwives didn't only *acknowledge* God's promises to them, but they *applied* the truth of that promise to their lives and allowed His promise to dictate their behavior.

What is the danger in only acknowledging the truth of God, but not applying it to our lives?

What people/things do we tend to fear and serve more than God?

Although the midwives' situation was bleak, and although it seemed like God was distant, the midwives believed that God was still faithful, and even though they didn't understand how God could be working in their situation, they knew that He had a purpose for it. In fact, it is precisely because the people of Israel spared their infants that Moses was allowed to be born, who almost eighty years later would be used by God to deliver His people from slavery. The obedience of God's people in the present resulted in their blessing and redemption in the future.

What promises has God made to us that we can rely upon?

If someone were to examine the details of your life, would they be able to determine that God is important to you?

What cultural, familial, and/or societal pressures are put on us that we must resist? How can we follow the example of the midwives and prove that we fear God more than man?

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week two

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Exodus 3

Bottom Line: God's promise to be with us and to give us a glorious future motivates us to fulfill His calling on our lives.

What is the most difficult goal you have set for yourself in the last few years? Was it a financial goal? A physical goal? A career or education goal?

What kept you going in the process of pursuing that goal?

Every once in a while, we get inspired to challenge ourselves to do something big, whether it's paying off debt, getting in shape, or memorizing a large portion of Scripture. In all of these efforts, the key to success is a focused "forward-thinking" attitude. You have to envision what *could* be and let that be your motivation. You can't dwell on your current state and assume that you'll never achieve your goals.

So now focus on your spiritual goals. Do you have any? What discourages you most about pursuing your spiritual goals? What encourages you most?

Moses is an example of someone who was too preoccupied with his current failures to be confident about any possible future successes. Moses was once a prince of Egypt, but as we saw in Exodus 2, Moses made some mistakes that caused him to be exiled from Egypt.

Read Exodus 3:1-6. Why do you think Moses was afraid to look at God? What do you think Moses was feeling emotionally? Do you think Moses' past played into his reaction to God?

In almost every instance recorded in the Bible where God reveals His presence to humans, they always respond in a similar manner as Moses: afraid and ashamed (See Exodus 20:18; Isaiah 6:1-5; Ezekiel 1:28; 3:23). Given Moses' past disgrace, it's easy to see why he felt unworthy to be in the presence of such a pure, holy God.

And this is why it's important to understand how God addressed Moses. God calls to Moses by repeating his name twice, "Moses! Moses!" In the ancient culture of Moses' time, addressing someone by saying their name twice was a way of expressing endearment, affection, and friendship. Thus, Moses would have understood immediately that He was being spoken to by someone who cared for him. From the very beginning of God's interaction with Moses, God was doing what He could to alleviate Moses' fear and shame and build confidence in him.

Read Exodus 3:7-12. How else does God try to encourage Moses?

God encourages Moses in several ways. He tells Moses that He has not forgotten the plight of His people, that He has a plan to rescue them from their oppression, and that He will bring them into the land that He promised them. Then God drops somewhat of a bombshell on Moses by telling him that *he* is the one God will use to confront Pharaoh and deliver the Israelites. Moses responds with "Who am I to be able to do all this!?"

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We can understand and identify with Moses' doubts. In some ways, we've probably all felt inadequate to fulfill God's call on our lives. But the response that God gives Moses as to why he is suitable for this task doesn't have anything at all to do with Moses and who he is, it has everything to do with God and who He is. God doesn't reassure Moses by building up Moses. God doesn't say, "because you are strong!" He says, "because I will be with you."

Now look at the rest of verse 12. What is the importance of the sign that God gives Moses?

God tells Moses that *after* he has led the people out of Egypt, then they will once again be free to worship God. In essence, God is telling Moses to take his focus off of the present and concentrate on the future. Moses needed to gain a vision of what *could* be in order to be motivated to fulfill God's calling on his life.

Moses' mission was to be God's instrument in delivering the Israelites from slavery. What is our mission today?

Our mission is the Great Commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:18-20).

God's promise to Moses that assured his effectiveness for this mission was "I will be with you." What parallel promise do we have that assures us of our effectiveness in our mission?

Jesus gave us a mission, just like God gave Moses, and He also gives us the same promise: "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

God told Moses to focus on the future, not the present. What is the future that we have to look forward to? How does this motivate us to live in obedience to God's calling on our lives?

In light of this, what is one spiritual goal that you can set for yourself? Think big.

Moses was motivated by a vision that God gave him of "what could be" if he was obedient. What is your vision of "what could be" by pursuing this goal? In other words, what affect will the pursuit of this goal have on your life? What affect will there be on the lives of other?

How does Jesus' promise to be with you overcome your own doubts about achieving this goal?

EX DUS

week three

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Exodus 4

Bottom Line: Through the evidence of the Gospel, the presence of the Holy Spirit, and the help of the Church, God has equipped us with everything we need to fulfill our calling.

What is the difference between “experiencing doubt” and “being a doubter?”

All believers have moments of doubt and even go through prolonged seasons of doubt, but to be a “doubter” implies a settled, default state of doubt about everything. The exact nature of our doubts will vary depending on our personalities and the season of life we are in, but probably the most common form of doubt amongst Christians is self-doubt. It’s easy to doubt that we are capable of anything meaningful for the Kingdom or that we could be used mightily by God.

Why do you think some Christians experience this kind of doubt?

Going through bouts of doubt is normal and is nothing to be ashamed of, but having a continuous attitude of doubt is not how God wants His people to live. Last week we saw how God tried to overcome Moses’ fears and hesitations by giving him a vision of what could be if he was obedient to God’s calling on his life. Nevertheless, as we read Exodus 4, we find that Moses is still filled with doubts, but God gives him three assurances that he can be used mightily.

Read Exodus 4:1. Who is the “they” that Moses is talking about? (Hint: read from 3:16 to the end of the chapter to get the proper context).

Exodus 3:16 shows us that the “they” is Israel. Moses is concerned that the Israelites will not believe that God has sent him to speak to them. He doubts that people will take him seriously or believe his testimony. Moses was afraid that his own people would reject him. Perhaps he was afraid they would shun him for his **past sins**, maybe they would consider him an outsider after 40-year **absence**, or maybe his **prior allegiance** to the Egyptian government would lead the Israelites to see him as a traitor.

How have you seen people’s fear of being judged concerning their past sins, their absence from church, and their prior allegiances keep them from growing spiritually? How does the Gospel break down these barriers and remove this fear?

Here we find the first assurance that God gives Moses. God disarmed Moses’ fear of rejection by giving him three signs to perform before the elders of Israel “so that they may believe that the Lord...has appeared to [him]” (Exodus 4:5). It’s easy to see how these signs, miraculous as they are, would not only convince Israel of Moses’ authenticity, but they would also convince Moses of his ability to be used by God.

What “signs” does God give believers today to prove their salvation? (Repentance, profession of faith, sanctification, increasing fruit of the spirit, etc.) How do these signs give confidence to those around us of God’s working in our lives? How do these signs give us confidence that God is working in us?

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Like Moses, we can be paralyzed by the fear that we won't be taken seriously by others, which can prevent us from stepping out in faith and pursuing great things for God. But also like Moses, God has given us undeniable evidence that we, and those around us, can look to for assurance.

But all of Moses' fears weren't calmed by these signs alone.

What is the doubt Moses expresses in v. 10? How is God's response in v. 12 a sufficient answer?

Here we find the second assurance God gives Moses. Because the Lord directs the mouth, ears, and eyes, Moses' "speech problem" is hardly a challenge to the Lord. God's power in the life of a believer is enough to overcome any physical "shortcomings" we think we may have. But still, fear of speaking, ineloquence, not knowing how to answer a question, etc.—these are all major reasons why we doubt ourselves today.

Do you ever doubt your ability to be used by God? How does 1 Corinthians 1:17-31 relieve us of this doubt?

The Gospel promises us that upon our salvation we are indwelt with the Holy Spirit, which means that we have access not only to the presence of God, but the power of God. Therefore, the only thing required to be used mightily in the Kingdom of God is not ability, but willingness.

But amazingly, Moses doesn't quite seem to catch on to this, because in v. 13, after seemingly running out of excuses, Moses flat out rejects God's call on his life and asks him to "send someone else."

Read Exodus 4:13-17. Is God's anger at Moses justified?

Even though God is angry at Moses, He still offers Moses a concession by sending Aaron with him to speak for Him. What does this reveal about God's nature?

In this passage we find God's third assurance to Moses: God doesn't expect Moses to do this alone. Notice that God told Moses that he "and the elders of Israel are to go to the King of Egypt" and confront Pharaoh together (3:18). He has also given Moses a helper in his brother Aaron.

God gave Moses a group of people to help him, the elders of Israel. What group has God given you to help you? (FBCnl at large, but also specifically our small groups). How can we as a group help support one another in being obedient to our callings?

God also gave Moses the help of his brother Aaron. Is there a certain person or two in your life that you can depend on to help you?

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God has given us the same three assurances (and more!) that He gave Moses: (1) He has removed fear of judgment and rejection by the evidence of the Gospel working in our lives. (2) He has removed doubts of our ability by giving us the presence and power of His Holy Spirit. (3) He has removed our fears of loneliness and inadequacy by giving us the help of the church. He has provided everything that we need in order to fulfill our mission.

Is your default outlook on life one of doubt or one of optimism? What has God done to help you overcome your doubts?

Are you focused on the problems in your situation to the extent that you feel helpless? Or, are you fixed on God's power to overcome them? Specifically, which of the three assurances do you need to focus on to change or strengthen your perspective?

****Leader Note:** The situation described in vv. 24-26 is a very mysterious one. It appears to come out of nowhere and seems to raise more questions than it answers. The truth is, although there have been many attempts made by scholars and commentators to explain exactly what is going on here, the church has not reached a clear consensus.

One particularly strong explanation is this: repeatedly up until this point, God has revealed Himself to Moses as "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." This is a "covenantal title" that seems to be meant to bring Moses' attention back to the covenant that God made with Abraham, in which part of that covenant contained the Israelites' responsibility to circumcise their male children on the 8th day of their life. It's possible that by revealing Himself to Moses in this way, God expected Moses to abide by the covenantal obligations given to the people of Israel, and since Moses' son was not circumcised, God was angry with Moses as a covenant-breaker, thus giving us the situation that unfolds in these verses.

This is a possible explanation, but it doesn't answer every single question about this event. You can spend a lot of time researching different explanations, but at the end of the day we have to be okay with the mystery.

EX DUS

week four

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Exodus 5

Bottom Line: When things don't go according to *our* plan, we can trust that it is because *God's* plan is greater.

Can you describe a time in your life where things didn't go as you planned?

This happens to us all. We'll have great expectations of how a certain event will unfold, only to find that things don't quite go as planned. It's in these moments that we get discouraged and wonder if we would have been better off not even attempting what we were trying to do.

Read or share a summary of the events of Exodus 5.

What we see here is a classic example of things not going as planned. The expectation was that Moses, after having shown the Israelite elders the signs God gave him and proving his authority, would simply command Pharaoh to release the Hebrews and send them on their way. Evidently, this is not what happened. But the question is: whose "plan" is being muddled up? God's or man's? The Israelites expected things to go differently, but God is not the one who has gone back on His word. He told Moses in Exodus 3:19 that Pharaoh wouldn't let them go so easily. Somewhere along the way, the Israelites confused their plan with God's plan, and when things didn't go the way they expected, they placed the source of their disappointment with Moses, the one who represented God to them.

How do we sometimes confuse God's plan with our plan?

Read Moses' cry to God in vv. 22-23. Where do we tend to place the blame for our ruined plans?

Moses had a clear directive from God, he was to be the one who would deliver Israel from slavery in Egypt. Put yourself in Moses' shoes for a moment: After Moses and Aaron perform the signs before the Israelites, they appear before Pharaoh. They are confident and bold. God has appeared to Moses and given him the authority to carry out this monumental task. Moreover, the Israelites are convinced of Moses' leadership and affirm him in the role he is to play. Moses is on a roll, and it could be rightly expected that he would march right in to Pharaoh's court, demand the release of the Israelites, and be done with this whole ordeal. But that's not what happens. Pharaoh essentially scoffs at Moses and Aaron, swats them away like flies, and decides to flex his muscles by inflicting even harsher conditions upon the Israelites than before. This goes to prove an important point: sometimes, even though we have a promise of deliverance from God, things get worse before they get better.

Has this ever happened to you? What, if anything, do you think God was trying to teach you in that situation?

How does James 1:2-4 speak into this kind of situation?

James says that patience in the midst of our suffering produces maturity and wholeness. This maturity and wholeness is closely linked to the "wisdom" that James mentions in verse 5. In

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other words, persevering through trials will allow us to gain wisdom to understand more fully God's plan for our lives, resulting in maturity and growth. A pastor once said that "patience is the car that takes us to wisdom. And it's in the long drive in the car that God does the work that prepares us to reach our destination." So, if this is true, then the spiritually mature will understand that God does not promise swift and immediate fulfillment of His plan for our lives. There are times that we have to wait to see the result of God's plan for us. His intention may very well be that we sit in difficult situations and circumstances and wait. And while we are waiting, that doesn't mean that God is not working on us. Paul explains this to us in Romans 5:3-5.

Read Romans 5:3-5. Out of endurance, character, and hope, which do you feel God may be trying to grow in you? For those who are not currently experiencing any difficult trials, can you look back on a time when you did and see how any of these traits increased in you?

As much as we can sympathize with the Israelites, (because let's be honest, we've all complained like they have), they, like us, were in error in the way that they responded to their circumstances. They quickly forgot the many ways that God had shown Himself faithful to them over the last 400 years. We do the same thing when we allow our circumstances to dictate God's faithfulness.

But we do have one advantage over the Israelites when it comes to waiting on God's promises.

Read 2 Corinthians 1:20. What does Paul mean that all the promises of God are "Yes" in Jesus? Understanding that "Amen" means "may it be so" why does Paul connect this reality to prayer? What implications does this have for you?

Our advantage is that we have absolute assurance that God will fulfill His promises to us. Not because of anything that we have done or who we are, but because of what Christ has done and who He is. God was faithful to Jesus in every way and never let Him down. All of the promises that God gave to His people since the beginning of time found their fulfillment in Christ. And now we, being united to Christ through the Gospel, are recipients of those promises just like Jesus was. We can "consider it all joy whenever we face trials of various kinds" because we know that just as God was faithful to see Jesus through every difficult season, so will He be faithful to us. We can wait patiently for God, knowing that when things don't go according to plan, it's because His plan is better. "He is working all things for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28), even our suffering.

In what situations have you seen God's greater plan work itself out in your life?

If you are currently in a season of disappointment, suffering, or waiting, what can you do to make the most of this time? For those that are not, how can you encourage those that are? Also, how can you best prepare yourself to face this kind of situation if/when it does come?

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week five

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Exodus 6:1-7:13

Bottom Line: God's sovereignty over every moment of our lives assures our greatest ultimate joy for His glory.

In your experience, does mankind submit well to authority? Why or why not?

For the most part, mankind as a whole has a problem with authority. It may not seem obvious that *everyone* struggles with this, but get personal enough and you start to see that there are certain issues we all consider as falling under our own authority and no one else's. For example, most of us are ok with the Bible telling us not to murder another person, and we gladly submit to that authority, but as soon as the Bible tries to dictate our parenting methods, our marriage practices, or our financial habits, we are much more hesitant to submit—that kind of authority resides in us alone. We probably wouldn't come out and say something like that, but our actions prove otherwise.

With this understanding of authority, how do you feel about the statement “God is completely sovereign over any and every aspect of my life”? (“sovereign” means “possessing supreme or ultimate power and authority”)

The reality of God's sovereignty is a very prominent theme in the book of Exodus and one that we will see repeatedly throughout the story. We will discuss three ways this passage reveals God's sovereignty and then consider some implications. The first demonstration of God's sovereignty is seen at the very beginning of chapter 6. Moses just complained to God, saying “O Lord, why have You done evil to this people? Why did You ever send me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people, and You have not delivered Your people at all.” But the Lord said to Moses, “Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh...” God's response to Moses shows that the previous events were all part of God's plan. It was “*now*” after everything that had previously happened, that Israel would see God's dominance over Pharaoh. God was setting the stage for what was about to come. He was showing Moses that He was sovereign over Israel's past, which included their blessing and their hardship.

How can you look back and see how God used various parts of your past to bring you to where you are now? How do you think God may be “setting the stage” for something that is coming in your life?

The second instance of God's sovereignty is described for us in verses 6-8: Read verses 6-8 and take note of every “I will” that God mentions. How do these statements point to God's sovereignty?

What we see here is God emphasizing that HE is the one who will deliver Israel and bring them into the Promised Land. This will not be Moses' doing, this will not be Pharaoh's doing, and this will not be the Israelite's doing, God and God alone will be the one to bring about their deliverance. God has shown Israel that He is sovereign over their past, and He is now showing them that He is sovereign over their future.

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Are there any areas of your future that you hesitate to entrust to God? What promises has God given us about our future? (2 Corinthians 4:17; Romans 8:18-23; Revelation 21:4-5)

In light of God's demonstrated control over our past and our future, how does this affect the way we view our present situations and circumstances? (see Philippians 4:12-13)

If God is sovereign over our past and our future, then it only makes sense that God has led us into our present situation for a specific purpose. He orchestrated our past to set the stage for the present and prepare us for the future. In light of the promises we have from God about our future, we should have the same attitude as we saw Paul had in Philippians 4:12-13, but if we're honest, contentment is not our normal outlook on life. For most of us, whether things are good or bad, things could always be *better* in some way. Our hearts are not satisfied with the present.

That's where the third instance of God's sovereign work is helpful to us. This demonstration of God's sovereignty is seen in chapter 7, verse 3. This is one of many instances where it is recorded that God hardens the heart of Pharaoh so that he does not let the Israelites go (cf. 4:21; 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8). This is a difficult text for us to fully wrap our minds around, and surely it raises many more questions than we have the time to answer, but we must not try to explain away the clear reading of what the Scripture is saying. God is completely sovereign over the human heart and He molds it and shapes it according to His will (Proverbs 21:1). In this way, God is sovereign over the present condition of our hearts.

Compare Jeremiah 17:9 with Ezekiel 36:26. How does God's sovereignty over our hearts give us comfort?

God's sovereignty over our past, our present, and our future has several implications for us.

Past – Most of us are comfortable with attributing to God all the good things that have happened in our lives, but not the things that we consider bad. However, if we are to believe what the Bible says about Him being in complete control over our circumstances, then we can look back on even the bad things and know that they came to us from the Lord for a good reason. There were no purposeless or wasted moments.

How do the following passages illustrate this point?

Job 2:9-10
Romans 8:28

Present – God's sovereignty over our present heart-condition should give us comfort and peace, trusting in the truth of Philippians 1:6, that "He who began a good work in you will see it through to completion." No matter how dissatisfied we are with our spiritual condition, no matter how weary we are of fighting the same old sin, not matter how overwhelmed we are with the cares of life, we know that we can entrust our heart to the One who is able to hold it, keep it, and most of all, change it.

How do the following passages illustrate this point?

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Genesis 20:1-7
1 John 3:20

Future – God’s sovereignty over our future is the only reason we can have any hope or assurance that things will not always be the way they are. Because God is in control, we don’t have to fear what may come, knowing that “God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:9). We can also maintain hope and faith even in difficult trials, knowing that “the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing to the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Romans 8:18).

How do the following passages illustrate this point?

Hebrews 12:2 (emphasis on “the joy set before Him”)
1 Peter 1:3-5

God’s sovereign control over every moment of our lives—our past, our present, and our future—should make us the most confident, peaceful, and steadfast people in the world. Our past failures and sins have not derailed us from God’s plan for our lives. Our present troubles and struggles are not beyond God’s power to overcome. Our future is not determined by ourselves or any other person, but by God, “who has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:9). God’s sovereignty assures us that our lives will be meaningful, and that obedience to Him, even when it’s hard, will always be worth it.

In light of God’s sovereignty over our past, present, and future, in what ways do you tend to undermine God’s authority over your life? (For example: Do you complain about past or present suffering and failures? Do you not give God credit for past or present blessings? Do you make future-affecting decisions based on your own potential gain or for the glory of God?) **What specific areas of your life do you struggle to submit to God’s authority? What is keeping you from submitting that area of your life over to God? How can you change these behaviors to show more trust in God rather than doubt?**

EX DUS

week six

E X D U S

Exodus 7:14-8:19

Bottom Line: Because God has demonstrated His supreme authority, we must identify and remove any and all idols in our lives.

How do our actions reveal pieces of who we are, what we love, and what we value?

Jesus said, “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21). And what our hearts are given to, we will pursue. We will make decisions and engage in activities that attempt to give our hearts what they long for. You can learn a lot about somebody by examining their words and actions. Something important to understand about the book of Exodus is that everything that is recorded in the book is primarily meant to teach us something about God. The book of Exodus teaches us about God by showing us the way He acts, behaves, speaks, responds, reacts, and controls. Everything is meant to show us something about Him. This is especially true in the account of the ten plagues, where through ten miraculous signs and wonders, God inflicts judgment upon the people of Egypt because they refuse to acknowledge and obey the command of God to release the Israelites from slavery.

In thinking about the plagues, what do you think God was trying to show about Himself through them? What do you think these plagues show us about what God values?

In the plagues, we see that God is showing His superiority not only over the Egyptians, but over their gods as well. God values His glory above all else and will not stand to see it given to another. The Egyptians worshiped many gods and all of them were grouped into three main categories: gods of the Nile, gods of the land, and gods of the sky. The Nile was Egypt’s lifeblood; it was the source of their wealth, their well-being, and their power. By God turning the Nile to blood, He was demonstrating that He was superior to the “Nile god” of the Egyptians. God also demonstrated His power over the Egyptian gods of the land by sending frogs to cover the earth, and the gods of the sky by producing a swarm of gnats. The message God sent the Egyptians is clear: they were putting their hope in weak and meaningless idols. And through the story of the Exodus, God is telling us the same thing.

We create an idol whenever we expect something to provide for us what only God can. When we look at food or family or work as ultimate and necessary for our happiness, then we crown those things as supreme and place them upon a throne that belongs only to the Lord. In Colossians 3:5-6, Paul defines idolatry as covetousness. This makes sense because when we desire something else so strongly, it shows that we’re not completely loyal to the One who satisfies us completely.

With this in mind, what are some prevalent idols today?

In answering these questions honestly, you can see how easy we can become divided in our loyalty to God. These idols are “gods” precisely because they require so much effort and attention from us to be able to maintain and please. They have assumed part (or all) of our identity. But that’s not to say that these idols are bad in and of themselves, in fact they may be very good things. Tim Keller said, “[idolatry] means turning a good thing into an ultimate thing.”

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And when that good thing becomes an ultimate thing, it becomes a bad thing. God has given us the good gift of money, but when we idolize it, we become workaholics and slip into the sin of materialism. God has given us the good gift of food, but when we idolize it, we become gluttons and drunkards. God has given us the good gift of sex within the boundaries of marriage, but when we idolize it, we become fornicators, adulterers, and pornographers. These good gifts do not need to be thrown away, we just need to return to God's original design for how they should be used.

In the idols that have been discussed, what does it look like to return to God's original design for them?

After we return our idols to their rightful place, we need to protect ourselves from allowing them to creep back in to an improper place in our lives. How can we fight against the lure of idols?

The apostle Paul traces the root of idolatry for us, saying "although they knew God they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him...[instead], they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen" (Romans 1:21, 25). Where thankfulness and honor for God ends, idolatry begins. Notice here that the sin of ingratitude is linked to the sin of idolatry. In other words, if we can develop a proper gratitude to God for everything that He has given us and done for us, we will be less tempted to drift into idolatry. Isn't this what God proved to the Egyptians when He turned the Nile to blood? He was essentially saying, "You've been worshiping other gods for this blessing, but it's really Me that you should be thankful to. I'm the one who controls the Nile." The Egyptians were honoring and revering a god other than Yahweh as the source of their blessing in the Nile. They "did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him,"—they lacked gratitude. And thus, they turned to idolatry.

Where/how have you seen your gratitude misplaced?

In proving His superiority to the Egyptian gods, God was also, in a way, calling the Egyptians to repentance, since having proven His lordship to them, they should turn from serving their gods to serving the One True God. In the same way, God has demonstrated to us, through the resurrection of Jesus, that He is Lord over life, death, and everything in between (Romans 14:8-9). We also, should be moved to repentance and should "turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come" (1 Thessalonians 1:9-10).

Here are some questions to help you identify and deal with any idols in your life:

What is an absolute requirement for your happiness and self-worth?

What in your life, if you were to lose it, would cause you to have a crisis of identity?

Keeping in mind God's good original design for the things that we have idolized, what does repentance look like for you?

EX DUS

week seven

E X D U S

Exodus 8:20-11:10

Bottom Line: The wrath of God is a right and necessary part of God's nature that we should not ignore.

So far in our study of the Exodus, we've covered some heavy, deep topics. We've seen God's sovereignty, His power, His control, and His faithfulness. We've wrestled along with Moses through our doubts and our shortcomings, we've located and uprooted idols in our lives, and we've had to reckon with the fact that our suffering is part of God's good plan for our lives. This study has been hard in a lot of ways, and there is good news coming, but this week we must focus in and pay close attention to what this passage in Exodus is pointing us to. It is vitally important that we understand what God is showing us about Himself through the plagues. Although this passage provides a glimpse into God's mercy and kindness, an equally balanced and unmistakable takeaway from this passage is this: that God hates sin and will pour out His wrath upon it in severe judgment.

What is your initial reaction when you hear references to the wrath of God? Why do you think we feel this way?

The doctrine of the wrath/judgment of God has fallen on hard times. Our present culture wants to reject any concept that God can be angry or vengeful (even in the church!). The love of God is seen as inconsistent with His wrath, and so we cater to our modern sentiments by ignoring the wrath of God altogether, or at least not giving it much thought. However, the plagues in Exodus show us that God's judgment is serious and sure and that none can escape it on their own merit. All of the plagues are expressions of God's wrath, but the most severe is seen in the last plague, the death of the firstborn.

Read Exodus 11:1-10. What important truth about God's judgment is revealed to us in verse 5?

Verse 5 shows us the impartiality of God's wrath. Every single person, from kings to slaves, is subject to it. Paul says in Romans 1:18 that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." Seeing as how "we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God", we know that God's wrath does not come to us without warrant. It is deserved by everyone, without exception. This is not a popular opinion in the world, and even its acceptance in the church is dwindling. But no matter how unpopular an idea it is, the Bible attests to the reality of it, and there are negative consequences if we ignore it.

What is the danger in not considering the wrath of God?

The biggest mistake in ignoring the wrath of God is that it robs God of the glory that belongs to Him due to His wrath against sin. Romans 9:22 says that "God desires to show his wrath and make his power known" and that He does this through punishing sinners who do not repent of their sin and submit to the Lordship of Christ. This punishment is eternal, conscious torment in the lake of fire (Revelation 14:11; 19:3; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Matthew 25:41, 46). This is uncomfortable to think about, but a certain aspect of God's glory is seen in His just, righteous,

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and holy punishment of sin that would not be seen otherwise, and this is a *good* thing. Perhaps it's only uncomfortable because we impose our own human concepts of "wrath" upon God. J.I. Packer explains why this is not a fair comparison to make, saying: "God's wrath in the Bible is never the capricious, self-indulgent, irritable, morally ignoble thing that human anger so often is. It is, instead, a right and necessary reaction to objective moral evil."

After hearing the quote from Packer, have you possibly been misunderstanding the wrath of God? In what way?

Another danger in ignoring the wrath of God is that it removes the urgency of the Gospel. Gospel means "good news," and the gospel is good news precisely because without it all we have is bad news. And the bad news is that apart from Jesus, the wrath of God rests upon us and we will have to reckon with it on Judgment Day (Hebrews 9:27). If you divorce the wrath of God from the Gospel then you are left offering the world an unnecessary Savior that they can take or leave at their convenience. When this happens, then at best, accepting Jesus becomes only a pragmatic decision, and as soon as service to Him becomes inconvenient, then Jesus loses His usefulness to us and is promptly discarded. But Jesus didn't come to merely offer us a "better life," He came to "deliver us from the wrath that is to come" (1 Thessalonians 1:10; cf. Romans 5:9). When the real, fierce, eternal, omnipotent wrath of God is taken seriously, then Jesus becomes eternally precious to us and it produces an incredible urgency in us to take the Gospel, and our responsibility to share it, seriously.

How does failing to acknowledge the wrath of God cause us to misunderstand God?

How does our misunderstanding of God affect the way that we share God with others?

There is some good news in all of this, though. The wrath of God is necessary, it is severe, and it is horrific, but it is also escapable. As mentioned earlier, part of the reason why Jesus came was to deliver us from the wrath of God. All those who place their trust in Him for their salvation will find the wrath that they deserve has been placed on Christ and in its place, God has given you the favor and blessing that was earned by Jesus. This is sometimes referred to as "the great exchange"—our sin for His righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). We will learn much more about this next week, but you should know that if you are unsure whether you have been delivered from the wrath of God, assurance can be found by repenting of your sin and placing your trust for deliverance in Jesus Christ.

It can be hard to derive practical implications from a study of the wrath of God. In light of God's impending judgment and anger towards sin, a suitable response is quiet, humble, and bowed submission to the power and might of God. He is Lord of all, Holy, Righteous, and set apart from sinners. Praise and reverent worship are good, right, and not at all inferior applications to this attribute of God. Nevertheless, the following questions may help provoke some ideas about how the wrath of God can motivate and inform our actions in some ways:

How does God's wrath affect how we embrace our culture's idea of "tolerance?"

How does the wrath of God influence the way that you share the Gospel with people?

EX DUS

week eight

E X D U S

Exodus 12:1-32

Bottom Line: Christ has taken the wrath of God that was due to us upon Himself, setting us free from the fear of judgment.

Begin by reading Exodus 12:1-32.

What are some duties/responsibilities/situations that, no matter how hard you try, you just can't avoid them?

Death, taxes, jury duty—there are just some things in life that are near impossible to get out of. There are some things we all have to go through and experience no matter who we are. There are shared life experiences common to all men and women that are guaranteed to occur. One of those shared experiences is judgment. The Bible says that we all, believer and unbeliever alike, will stand before God to be judged (2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10-13).

Read Revelation 20:12-15. What is the basis by which we are judged? (Each was judged “according to what they had done.” We are judged based on our actions)

Thinking about judgment day, what emotions do you feel when you imagine yourself standing before God to be judged according to your works?

Hopefully, remembering what we learned about God's wrath last week, this was a sobering thing to think about. When we stand before God, “all of our righteous acts will be like filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6). When the list of our works is read to us, there will be nothing that will justify us, there will only be condemnation, because the Bible is clear that “there is no one who does good, no not one” (Romans 3:10). Every single one of our sins will have to be accounted for and the penalty will need to be paid. No exceptions.

But the good news of the Gospel is that even though the penalty for our sins needs to be paid, there is Someone who has stepped in to pay it for us. In 1 Corinthians 5:7, Paul refers to Jesus as our “Passover Lamb.” We read in the account of the Passover in Exodus that the lamb that the Israelites slaughtered acted as a sacrifice that died in place of the firstborn. Paul is saying that Jesus is *our* sacrifice who has died in *our* place. This means that Jesus, like the Passover lamb, was “without blemish”, meaning that **Jesus was completely sinless and without fault or defect** (1 Peter 1:19). It should shock us that our sin is so evil that they only suitable and acceptable sacrifice for us was the pure, sinless, innocent Son of God. And like the Passover Lamb, **Jesus bore the wrath of God in our place** (Romans 5:9). For those who trust in the sacrifice of Christ on their behalf rather than anything they can give, the blood of Christ covers them, and when the day comes for God to dispense His wrath upon sin, He will “pass over” them. But although having the wrath of God removed from us is good, it actually gets better than that.

Read Colossians 2:13-14 and compare with Romans 8:3-4. What was taken away? What was given to us in its place?

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Our record of sins was “nailed to the cross”, which is a way of saying that they were attributed to Jesus. When He hung on the cross He was bearing the penalty of our sins. Now, in place of our record of sins, “the righteous requirement of the law” has been fulfilled in us. This is the Great Exchange that we mentioned last week. Christ has taken our sin and given us His righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21).

In light of this truth, what do you think will happen to us when we stand before God in judgment and must answer for our deeds?

On that day, we do not need to fear, the record attributed to us will be everything that Christ did in His life to earn righteousness before God. We will be considered as having fulfilled the whole law of God, as having lived completely selfless and God-glorifying lives, as having resisted our sin to the point of shedding our blood, as having perfectly loved God and our neighbor, and as never once failing or disappointing God. On that day, God will say to us who are neither good nor faithful, “well done, My good and faithful servant.” Instead of condemnation, we will receive commendation. Instead of wrath, we will receive reward. Instead of eternal death, we will inherit eternal life. All of this because of the One who loved us and gave Himself for us. He truly is “the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world!” (John 1:29).

What kind of confidence does the death of Christ bring you? How does it affect the way that you approach God?

How does the death of Christ for our sins motivate us to pursue holiness and righteousness? (See 1 Corinthians 5:6-8, especially “you really are unleavened”)

In light of this renewed confidence before God and motivation to pursue righteousness, what step of faith do you need to take this week?

EX DUS

week nine

E X D U S

Exodus 12:33-13:16

Bottom Line: God has not partially redeemed us from sin, but has fully, wholly, and completely set us free from it.

Can you describe a time where you had to do/participate in something in which you were completely out of your element/expertise?

Moments like this can be overwhelming and embarrassing. They make us feel vulnerable and force us to confront our inadequacy. Today we are looking at the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the significant truth that it holds for us: that we are completely “out of our element” when we engage in sin.

So far, God has proven Himself to be greater than all the gods of Egypt, and now, after four centuries of being enslaved, the Israelites are set free from their bondage and are on their way to the land that God had promised them. To commemorate God’s faithfulness and remember how He delivered them from Egypt, Israel was to keep the Passover and afterwards they were to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Passover was meant to remind Israel of God’s sparing them the death of the firstborn (12:27), and the Feast of Unleavened Bread was meant to remind them of God delivering them from slavery (13:8).

Slavery is the obvious answer, but by delivering the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, what else did God deliver them from?

Read 1 Corinthians 5:6-8. In this passage, we see how the purpose of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was to remind the Israelites that God had delivered them not only from Egypt, who physically enslaved them, but from sin, which spiritually enslaved them. This makes Paul’s argument in 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 a very important one for us. Christ, being our Passover lamb, has absorbed the wrath of God for us (v. 7) and therefore He has delivered us from our sin (v. 6, 8). There are several implications for us that we can pull from this passage.

Paul says in verse 7 that we should “cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump.” What do you think Paul means here?

In the immediate context, Paul is referring to the church as a whole, saying that they are all unleavened people, meaning that they have been set free from sin. In the Corinthian church there was a man who was engaging in gross, unrepentant sin, and because “a little leaven leavens the whole lump”, Paul admonishes the church to remove the sinful man from the church for the sake of everyone else in the body. Paul is telling the Corinthians that they should protect the holiness and purity of the church by disciplining those who engage in unrepentant immorality. In other words, the church is “out of its element” when it is filled with sin. Or rather, those who are consumed with sin are out of their element when they are surrounded by the righteous church.

Read Psalm 1:1-2. Taking into account what Paul tells the church to do in 1 Corinthians 5:7, what classic principle is being taught here? (“Bad company corrupts good morals”, “you become like those you spend your time with”, etc.). **Are your relationships aligned with this**

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principle? Are you spending time with people that you shouldn't? On the other hand, are there people that you should spend *more* time with?

Jackie Hill Perry said, "Get friends that make: 1) sin look bad, 2) God look big, 3) grace look tangible, and 4) the Gospel look true." The question is: **Are you this type of friend?** *[This is meant to be a rhetorical question]*

Paul tells the Corinthians that the reason they should purge the leaven—sin—from them is because they "really are unleavened" (v. 7).

What do you think this means? What is your reaction to this claim? Do you truly feel free from sin? If not, then why?

It's easy to get into the habit of mentally acknowledging the truths of the bible, but not actually acknowledging them in our hearts. Or in other words, it's easy to mentally agree with something the Bible says, but then live lives that don't agree with what the Bible says. This is especially true of some of the more spectacular claims of the Bible. For instance, in this verse, Paul is not saying that the church should live in holiness *as if* they were free from sin, but because they *actually are* free from sin. Do we *really* believe what Paul is saying here? We may mentally assent to this truth, but do we actually make decisions based on this fact? So, for the purposes of this study, we can say that the Christian is "out of their element" whenever they engage in sin. The true, real, spiritual (just because it's spiritual doesn't mean it's not "real") reality of the Christian is that they have been wholly, sufficiently, and completely delivered from the effects of sin.

What feelings does this reality evoke in you? How does this reality make a difference in your life? Are there any sins that you've given up on fighting? Are there any lifestyle changes you need to make to help you steer clear of sin? How can you make this truth more "concrete" in your life?

How does our sin damage the witness of the church? How does it damage our testimony to the Gospel? With that being said, what "leaven" do you need to remove from your life? How can you stop the spread of sin in your life?

EX DUS

week ten

E X D U S

Exodus 13:17-14:31

Bottom Line: In our fight against sin, God has given us every reason to be fearless, to stand firm, and to wait for His deliverance.

What were the “good old days” to you?

Everybody can look back and remember a time when things were simpler and less stressful. Maybe it was when you were a child, or when you were in college, or before you had kids. We all get nostalgic every once in a while, longing for the glory days of old. However, it's easy to view our past through rose-colored glasses, allowing the stresses of the present, or the uncertainty of the future, to make us long for what used to be, rather than being content with where we currently are. But as Christians, we are not called to live in the past, we are called to be content with our present and optimistic about our future. For a follower of Jesus, there's no better time to be alive than right now, and there's no better future to look forward to than ours, for the best is always yet to come.

Read Exodus 13:17-18. What do you notice about the route God lead the Israelites on? Why does it say that He lead them this way?

We saw last week that when we are saved, we are totally and completely delivered from sin. This is true for everyone who has repented of their sin and placed their faith in Jesus. But sometimes, even those who are saved experience seasons of sinful rebellion; we fall back into old habits and hang-ups that are destructive. Sometimes this is referred to as “backsliding.” We've “slid back” into sinful activities and patterns that God once delivered us from. To prevent their backsliding is exactly why God lead the Israelites out of Egypt via the longer, harder route through the wilderness rather than the shorter, easier one through the land of the Philistines. God was trying to protect the Israelites from backsliding because He knew that if they were given the opportunity to do so, they would “change their minds when they [saw] war and return to Egypt.”

What lessons can we learn from this situation? What does this teach us about God's plans versus our plans? How does this story affect the way we view our “wilderness” moments?

If we continue reading, we see that God's concern about Israel's devotion to Him was valid, because at the first sign of trouble, they are willing to march straight back to Egypt, returning to the slavery that God had so mightily delivered them from (14:10-12). The Israelites were quick to forget everything that God had shown them in the plagues. Despite the awesome display of power and authority that God had exhibited over their enemies, Israel was convinced that they would be more secure under the oppression of their captors rather than in the wilderness with God.

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What are some things that we tend to turn to other than God whenever we face difficulty in life? What comfort are we looking for in the things we turn to? Have these things ever truly fulfilled or satisfied us? Why not?

We are often tempted to do the same thing as the Israelites. Even though God has delivered us from sin, when we face trouble, we want to fall right back into the old habits, attitudes, and behaviors that we used to. We convince ourselves that there is security in that lifestyle, or we just want to be distracted from the worries of life. For some—backsliding, confessing, repenting, backsliding, confessing, repenting—this is a vicious cycle that’s repeated over and over. But there is a way out. There are three things that we can do to help us fight against the desire to return to sin.

Read Exodus 14:13-14. What are the three commands Moses gives the Israelites?
 (“Fear not”, “Stand firm”, “Be silent” [sometimes, “be still”])

The first command Moses gives the Israelites is “fear not.” **Why was Moses convinced that the Israelites had nothing to be afraid of?** (God had proven Himself faithful to Moses time and time again, also the previous plagues had proven God was on Israel’s side and would deliver them). **What acts of God in your life can you look back on to help you fight against the temptation to backslide?**

The second command Moses gave was to “stand firm.” He was commanding them to stand their ground, to not waver or fall back against the looming threat of the Egyptians. **Read Ephesians 6:13. How do we “stand firm” in our fight against sin? In looking through the armor of God (Ephesians 6:14-18), which piece do you need to be more diligent in arming yourself with?**

The third command Moses gave was probably the hardest: “be silent”, or some translations may say “be still.” Moses was commanding the Israelites to have faith in God. It was not they themselves that were having to fight, instead it was “the salvation of the Lord” that the Israelites were depending on.

In what ways do we try and strive in our own power to overcome sin?

We tend to think that the solution to our sin problems is found in being more disciplined (more prayer, more Bible-reading, more volunteering), or putting up safeguards (internet filtering, spending limits on our debit cards, etc.). But most of the time, these are efforts to alleviate symptoms of the problem rather than cure the problem itself. We don’t need to simply change our behavior, we need to change our hearts. And this heart change does not come from anything that we can do. Moses assured the Israelites that the Lord would fight for them, they only needed to be still. We are in a similar position as the Israelites. In our fight against sin, our victory is not dependent upon *what we do* but only upon *what Christ has done*. He has fought for us, we need only to be still and trust in His finished work.

Out of “fearing not”, “standing firm” and “being still”, which area do you struggle with most? How do you think growing in that area will help you fight against old sin? So, what do you need to do to grow in that area?

EX DUS

week eleven

E X D U S

Exodus 15

Bottom Line: Remembering God's wondrous deeds and perfect attributes should move us to worship.

What is one of your favorite hymns or worship songs? What is it that you like about it?

After 400 years of slavery, countless hardships, and immense suffering, Israel has finally been delivered, once and for all, from the hands of the Egyptians. Through a magnificent display of His power, God brought judgment upon Egypt through the ten plagues, parted the Red Sea to allow Israel to pass, and ended the vicious rule of Pharaoh by drowning him and his army in the sea. Now, on the other side of the Sea, on the other side of slavery, on the other side of their struggling, and praying, and waiting, the Israelites look back at everything God brought them through, and they respond in praise to God through a song. Today, we will look back at a few of God's deeds and attributes we've studied in this series, and hopefully renew again a spirit of praise in our hearts for who God is.

Exodus 15:1-21 records Israel's celebration of all that God had done for them. This is the Song of Moses, a recollection of God's faithfulness in bringing the people out of Egypt. Several mighty deeds and attributes of God are remembered and celebrated in this song. For instance, God's *faithfulness* is a recurring theme that is celebrated in this song. "He has become my salvation...my Father's God" (v. 2), "you will bring them in and plant them on your mountain" (v. 17), these are ways that God has been and will be faithful to Israel.

In week 1 of this study, we looked at God's faithfulness and determined that when we are faced with difficult situations, we can be faithful to God, knowing that He is always faithful to us. How have you seen your trust in God's faithfulness increase over the course of this study? Are there any actions you have taken because of a renewed trust in God? If not, what commitments do you need to make in light of God's faithfulness?

Moses also celebrates God's *power* over and over throughout this song. "Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power..." (v. 6a). The Israelites had seen consistent, powerful displays of God's might, proving that He was indeed sovereign over the fate of the Egyptians as well as the Jews. God's power was not a threat to the Israelites, but a comfort, because God was using His power to bring about good for them, not harm. This theme receives the most attention in Moses' song, which shows how important it is that we recognize and praise God for His sovereign power.

Week 5 of this study was devoted to applying God's sovereign power to our lives, and we concluded that God's sovereignty over every moment of our lives assures our greatest ultimate joy for His glory. One of the questions from that study was "what specific areas of your life do you struggle to submit to God's authority?" Do you remember your answer? How well have you done in surrendering that part of your life to God? Do you need to re-examine this question and make a new commitment? How will you hold yourself accountable to following through with it?

Another attribute of God that is praised in this song is God's wrath. "...Your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy. In the greatness of Your majesty, You overthrow Your adversaries; You

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send out Your fury; it consumes them like stubble” (v. 6b-7). This attribute of God was covered in week 7. We learned that the wrath of God is a right and necessary part of God’s nature that we should not ignore. Look again at the quote from J.I. Packer that was mentioned in that lesson: “God’s wrath in the Bible is never the capricious, self-indulgent, irritable, morally ignoble thing that human anger so often is. It is, instead, a right and necessary reaction to objective moral evil.” If it is right and necessary that God responds to sin with His wrath, then it is right and necessary for us to respond to His wrath with praise.

Do you have trouble praising God for His wrath? Why would a wrathless God not be worthy of our praise? (Without wrath, sin will never be fully dealt with). How has your understanding of the wrath of God influenced you since we studied it in Week 7?

Moses recounted several other works and attributes of God in his song: His eternity, His supremacy, His steadfast love, His judgment, His kindness—all of these find a place in the Israelites’ worship of God. As a church, we have walked through this first half of the Exodus story and together we have seen and experienced so much of who God is. In the Exodus story, the glory of God is put on display in many ways, and if we have seen it, we are obligated to worship Him for it. Now, the question is how will we respond to what we have seen? Will we praise God for who He is? Or will we praise God for who we want Him to be? Will we worship God in all of the ways that He has revealed Himself to us? Or will we pick and choose what we like about Him and sing only about those things? Have we changed at all through this study? Or are we still the very same people that we were before? Have we grown in righteousness, Christ-likeness, and in reverence of God? Or was this all a waste of time? All of these questions need to be thoughtfully and carefully considered.

How have you seen God differently through this study than you did before? How have you been challenged through this study? How have these new perspectives of God and challenges changed your heart for the better?

Taking into account everything we’ve learned so far, what is ONE thing you need to do in response as an act of obedience to what you’ve seen?

There is one step of obedience that every single one of us can take. For some of us, we will finish this study in our groups and then join the rest of the church body for a time of worship. For others, we will do this study and then go home to prepare for another week of work, school, and responsibility.

For the first group, when we worship together, will you sing and praise God for who He is and what He has done? Will you put aside any complaints of musical preference and choose instead to focus on the truth being sung and the joy of praising God with others?

For the second group, will you face the coming week with an attitude of praise and worship? Will you decide now to set your affections on God and not on your circumstances? Will you devote this week to offering all of yourself to God in worship?